



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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REPORTING OF WEST NILE VIRUS CASES

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This report provides a brief summary of the process for reporting West Nile Virus cases to the state.

SUMMARY

By law, the Department of Public Health (DPH) maintains an annual list of (1) [Reportable Diseases, Emergency Illnesses, and Health Conditions](#) and (2) [Reportable Lab Findings](#). It must distribute the lists to the state's licensed physicians and clinical laboratories, and they must report cases of the listed conditions within certain timeframes to the (1) local health director in the town where the case occurs and (2) DPH ([CGS § 19a-2a](#) and Conn. Agencies Reg., [§ 19a-36-A1 et seq.](#)).

West Nile Virus is currently included on both lists. This means that a health care provider, health care facility, or other mandated reporter must file such a report electronically or in writing within 12 hours of finding a suspected or actual case of the virus. A clinical laboratory's director must do this within 48 hours of making the finding. These reports and any subsequent information DPH or the local health director obtains when investigating the report is confidential and can only be used for (1) medical or scientific research or (2) disease control and prevention purposes.

MANDATED REPORTERS

By law, the following professionals must report suspected or actual cases of the virus to the department and the local health director if a health care provider is not in attendance or is not known to have filed a report:

1. a school, day care, or camp administrator;
2. the master or person in charge of any vessel or aircraft in the state;
3. the owner or person in charge of an establishment that produces, handles, or processes dairy products, food, or non-alcoholic beverages for sale or distribution; and
4. morticians and funeral directors (Conn. Agencies Reg., [§ 19a-36-A3](#)).

REPORT CONTENTS

Reports of suspected or actual cases of the virus filed with the department and local health director must include the following:

1. reporter's name and address;
2. infected person's name, address, occupation, age, gender, and race or ethnicity;
3. attending physician's name and address;
4. identity of the infectious agent; and
5. for laboratories, the method of identification (Conn. Agencies Reg., [§ 19a-36-A4](#)).

CONFIDENTIALITY

When DPH and the local health director receive a report, they can contact the infected person and his or her physician to obtain additional information needed to control further spread of the virus. This includes obtaining the identification of people who may be the source or subsequent contacts of the infection.

By law, all personal information obtained, including the identity of the health care provider, infected person, and suspected contacts is confidential. It can be used only for (1) medical or scientific research or (2) disease control and prevention and can be disclosed only for purposes of the project to which it relates. DPH can disclose personal data for medical or scientific research to other government agencies and private research organizations as long as they do not further disclose it. The information is not admissible as evidence in any kind of judicial or administrative action ([CGS § 19a-25](#)). Anyone who violates this confidentiality requirement is subject to a fine of up to \$500 ([CGA § 19a-215](#)).

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