



<b>POLICY AND PROCEDURE</b>	
SUBJECT/TITLE:	Processing Reports through the Communicable Disease Email
APPLICABILITY:	Nursing / Epidemiologist
CONTACT TITLE & DIVISION:	Diane Thompson, MSN, RN
ORIGINAL DATE ADOPTED:	07/06/2022
LATEST EFFECTIVE DATE:	07/06/2022
REVIEW FREQUENCY:	Every 5 years and as needed
BOARD APPROVAL DATE:	N/A
REFERENCE NUMBER:	200-024-P

### **A. PURPOSE**

The intent of this document is to detail how communicable disease reports will be processed and managed when sent to the email address: [communicabledisease@cantonhealth.org](mailto:communicabledisease@cantonhealth.org).

### **B. POLICY**

To accommodate the needs of agencies reporting diseases to public health, a common email has been set-up at Canton City Public Health with access by only those individuals involved in the management of communicable disease reports. This policy will detail the process of managing those reports so that every effort is made to do this intentionally and consistently, so reports are not overlooked.

### **C. BACKGROUND**

N/A

### **D. GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**Class A Reportable** – Diseases of major public health concern because of the severity of disease or the potential for epidemic spread. Report immediately via telephone upon recognition that a case, a suspected case, or a positive laboratory result exists.

**Class B Reportable** – Disease of public health concern needing timely response because of potential for epidemic spread. Report by the end of the next business day after the existence of a case, a suspected case, or a positive laboratory result is known.

**Class C Reportable** – Report an outbreak, unusual incident or epidemic of other diseases (e.g. histoplasmosis, pediculosis, scabies, staphylococcal infections) by the end of the next business day.

**HIPAA** – Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act – a Federal Law that requires the protection of sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient’s consent or knowledge.

### **E. PROCEDURES & STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

The following email account has been created for agencies to email encrypted confidential information to meet the reporting requirements to public health:

[Communicabledisease@cantonhealth.org](mailto:Communicabledisease@cantonhealth.org)

The following positions will have access to the email account:

1. Director of Nursing (DON)
2. Director of OPHII (EPI Supervisor)



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3. Lab Director
4. Nursing Supervisor
5. Communicable Disease Nurse(s) (CD)
6. STI follow-up nurse
7. Lab personnel designated by lab director
8. Epidemiologists designated by OPHII director
9. Disease Intervention Specialist (DIS)
10. DIS Supervisor

The initial processing of reports will be managed by the Nursing Department beginning with the Director of Nursing and moving down the hierarchy of positions in the DON's absence. Files will be created in the communicabledisease email account labeled as follows:

1. Epidemiologist (flu reports, COVID suspect breakthrough cases, specific epi report requests)
2. CD Nurse – all CD reports managed by the nursing department (this includes a multitude of reports including class A and class B reportable diseases)
3. DIS – syphilis and HIV reports
4. Back-up CD nurse – Hepatitis C reports and Hepatitis B reports for females in child-bearing ages

As a courtesy, once the reports have been processed to the correct folders, emails can be sent to the appropriate individuals to manage the reports. Reports are required to be managed within 8 hours of receipt except for reports received on weekends or holidays which will be processed on the first morning back into the office.

Reports can be deleted once confirmation of data entry into the State reporting system (currently ODRS).

This policy does not negate the need for providers to report a Class A reportable (disease of major public health concern because of the severity of disease or the potential for epidemic spread) immediately by telephone upon recognition that a case, a suspected case, or a positive lab result exists.

#### Notification to outside agencies of available disease reporting email account

The Director of Nursing and/or the Director of OPHII will inform (via email) hospital infection control practitioners, local health department communicable disease staff, and other agencies appropriate to use the email account.

Agencies will be guided to send reports in appropriate batches (i.e., syphilis reports; STI reports; individual CD reports) so that reports can be distributed appropriately in the email account. In addition, they will be guided to include the disease being reported in the subject line (or, the name of the individual that requested the report) to better allow the processing of reports. Agency staff will also be reminded that reports should be sent encrypted so there are no violations in HIPAA.

#### Noncompliant Sender

All senders need to be instructed to send emails confidentially. For those agencies noncompliant, the DON or EPI supervisor will reach out to the responsible party reinforcing the instruction necessary. Explanation will be made



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about the importance of following HIPAA laws. If continued noncompliance, CCPH will reach out to legal counsel to see what additional steps can be taken.

**F. CITATIONS & REFERENCES**

N/A.

**G. CONTRIBUTORS**

The following staff contributed to the authorship of this document:

1. Diane Thompson, MSN, RN; Director of Nursing
2. Amanda Archer; Director of OPHII

**H. APPENDICIES & ATTACHMENTS**

N/A

**I. REFERENCE FORMS**

Include a list of forms needed for this policy/procedure. If none, list as N/A.

**J. REVISION & REVIEW HISTORY**

Revision Date	Review Date	Author	Notes

**K. APPROVAL**

This document has been approved in accordance with the “800-001-P Standards for Writing and Approving PPSOGFs” procedure as of the effective date listed above.