

# *epi*TRENDS

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## **Rare Diseases of Public Health Significance**

Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 246-101 addresses notifiable conditions. In January 2022 there will be revisions to the reporting requirements. This includes elimination of the category that specified reporting for rare diseases of public health significance.

### **Reporting Rare Diseases in Washington**

In the existing WAC 246-101 requirements, healthcare providers should report “other rare diseases of public health significance”. There is no laboratory equivalent, since

“Other rare disease of public health significance” is defined in the WAC as “a disease or condition, of general or international public health concern, which is occasionally or not ordinarily seen in the state of Washington including, but not limited to, spotted fever rickettsiosis, babesiosis, tick paralysis, anaplasmosis, and other tickborne diseases. This also includes public health events of international concern and communicable diseases that would be of general public concern if detected in Washington.”

The category for rare diseases of public health significance covered any newly emerging condition. It also reduced the number of conditions specified as reportable in the state. However, there was no parallel reporting by laboratories, which report specific agents. The January 2022 revision removes the category and instead lists specific conditions that were previously included in the definition as well as several new conditions. As rare conditions, the occurrences in Washington are few if any, so WDRS will continue to list them under Rare Disease unless there is a more appropriate condition such as tickborne disease.

**Chapter 246-101 WAC**

**NOTIFIABLE CONDITIONS**

**WAC Sections**

HTML	PDF	246-101-001
HTML	PDF	246-101-005
HTML	PDF	246-101-010
HTML	PDF	246-101-011

<https://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=246-101>



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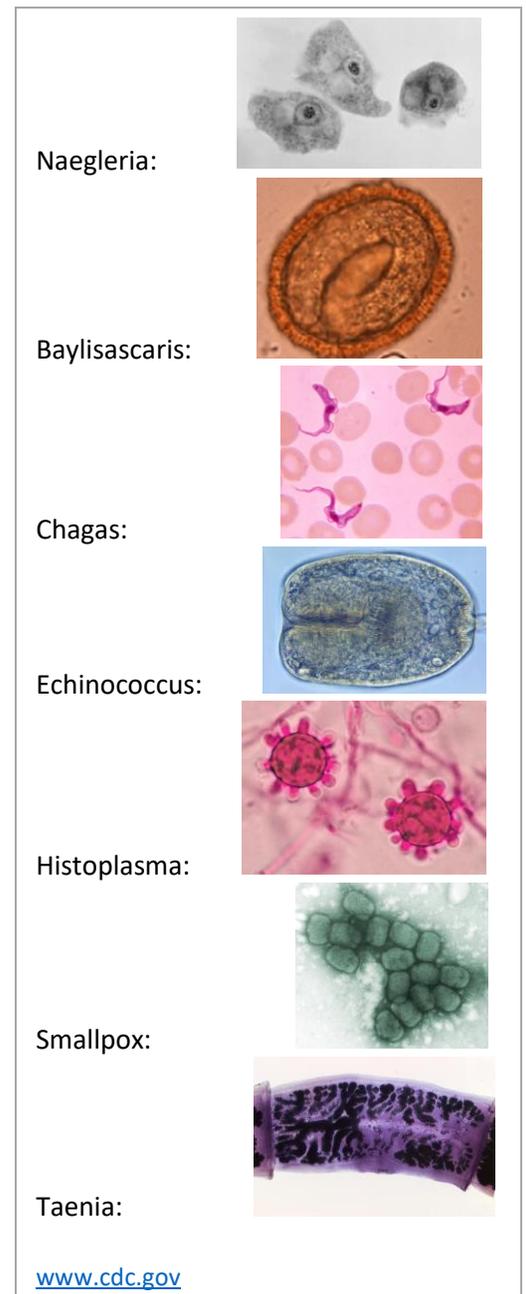
### Newly Added Conditions

Within WDRS there will remain a condition called “Rare disease of public health significance”. A drop-down menu lists conditions that are notifiable. It offers entry of conditions that are so rare, most counties will never report a case and many years no reports will be received at all. Included are conditions such as monkeypox which have been reported rarely in the entire country. Rather than a large number of short guidelines, DOH will also continue the existing guideline for rare diseases, providing a brief summary of the associated conditions entered into WDRS.

Several conditions will be added in January as reportable in Washington:

- Amebic meningitis or encephalitis: *Naegleria*, *Balamuthia*, or *Acanthamoeba* brain infection acquired from water. Other serious infections can also be reported.
- Baylisascariasis: roundworm infection of the eye, brain, or other organ(s) acquired from raccoon feces. Cases have been acquired in Washington.
- Chagas disease (American trypanosomiasis): parasitic disease with the potential for chronic infection causing damage to heart, intestines, or other organs. Cases reported in Washington have had international exposures. Infected persons may not donate blood.
- Echinococcosis: hydatid cysts typically develop in the liver or lung due to larval cestode (tapeworm) infection acquired from canid feces, particularly dogs and foxes.
- Histoplasmosis: respiratory infection due to an environmental fungus present in bird and bat droppings. Within the U.S. the fungus is most commonly found in the central and eastern states.
- Smallpox: viral rash illness no longer present outside laboratories, last naturally-occurring case globally was 1977.
- Taeniasis: Intestinal tapeworm infection most commonly acquired from the consumption of undercooked beef or pork. .
- Cysticercosis: Disease caused by larval cysts of the tapeworm *Taenia solium*, which can affect the brain (neurocysticercosis), muscle or other tissues. Cases reported in Washington have had international exposures.

The additions listed above are all rare conditions, with few or no cases reported with exposure in Washington. The conditions have been included as reportable because public health control measures may be appropriate regardless of where the person was exposed to the agent. A small number of exposure or clinical questions applicable to the added conditions will be added to the Rare Disease event.



### Revision to Existing Conditions

For several existing conditions additional species were added:

Condition in WDRS	Additions for 1/31/2022
Anthrax	Bacillus cereus, biovar anthracis
Lyme disease	<i>Borrelia mayonii</i>
Relapsing fever	<i>Borrelia parkeri</i> <i>Borrelia turicatae</i> <i>Borrelia miyamotoi</i>
Tickborne disease	<i>Anaplasma</i> <i>Ehrlichia</i> <i>Rickettsia parkeri</i> <i>Rickettsia philipii</i> <i>Rickettsia typhi</i> Tick paralysis
Yersiniosis	<i>Yersinia intermedia</i> <i>Yersinia fredericksonii</i> (previously added) <i>Yersinia kristensenii</i> (previously added)
Highly antibiotic resistant organism	<i>Candida auris</i> infection or colonization

More detailed information regarding the specific agent causing disease for conditions such as hantavirus or arboviral infections will be collected. The agent causing psittacosis has been renamed from *Chlamydophila psittaci* to *Chlamydia psittaci*.

One goal of the revision was to improve overall clarity and usability of the WAC. Notification and specimen submission requirement have been standardized in language and time frames.

EpiTRENDS articles later this year will address some of the other reporting changes that will be implemented in January 2022. These include reporting time frames and the addition of extended fields for race. Improving data collected for notifiable conditions surveillance can improve public health response.

### Resources

Board of Health

<https://sboh.wa.gov/News/Articles/ID/2698/Board-Members-Adopt-Proposed-Amendments-to-Washingtons-Notifiable-Conditions-Rule>

<https://sboh.wa.gov/Rulemaking/CurrentRulesandActivity/NotifiableConditions>

<https://sboh.wa.gov/Portals/7/Doc/Rulemaking/PostAdoptionNotice-NotifiableConditions.pdf>

Notifiable Conditions, Washington State Department of Health

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/NotifiableConditions/ListofNotifiableConditions>