

## Reportable Disease Surveillance System (RDSS)



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**State Web Site:** <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dehp/idb/Pages/default.aspx>

**National Web Site:** <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/>

### **Sources of Information for the Database**

Disease reporting is a required activity by health care providers, hospitals, clinics, and laboratories, and is mandated and regulated by the Commonwealth of Kentucky through the Kentucky Disease Surveillance Administrative Regulation 902 KAR 2:020, Disease Surveillance. Data collection tools include the EPID 200 Reportable Disease form, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) disease-specific supplemental forms, and clinical laboratory reports. Data are submitted by hospitals, clinics, local health departments, private practice physicians, commercial laboratories, and the state public health laboratory by mail, fax, or electronically through a CDC web-based system the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NEDSS) Disease Surveillance Module. Additionally, state and local health department staff conduct case investigations and report findings in NEDSS.

### **Description of the Data Collected**

The Reportable Disease Surveillance System includes demographic information, clinical symptoms, risk factors, and outbreak associations on each occurrence of more than seventy reportable conditions. Demographic data collected include gender, age, race, ethnicity, and place of residence. Information from supplemental forms for certain diseases is also entered into NEDSS. These activities are supported by a combination of federal and state funds.

### **Strengths of the Data**

The major strength of this data is that it provides an estimate of communicable disease incidence and trends across the state, which works toward one of the ten essential public health services – to monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems.

**Data Limitations**

- Data on the EPID200 form and K-NEDSS are often incomplete.
- Follow-up is difficult and may not result in obtaining the needed information.
- Data are often sent to the state or local health department weeks, and sometimes months, after the reportable event. This makes follow-up even more difficult.
- A complete data set is not readily available. Extracting data can be cumbersome and typically needs to be done by reportable disease staff.
- RDSS is a passive system and thus data availability is dependent on reporting by health care providers and laboratories.

**Specific Uses if Information**

- Monitor disease trends in the state.
- Provide data to create and evaluate prevention and treatment initiatives.
- Provide data to CDC for national reportable disease statistics.
- Provide data for grant applications related to reportable diseases in Kentucky.
- To monitor and evaluate geographic and or spatial characteristics of disease.
- To monitor and evaluate outbreaks of disease.

**System Evaluation**

Data collection is routinely monitored utilizing quality control standards developed by CDC. Reportable Disease staff at the KDPH review individual cases before initial submission to CDC. Additionally, data are reviewed annually; any discrepancies between Kentucky and CDC are reconciled before data are finalized.

**Data Set Availability**

The fully identified data set is not available to the public. Portions of the data set may be shared, and identified data can be made available to research organizations providing that the requestor has signed a confidentiality/security agreement with the Department for Public Health. Occasionally approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) is necessary. Most data are released as an Excel file; other formats are available.

**Data Release Policy**

Data shall be released in accordance with the Kentucky Department for Public Health Data Release Policy. All requests should be submitted by email and should include a project justification, variables of interest, time period of interest, and an anticipated deadline. Any data released to the public will be de-identified.

**Data Publications**

The Reportable Disease Program produces a ten-year statewide reportable disease summary, which is available online at: <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dehp/idb/Pages/diseasesummary.aspx>. The most recent report includes data from 2006-2015.

**Suggested Data Citation**

Kentucky Department for Public Health Reportable Disease File. Frankfort, Kentucky. Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Public Health [data year].

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