



**Public Health**  
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Canton City Health District

Canton City Health District  
Nursing  
FINAL

<b>POLICY AND PROCEDURE</b>	
SUBJECT/TITLE:	Receipt of a Communicable Infectious Disease Report and 24/7 Contact System Protocol
APPLICABILITY:	Nursing / Epidemiologist
CONTACT PERSON & DIVISION:	Diane Thompson, RN, MSN, Director of Nursing
ORIGINAL DATE ADOPTED:	11/01/2011
LATEST EFFECTIVE DATE:	04/28/2025
REVIEW FREQUENCY:	Every five (5) years and as needed
BOARD APPROVAL DATE:	N/A
REFERENCE NUMBER:	200-015-P

#### **A. PURPOSE**

To provide clear guidance regarding the collection and distribution of telephone reports of reportable infectious diseases and communicating that through a 24/7 contact system protocol when necessary.

#### **B. POLICY**

Canton City Public Health is equipped to receive communicable disease reports on a 24/7 basis. Physicians, healthcare providers and laboratories are legally required by the Ohio Administrative Code, Chapter 3701-3 to report the existence of a case, a suspected case or a positive laboratory result of any Class A and B reportable infectious diseases, and Class C outbreak, unusual incident or epidemic of other diseases to the local health jurisdiction where the patient resides.

Class A diseases must be reported to the local health department immediately by telephone, and Class B and C diseases must be reported to the local health department by the close of the next business day. Canton City Public Health is prepared to receive reports via telephone, secure fax, encrypted e-mail, electronic lab report (ELR) and USPS mail. To maintain a reliable system, Canton City Public Health tests its reporting system annually to ensure the system is functional, dependable, confidential, accurate and appropriate for the data it is receiving. Because the system is set up to receive reports by phone, secure fax, encrypted e-mail, and ELR, all elements must be tested to ensure the ability to receive reports.

#### **C. BACKGROUND**

Standard procedures dictate that phone calls relating to communicable disease reporting be directed to the communicable disease nurse or the supervisor. Due to multiple layers of reporters in the community, not all calls will proceed through the nursing division as intended. Staff answering phones have been trained on this policy. Staff are familiar with the list of notifiable diseases and can be found at:

[https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/81628d9a-fe78-4b95-bcb7-be7f59e96f66/abcs-guide-to-reportable-infectious-diseases-in-ohio.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT\\_TO=url&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18\\_K9I401S01H7F40QBNJU3SO1F56-81628d9a-fe78-4b95-bcb7-be7f59e96f66-mNy8lhR](https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/81628d9a-fe78-4b95-bcb7-be7f59e96f66/abcs-guide-to-reportable-infectious-diseases-in-ohio.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT_TO=url&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18_K9I401S01H7F40QBNJU3SO1F56-81628d9a-fe78-4b95-bcb7-be7f59e96f66-mNy8lhR)

This procedure applies to all events, real as well as exercises. This procedure discusses the mode of communication for work hours and after-hours calls.

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

Communicable – Capable of being transmitted from person to person, animal to animal, animal to human, or human to animal. Used interchangeably with infectious.



Infectious – capable of being transmitted or spread. Used interchangeably with communicable.

Virtru – an encrypted e-mail system for outlook

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

### Communicable Disease Reporting

Disease reports can be received by one of the following methods:

1. Verbal via phone
  - a. During office hours 8:00AM – 4:30PM Monday through Friday, excluding holidays (330) 489-3322.
  - b. Outside office hours: (330) 438-4681
2. Via fax on secure fax line (330)-430-7857
3. Electronically via the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS)

Infectious disease reports may be transmitted via encrypted email to ensure the secure and confidential exchange of protected health information. Infectious disease reports, on occasion, are reported through USPS mail (though, oftentimes, these reports have already been received through other means). All reports received through USPS mail are distributed to the appropriate person for follow-up.

### Verbal Report

When receiving a verbal report via phone during office hours, the individual answering the call must immediately locate the communicable disease nurse, nursing supervisor, or director of nursing to take the details of the information being shared. The call is not to be transferred to voicemail under any circumstances. The following information taken: Collect as much information as possible from the list below:

- a. Name, Facility, and a **direct** phone number of the caller (collect this information first);
- b. Date and Time the call was received;
- c. Infectious disease being reported;
- d. Patient Demographics  
If not a Canton City Resident, refer the caller to the appropriate jurisdiction. Collect the following information if Canton City resident:
  - 1) Full Name of Patient;
  - 2) Date of Birth;
  - 3) Address.
  - 4) Phone number;
  - 5) Sex; and
  - 6) Race and ethnicity
- e. Lab Information:
  - 1) Specimen Type (culture, PCR, antibody, etc.);
  - 2) Date of Collection;
  - 3) Specimen source;
  - 4) Test;
  - 5) Result (including date resulted);
  - 6) Location/Facility specimen was collected;
  - 7) Ordering Physician.
- f. Any other pertinent information that the caller has, this may include occupation, symptom onset, symptoms, other exposures, etc.



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2. Direct the Caller to fax a copy of the results and other pertinent information to the confidential fax line, 330.430.7857.
3. Make the caller aware that the communicable disease nurse and/or their supervisor may be calling back if more information is needed.
4. If class A reportable infectious disease, notify ODH at 614-722-7221 within 1 hour of receipt of disease report. Document the date and time the call was made. Enter into ODRS if not already in system.
5. Consider notifying other health department staff (epidemiologist, medical director, lab manager, etc.). Information can be shared via secured e-mail (CCPH uses Virtru at time of policy writing).
6. Handle all notes in a sensitive manner compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Use ODRS number when referencing case in communications.

### Fax Report

When receiving a report via fax, the following procedure should be followed:

1. Only the secure fax line (330-430-7857) should be used for faxing communicable disease reports.
2. One of the following individuals will process faxed infectious disease reports (these reports are now sent through an encrypted process):
  - a. Clinical Receptionist
  - b. Office Manager
  - c. Director of Nursing
  - d. Nursing Supervisor
  - e. Communicable Disease Nurse
  - f. Epidemiologist
3. Faxes/encrypted e-mails are reviewed for page completeness and infectious disease being reported by the individual processing the report.
  - a. If class A reportable condition, the report will be handled by the communicable disease nurse (or supervisor) immediately (these reports should come through as a verbal report first and then a faxed report of the details. See Verbal Report a-f above for information needed). These reports are called to ODH reporting line within 1 hour of receipt.
  - b. If class B or C, the report will be placed either on the chair of the communicable disease nurse or in his/her mailbox slot or uploaded in the secure drive of the person responsible for the follow-up (DIS team, HIV team, etc.).
  - c. The Ohio Department of Health Infectious Disease Control Manual (IDCM) is used to guide the case investigation.
4. Faxes received over the weekend will be processed the first morning staff returns to the office. Class A communicable disease reports are reported immediately to a live person – if this occurs on the weekend, follow the process for reporting a Class A infectious disease to ODH.

When receiving a report through an electronic lab result (ELR) entry in ODRS, the following procedure should be followed:

1. ELR reports are processed by either the Director of Nursing or the Nursing Supervisor; these are reviewed daily during the work week.
2. ELR reports are saved in ODRS for the appropriate jurisdiction and saved as a NEW report
3. Once the NEW report is seen and initiated by assigned responsible party, the report is changed to an OPEN case until the report is ready for closure.

### **24/7 Contact System and Testing Protocols**



The 24/7 contact system is tested at a minimum of 2x/year by the Ohio Department of Health and managed in the following manner:

Telephone: Canton City Public Health utilizes the Ohio Department of Health's Local Health Department After-Hours Contact Drill as its main method to test the phone lines and the contact procedures for after hour's notification. This drill occurs twice a year and is a function of the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Grant. The timeframe required to respond is detailed in the PHEP grant requirements. Documentation of performance is maintained by the Emergency Preparedness Planner or Public Information Officer (PIO).

Fax: Canton City Public Health utilizes the College of American Pathologists (CAP) Lab Proficiency Survey (LPS), in conjunction with the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL), The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ohio Department of Health as a measure of receiving reportable disease reports via fax. The purpose of this exercise is to ensure that healthcare laboratories having a positive test result know the appropriate reporting structure (i.e., laboratory to local health departments, local health departments to ODH, within the required timeframe), which in turn will allow the local health department to test their ability to receive fax communication of a reportable disease. Once notified of the 'test' reportable disease, Canton City Public Health will be able to enter the test case into the ODRS training module. A generic account has been set up on ODRS Training for all users to enter in LPS Test results (<https://odhgatewaytrng.odh.ohio.gov/> ; User Name: test.lps, Password: Welcome-1. LPS testing is done biannually. Documentation of LPS testing will be logged and maintained by the Communicable Disease Nurse.

ELR: Canton City Public Health utilizes electronic lab results (ELR) to receive positive lab results on reportable diseases. ELR is the electronic transmission from laboratories to public health of laboratory reports which identify reportable conditions. ELR has many benefits, including improved timeliness, reduction of manual data entry errors, and reports that are more complete. The ELR system is a partnership between the Ohio Department of Health (Informatics) and the reporting laboratory. ODH and reporting facilities are equipped to test the systems and audit compliance with reporting guidelines, reporting timeframes and accuracy. Follow the steps outlined by ODH including calling in the report to ODH (on occasion, this can change annually).

Noncompliance of any contact system testing protocols will result in a written action plan to demonstrate correction of the noncompliance issue within 30 days of identification.

## **F. CITATIONS & REFERENCES**

N/A.

## **G. CONTRIBUTORS**

The following staff contributed to the authorship of this document:

1. Diane Thompson, RN, MSN, Director of Nursing
2. Jon Elias, MD, Medical Director
3. Amanda Archer, MPH, Epidemiologist

## **H. APPENDICIES & ATTACHMENTS**

N/A

## **I. REFERENCE FORMS**

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



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#### J. REVISION & REVIEW HISTORY

Revision Date	Review Date	Author	Notes
08/28/2024	08/28/2024	Diane Thompson, RN, MSN	Grammatical changes.
4/8/2025	4/8/2025	Diane Thompson, RN, MSN	Updated processes. Made corrections to various steps that have changed over time.

#### 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.