

# The CDC 52.12 form for NORS, Module 1: General Section

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This is a training session for the National Outbreak Reporting System, or ‘NORS’. In this session, you will learn how to complete the first two pages of the CDC 52.12 form. The form is a paper version of a web-based system that your reporting site uses to report waterborne disease outbreaks to CDC. Both the paper and electronic versions of NORS are organized into tabs. The first two pages of the form have tabs that say ‘General’. This General section contains the same questions as the General tabs in the electronic system. Other types of outbreaks, such as foodborne disease outbreaks, are reported in NORS and share this section.

For each waterborne disease report, you will complete the General section, a Water-General section, and one of four sections about the type of water exposure. Please review the trainings for each section before completing it for the first time.

If you have additional questions about this form, a guidance document for the paper form is available online. This document also contains pick-lists to help you complete several of the fields. Please contact your agency or reporting site administrator if you have questions about the reporting process for your site.

## 2 GENERAL - PAGE 1

The first field on the CDC 52.12 form is the CDC Report ID. This field should be left blank. It will be filled with a number that is generated automatically when the report form is entered into NORS.

The State Report ID is a unique identifier used to organize and manage reports within each reporting site. If the State Report ID has not been assigned and someone else in your reporting site will assign it later, leave this field blank. If you are assigning the State Report ID, refer to the format used by your state. Once a State Report ID has been assigned, it should not be used again.

Next, the box next to ‘Water’ should be checked off to indicate that water exposure resulted in the first cluster of illness in the outbreak. If you are unsure whether the primary mode of transmission should be ‘Water’, please refer to the guidance manual to help you decide how to report the outbreak.

Waterborne disease outbreaks often involve epidemiologic and environmental investigation methods. Please check all that apply. This form indicates that a case-control study was used to investigate an outbreak. There was an assessment of a recreational venue, and water testing was conducted. The Comments section can be used to enter more information about the investigation methods.

Next, let's enter a few dates using the format 'month, day, year'. The following dates refer only to the primary cases. There will a place on the second page to report more information about secondary cases, such as cases who became ill only after having contact with other cases.

The dates you can include are the date the first case became ill, (which is a required field); the date the last case became ill; the date of the first known exposure to the implicated water source among cases; the date of the last known exposure among cases; the date the outbreak was reported to CDC (other than this form), if CDC was contacted prior to completion of an outbreak report; and the date that the State/Territory or Local/Tribal Health Authorities first learned about the outbreak.

Once you have entered date information, complete the geographic location section. Again, this section refers only to primary cases in the outbreak. Write in your state and if the water exposure occurred in more than one state, check the first box. If it only occurred in one state but cases lived in additional states, check the second box. If you check either box, please write in the additional states. Next, repeat this process for your reporting county and other counties in your state. Then write in the city, town, or place where the water exposure occurred. Do not include proprietary or private facility names.

The last part of page 1 asks for numbers and percentages of primary cases. For outbreaks where more than one mode of transmission has been suspected but can't be distinguished among the cases, classify all cases as primary cases and simply list suspected secondary transmission modes on page 2. Otherwise, report about primary cases here and report the number of secondary cases on page 2.

Here we have 12 lab-confirmed cases and 6 probable cases, for a total of 18 primary cases. A slightly higher proportion of women, 55 percent, than men, 45 percent, became ill.

The report also provides space to list the number of cases who died, were hospitalized, visited the emergency room, or visited another health care provider. For each category, please list the total number of cases for whom the information is available, which may not be the same for each category.

The last fields on page 1 ask for the percentage of cases in several age groups listed on the form. Enter the exact percent distribution, if known. If you do not have the percentages but you do have counts for each of the age categories, you may enter the counts instead. If you are not entering percentages, make a note of this on the paper form so that the data will be entered correctly into NORS.

### **3 GENERAL - PAGE 2**

At the top of page 2, enter the shortest, median and longest incubation periods and durations of illness for primary cases and circle the appropriate time periods for each entry. Indicate the number of cases for whom information is available. If no information is available, check the boxes indicating that the information is unknown. In this example, we only have the duration of illness for 15 of the 18 cases.

For incubation period, include the date of exposure and first date of symptoms in your count. For duration of illness, count the date of the first symptom to the date that all symptoms ended.

The table for signs or symptoms should only be completed for primary cases. Symptoms that are not already listed in the field titled 'Feature' may be added. On this form, 'nausea' has been added. Many standard symptoms are also listed for reference in the guidance manual. For each sign or symptom, enter the number of cases who reported a specific symptom in the field titled '# Cases with signs or symptoms'. Enter the total number of cases who provided information about the sign or symptom in the field titled 'Total # of cases for whom info available'. The number of cases who provided information might vary. For example, some cases may not have been asked about specific symptoms.

Next, let's look at the section for secondary cases. If cases were not directly exposed to the water source that was implicated in an outbreak, but had another exposure that led to illness, they are called secondary cases. Please check off any known or suspected modes of secondary transmission, and enter the numbers for lab-confirmed and probable secondary cases. Here, the total number of primary and secondary cases, including probable cases, is 21.

The Environment Health Specialists Network section will only be used by states that participate in the EHS-Net program. This section will link outbreak reports with data from environmental investigations. This section is not active in NORS yet.

For waterborne disease outbreaks involving bottled water, you would want to complete the traceback section if local, state and/or federal authorities did a traceback to find out where the bottled water came from. To do this, simply check the box if a traceback was attempted, regardless of its success. Then write in the source name, such as a particular lake or stream; the source type, such as a particular water bottling facility; the U.S. state or international location where the water came from; and the country where the water came from. In the comments, state which agency did the traceback and any additional comments about the traceback. If bottled water was recalled, then check the box in the Recall section that follows the Traceback section. You can also list the Type of item and include Comments such as lot numbers for the recalled item.

Next, enter your contact information in the Reporting Agency section. Check with your agency or reporting site administrator if you do not know what to list for your agency name.

Lastly, briefly describe important aspects of the outbreak not covered above, including any adverse outcomes in special populations such as pregnant women and immunocompromised persons.

If you would like to have copies of documents, such as agency reports, MMWR articles or journal publications attached to a NORS report, you can do this by submitting the electronic files to the person who will enter your form into NORS.

Thank you for reviewing the information contained in this module. This is the end of the training for the General section of the CDC 52.12 waterborne disease outbreak reporting form. Please refer to the guidance document for the form or the other online training modules before completing additional sections of the form.