

Local County Health Department

Action Dates

Approval: _____

Revisions: _____

Effective: _____

Next Review: _____

Policy Title: 24/7 Response for Communicable Disease
No. [Example X.XXX-0X]

Purpose: This policy sets the standard for the health department to respond to reports of communicable disease within their jurisdiction on a 24 hour/7 day a week basis.

Policy: The local health department will investigate and implement control measures for all reports of communicable disease according to local and state laws and in accordance with the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Approvals:

_____	____/____/____
Director of Nursing	Date Signed
_____	____/____/____
Medical Director	Date Signed
_____	____/____/____
Health Director	Date Signed

Procedure:

1. The health director will ensure that trained staff is available 24/7 to respond to public health concerns from the community, including private citizens, hospitals, private health care providers, emergency response personnel, correctional facilities, long term care facilities, schools, child care facilities, restaurants, and other government agencies.
2. The health director will ensure that key agencies are informed of the 24/7 policy and will ensure that these agencies are provided with current contact information.
3. The health director will ensure that anyone contacting the health department after hours, including nights, weekends, and holidays, will be given instruction on how to reach a health department representative for emergencies.
4. The health director or his/her designee will be available 24/7 for emergency response.
5. The health director or his/her designee will be available for response by a minimum of four means of contact: a work telephone number, a home telephone number, a work cellular phone number, and a beeper.
6. Staff on call for emergency response for communicable disease will carry a beeper and have available a cellular phone for responding to calls.
7. Staff on call for communicable disease response will have access to the local health department facilities after hours.
8. Staff on call will have access to the NC Health Alert Network and be able to communicate via email, fax and telephone with public health professionals and other key agencies.
9. Staff on call will be available to respond within 15 minutes to an after hours emergency page.

Definitions:

Staff on call: Staff that is trained and designated locally to carry the after hours beeper and cellular phone. Typically this is a communicable disease nurse or epidemiologist, but may include other professional staff that has been trained to respond.

Key Agency: Locally defined agencies. Typically these would include hospitals, emergency management, and state/regional public health entities.

Historical Notes: [local use]

See also related policies: [local use – example Compensatory Time, Building Security, Communication, etc.]