



# Local Health Jurisdiction Communicable Disease Epi New Investigator Manual

Last Revised: July 2021

The Washington State Department of Health Office of Communicable Disease Epidemiology (WA DOH CD Epi) can be contacted 24/7 via 206-418-5500. Office of Public Health Outbreak Coordination, Informatics and Surveillance (PHOCIS) can be contacted via 206-418-5700. *Please use this guide as a starting point. For assistance, please call us.*

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## Communications

Here is a summary of the two phone lines you are most likely to call as well as a few of the broader agency phone numbers for reference.

- **206-418-5500 – Main Line for Office of Communicable Disease Epi (CD Epi):**
  - Call 5500 for any of the following:
    - Zoonotic Disease, Vaccine Preventable Disease, Foodborne and Enteric Disease, Healthcare Associated Infections, Tuberculosis, Refugee Health, Non-healthcare congregate settings
      - For communicable disease investigation support including specimen facilitation, guidance, surveillance and discussion regarding cases and clusters, call 206-418-5500 as you have always done historically
    - COVID-19 Clinical and Investigative guidance
- **206-418-5700 – Main Line for Public Health Outbreak Coordination, Informatics and Surveillance Office (PHOCIS):**
  - Informatics – For general communicable disease informatics including COVID-19 – (i.e. ELR, RedCap, WDRS, CREST, etc.)
  - COVID-19 Coordination - For multiple needs in an outbreak that span multiple DOH offices or for centralized investigator support
  - COVID-19 Surveillance – for COVID-19 data, metrics and dashboards
  - COVID-19 Testing support
- **1-800-525-0127 - DOH COVID line – mainline for the public but also for other content areas such as:**
  - Isolation and Quarantine Support
  - Care Coordination
  - Immunizations
- **360-236-4501 - DOH mainline for the public - all other content areas – best to navigate to this site for specific numbers: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/AboutUs/ContactUs>**
- **GovDelivery listserv** (how WA DOH CD Epi communicates with LHJs).
  - It is *essential* to get added to this listserv, as this is how we let LHJs know about important issues.
  - To get added to the GovDelivery listserv, contact your LHJ data steward.
  - If you need assistance, please call the DOH CD Epi main line 206-418-5500 or email DOH DCHS CDEPI Admin Team [DOHDCHSCDEPIAdminTea@doh.wa.gov](mailto:DOHDCHSCDEPIAdminTea@doh.wa.gov)
  - WA DOH CD Epi has a call for LHJs each month. Information about the calls is shared via the listserv above.

**Systems You Will Need Access To**

- Washington Disease Reporting System (WDRS), the notifiable conditions electronic case reporting system
  - Request permission through LHJ data steward.
  - Information:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/PublicHealthSystemResourcesandServices/WDRS>
- Case, Risk and Exposure Surveillance Tool (CREST)
  - To learn more, email: [doh-crestcoord@doh.wa.gov](mailto:doh-crestcoord@doh.wa.gov)
- SARA Alert
  - To learn more, email: [doh-crestcoord@doh.wa.gov](mailto:doh-crestcoord@doh.wa.gov)
- RedCap
  - To learn more, email: [doh-crestcoord@doh.wa.gov](mailto:doh-crestcoord@doh.wa.gov)
- Rapid Health Information Network (RHINO, syndromic surveillance system)
  - To get access and learn more, email: [syndromic.surveillance@doh.wa.gov](mailto:syndromic.surveillance@doh.wa.gov)
  - Information:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/HealthcareProfessionalsandFacilities/PublicHealthMeaningfulUse/SyndromicSurveillance/RHINO>
- Immunization information system (IIS)
  - General information: [Washington State Immunization Information System](#)
  - Training materials: [IIS Training Materials Portal](#)
- Community Health Assessment Tool (CHAT), web-based query system for population health data
  - Information: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/DataSystems/CHAT>
  - Login (once permission granted) is here:  
<https://secureaccess.wa.gov/myAccess/saw/select.do>

**Notifiable Conditions Basics**

- General information:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/NotifiableConditions>
- Guidelines and forms:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/NotifiableConditions/ListofNotifiableConditions>
- WAC 246-101 (Washington Administrative Code governing notifiable conditions including lists of notifiable conditions for providers and laboratories, LHJ and DOH responsibilities):  
<https://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=246-101>
- CDC case definitions: <https://www.cdc.gov/nndss/case-definitions.html>

**Laboratory Testing at the Washington State Department of Health Public Health Laboratories (PHL)**

- Washington State Microbiology test menu (provides details on all of the testing offered at WA PHL):  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/PublicHealthLaboratories/MicrobiologyLabTestMenu>
- General shipping instructions to WA PHL:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/PublicHealthLaboratories/Shipping>

**Washington State Department of Health Reports**

- Annual Report (case counts by year with county level data for more common diseases):  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/DiseasesandChronicConditions/CommunicableDiseaseSurveillanceData/AnnualCDSurveillanceReports>
- Influenza report:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/DiseasesandChronicConditions/CommunicableDiseaseSurveillanceData/InfluenzaSurveillanceData>
- Pertussis report: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/348-254-PertussisUpdate.pdf>
- Real-time posting of West Nile Virus cases, Zika cases, and rabies positive animals:
  - West Nile Virus:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/WestNileVirus>
  - Zika: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/ZikaVirus>
  - Rabies Positive Animals:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Rabies/RabiesActivity>
- EpiTRENDS (monthly publication regarding hot topics in epidemiology with a WA perspective):  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/DiseasesandChronicConditions/CommunicableDiseaseSurveillanceData/EpiTRENDS> (self-subscribe)
- Tuberculosis Reports:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Tuberculosis/DataReports>

**Selected Program-Specific Information for WA DOH CD Epi & PHOCIS**

- **Enteric/Foodborne/Waterborne Illness**
  - Norovirus toolkit: [Norovirus Outbreak Management Toolkit | Washington Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence \(uw.edu\)](#)
  - Washington Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence: [Washington Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence \(uw.edu\)](#)
  - Foodborne disease outbreak reporting:

- Scroll to Foodborne Disease Outbreaks:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/NotifiableConditions/ListofNotifiableConditions>
- **Healthcare-Associated Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance Program**
  - <https://www.doh.wa.gov/AboutUs/ProgramsandServices/DiseaseControlandHealthStatistics/HealthcareAssociatedInfectionsProgram>
  - National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN):  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/HealthcareAssociatedInfections/EQuIP>
  - Education, Quality and Infection Prevention (EQuIP) program:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/HealthcareAssociatedInfections/EQuIP>
- **Influenza**
  - Outbreaks of influenza-like illness in long-term care facilities must be reported to the LHJ. The LHJ must report to WA DOH using the form here:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-031-ReportForm-ILI-Outbreak.pdf>
  - General influenza information for healthcare providers and public health:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/PublicHealthSystemResourcesandServices/Immunization/InfluenzaFluInformation>
    - For information on management of influenza like illness outbreaks in long-term care, scroll to the Long-Term Care Guidance section
  - Note that lab-confirmed influenza deaths *in any age* are reportable to the LHJ and in turn to WA DOH
- **Legionellosis:**
  - DOH CD Epi and Environmental Public Health can provide consultation and technical assistance. Call the main number 206-418-5500 to discuss.
  - Culture of respiratory secretions *and* urine antigen assay are together the preferred diagnostic tests
  - Report travel and healthcare-associated cases promptly
- **Non-Healthcare Congregate Settings Program**
  - COVID-19 outbreaks must be reported to WA DOH. This can be accomplished by entering an outbreak event and linking cases in WDRS or calling 206-418-5500 and asking for the COVID-19 Outbreak Response Program (for non-healthcare settings) or the Healthcare Associated Infections Program (for long term care facility and healthcare settings). Outbreak definitions in various settings can be found in the COVID-19 infection guide (pg. 12-14) here: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-107-Guideline-COVID-19.pdf>

- COVID-19 outbreak reporting form:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-033-ReportForm-COVID19-Outbreak.pdf>
- Public Health COVID-19 Guidance: Non-Healthcare Workplaces in Washington State:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-284-Guidance-NonHC-Workplace.pdf>
- Weekly COVID-19 Outbreak Report (published with Healthcare Associated Infections Program): <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/data-tables/StatewideCOVID-19OutbreakReport.pdf>
- **Rabies**
  - Rabies assessment tool (to determine when testing or treatment is appropriate):  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/RabiesPEPGuidance.pdf>
  - Turn-around time is 30 hours but if specimen arrives by 11 AM there is usually a result by the end of the day; may be after 5 PM so LHJ should give after-hours phone numbers
  - General rabies information, including how to ship bats to WA PHL for testing:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/NotifiableConditions/RabiesResources>
- **Special Topics**
  - Botulism: for adult botulism call the main number 206-418-5500 24/7. For infant botulism refer the healthcare provider to 510-231-7600 for consultation.
  - Hepatitis A: genomic sequencing is available for selected cases
- **Tuberculosis:**
  - TB Program Homepage:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Tuberculosis>
  - TB Newsletter:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Tuberculosis/TBNewsletter>
  - TB Consultation:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Tuberculosis/TrainingandEducation>
- **Vaccine Preventable Diseases:**
  - Call the VPD team at 206-418-5500 to immediately report suspect cases of measles, AFM, diphtheria, meningococcal disease (cultured from sterile site), and *H. influenzae* (under 5 years of age, cultured from sterile site) to WA DOH. DOH will help with specimen retrieval and shipment of clinical specimens to WA PHL for disease confirmation or further surveillance diagnostics.
  - Rapid diagnosis of measles is essential to preventing further spread. Please refer the reporting health care provider to the Measles Assessment Checklist for Providers which is designed to help them (and you) assess whether measles should be considered in the differential diagnosis when patients present with a rash with fever. If the patient meets

the criteria for consideration as a suspect measles case this form also provides information on what clinical specimens to collect:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/348-490-MeaslesAssessmentQuicksheetProviders.docx>

- Testing for measles should always be done at PHL rather than through a commercial laboratory to ensure rapid turnaround. We can usually have results within 24 hours of specimen arrival.
- For suspected acute flaccid myelitis (AFM) cases, an AFM the patient summary form found at <https://www.cdc.gov/acute-flaccid-myelitis/downloads/patient-summary-form.pdf> should be filled out by the clinician. Please provide the clinician with this job aid for clinicians that provides guidance on proper AFM specimen collection:
- [Job Aid for Clinicians: How to report a suspected AFM case to the health department \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- Mumps approval process:
  - If a healthcare provider calls to report suspected mumps: verify clinical symptoms, vaccination and travel history and assess exposure risk. If mumps is suspected approve testing and notify DOH. If mumps seems unlikely, reject testing at PHL. Call the VPD team at 206-418-5500 if you need assistance with this assessment.
  - If DOH receives specimens that the LHJ has not notified them about, the VPD team will contact the LHJ. It is the responsibility of the LHJ to contact the healthcare provider who ordered mumps testing and assess the likelihood of mumps in order to approve (or decline) testing at PHL. Once the determination has been made, contact DOH with approval or rejection
- We do not have “case-based” reporting of varicella/chickenpox in Washington. Only cases with a fatal outcome are reportable in our state. However, although individual cases of non-fatal varicella are not reportable to WA DOH, clusters ( $\geq 3$  cases) and outbreaks ( $\geq 5$  cases) are reportable to DOH using Outbreak/Cluster Reporting Form: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-030-ReportForm-Varicella-Outbreak.pdf>. Clusters and outbreaks can be reported to DOH as they happen, or quarterly.
- **Zoonotic and Environmental Agents**
  - DOH CD Epi can provide aid for a wide range of conditions including arranging testing
  - Vectorborne: babesiosis, ehrlichiosis, Lyme disease, relapsing fever, spotted fever rickettsiosis, West Nile virus, Zika virus (see below) and travel-associated infections
  - Zoonotic infections from animals: brucellosis, hantavirus, leptospirosis, malaria, plague, psittacosis, Q fever, rabies (see above), tularemia
  - Environmental agents: coccidioidomycosis (Valley fever), cryptococcosis (*C. gattii*)
  - Call the main number 206-418-5500 and ask for the ZD group

- Zika Virus Testing through WA PHL:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/ZikaVirus/HealthcareProvidersClinicalLabs/ZikaVirusTesting>
- **PHOCIS Epidemiology Response Team**
  - DOH and LHJ staff (epidemiologists and non-epidemiologists) who are interested in training and assisting with all-hazard emergencies, including outbreaks, and other high priority events requiring disaster epidemiology tools and resources.
  - To join the Epi Task Force or for more information, email Alexa Halling at alexa.halling@doh.wa.gov
  - CDC Disaster Epidemiology definition and FAQs:  
  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/disaster/epidemiology.htm>
  - CSTE Disaster Epidemiology resources:  
  
<https://www.cste.org/members/group.aspx?id=87588>
  - CSTE Disaster Epidemiology Tool Repository:  
  
<https://www.cste.org/general/custom.asp?page=DisasterEpiToolRep>
  - Public Health Preparedness (PHP) Capabilities and Disaster Epidemiology Crosswalk:  
[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cste.org/resource/resmgr/PDFs/Crosswalk\\_5.28.15.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cste.org/resource/resmgr/PDFs/Crosswalk_5.28.15.pdf)

### **Contact Information**

- DOH LHJ and Tribal Directory:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/PublicHealthSystemResourcesandServices/LHJandTribalDirectories>

### **Free Online Trainings**

- Northwest Center for Public Health Practice
  - Basic Infectious Disease Concepts in Epidemiology:  
<http://www.nwcphp.org/training/opportunities/online-courses/basic-infectious-disease-concepts-in-epidemiology>
  - Introduction to Outbreak Investigation:  
<http://www.nwcphp.org/training/opportunities/online-courses/introduction-to-outbreak-investigation>
- Epi-Ready Training (for foodborne illness response): <https://www.neha.org/professional-development/education-and-training/epi-ready-team-training>



- Oregon Health Authority Outbreak Interviewing Strategies: <http://www.oregon.gov/OHA/PH/DISEASES/CONDITIONS/COMMUNICABLEDISEASE/OUTBREAKS/Pages/TrainingVideoOutbreakInvestigation.aspx>
- Introduction to Incident Command: <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.b>
- Curry International TB Center: <https://www.currytbcenter.ucsf.edu/>
- WA State Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence: [Training | Washington Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence \(uw.edu\)](#)
  - Introduction to Outbreak investigation
  - The Role of Environmental assessments in Outbreak Investigations
  - ATG, GAC, what can sequencing do for me?

### **Free Continuing Medical Education**

- CDC COCA calls: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/continuingeducation.asp>
- Seattle Children's: <http://www.seattlechildrens.org/healthcare-professionals/education/grand-rounds/online/?year=0&month=0&videocat=242>

### **Professional Associations, some involving conferences**

- Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE): <https://www.cste.org/>
- Puget Sound Association of Professionals in Infection Control: <https://community.apic.org/pugetsound/home>
- Washington State Public Health Association: <http://www.wspha.org/>
- National Association of County and City Health Officials: <https://www.naccho.org/>
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials: <http://www.astho.org/>
- Washington State Environmental Health Association: <https://www.wseha.org>
- Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials: <http://www.wsalpho.org/>
- West Coast Epi (conference of epidemiologists in the western region of the United States; conference location varies and is usually held in October). DOH CDE will send out information via the GovDelivery listserv.
- National Tuberculosis Controllers Association: <http://www.tbcontrollers.org/>
- International Union Against TB and Lung Disease – North American Region: <https://theunion.org/our-work/north-america>

**Office of Communicable Disease Epidemiology Contact List**

## Points of Contact

Office of Communicable Disease Epidemiology  
Division of Disease Control and Health Statistics

Please call the main line for all inquiries (24/7): 206-418-5500 | Fax: 206-364-1060

Section	Emails
<b>General Communicable Disease Epidemiology</b> Office Director: Wayne Turnberg Deputy Director: Vivian Hawkins Admin Supervisor: Leslie Byerly	<a href="mailto:commdisepi@doh.wa.gov">commdisepi@doh.wa.gov</a>
<b>Foodborne, Waterborne and Enteric Disease</b> Supervisor: Beth Melius	Foodborne: <a href="mailto:foodborne-epi@doh.wa.gov">foodborne-epi@doh.wa.gov</a>  Waterborne: <a href="mailto:waterborne-epi@doh.wa.gov">waterborne-epi@doh.wa.gov</a>
<b>Zoonotic, Vector-borne, &amp; Cross-Cutting</b> Supervisor: Hanna Oltean	Zoonotic: <a href="mailto:zd@doh.wa.gov">zd@doh.wa.gov</a>  Cross-cutting: <a href="mailto:mary.chan@doh.wa.gov">mary.chan@doh.wa.gov</a>  SET-NET/COVID-19 Pregnancy Registry: <a href="mailto:Deborah.Mbotha@doh.wa.gov">Deborah.Mbotha@doh.wa.gov</a>  Molecular Epidemiology: <a href="mailto:Wgs-epi@doh.wa.gov">Wgs-epi@doh.wa.gov</a>
<b>Tuberculosis</b> Supervisor: Monica Pecha	<a href="mailto:tbservices@doh.wa.gov">tbservices@doh.wa.gov</a>
<b>Vaccine-preventable disease*</b> Supervisor: Chas DeBolt	Call: 206-418-5500
<b>COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough</b>	<a href="mailto:vpd-cde@doh.wa.gov">vpd-cde@doh.wa.gov</a> *Only use for COVID vaccine breakthrough cases
<b>Refugee health</b> Supervisor: Jasmine Matheson	<a href="mailto:RefugeeHealthProgram@doh.wa.gov">RefugeeHealthProgram@doh.wa.gov</a>
<b>Healthcare-associated infections &amp; Antimicrobial resistance</b> Supervisor: Sara Podczervinski	<a href="mailto:HAI@doh.wa.gov">HAI@doh.wa.gov</a> or <a href="mailto:HAI-COVID@doh.wa.gov">HAI-COVID@doh.wa.gov</a>
<b>COVID-19 outbreak response Non-healthcare congregate settings</b> Supervisor: Laura Newman	<a href="mailto:nhcs-covid@doh.wa.gov">nhcs-covid@doh.wa.gov</a> or <a href="mailto:laura.newman@doh.wa.gov">laura.newman@doh.wa.gov</a>