

## **Clostridium Difficile Reporting Requirements**

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### **Issue**

Does Connecticut require health care professionals or institutions to report Clostridium Difficile infections (CDIs or “C. diff”) to local health officials or the general public?

### **Clostridium Difficile Reporting Requirements**

CDI is a bacterial infection that causes various gastrointestinal symptoms, such as diarrhea and inflammation of the colon, which in some cases can be life-threatening. The bacteria can easily spread from person-to-person by touch or direct contact with contaminated surfaces. People who are on antibiotics and hospitalized or residents of long-term care facilities (e.g., nursing homes) are generally at a higher risk of contracting the infection.

Connecticut law requires both clinical labs and licensed health care institutions to report CDIs to state and local health officials, and the Department of Public Health (DPH) must make publicly available certain information about CDI and other health care associated infections.

### ***Clinical Laboratories***

By law, DPH maintains an [annual list](#) of reportable diseases, emergency illnesses and health conditions, and reportable lab findings ([CGS § 19a-2a](#) and [Conn. Agencies Regs. § 19a-36-A1 et seq.](#)). Health care providers and clinical laboratories must report cases of the listed conditions within certain timeframes to the department and the local health director where the case occurs.

CDI has been included on the department's list of reportable lab findings since 2011. This means that a clinical lab director must report the positive lab results within 48 hours to DPH and the local health director in the town in which the affected person resides. If the town of residence is unknown, the clinical lab director must report the finding to the local health director in the town where the specimen originated.

### ***Health Care Facilities***

Additionally, state law requires licensed health care facilities to report to DPH their incidence of certain health care associated infections and antibiotic resistant infections, including CDI.

By law, DPH established a [mandatory reporting system](#) for these conditions and must annually post on its website the (1) number and type of health care associated infections and antibiotic resistant infections reported by each licensed health care facility, (2) links to the CDC's health care infection data reports and the federal Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) quality improvement program website, and (3) information to assist the public in learning about these conditions and how to prevent them ([CGS §19a-490o](#)). The 2018 data reports for consumers are available [here](#).

Additionally, in 2015, CMS began requiring acute care hospitals participating in Medicare and Medicaid to report positive CDI lab results as part of its Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting [Program](#). This program is intended to (1) provide consumers with quality of care information so that they can make informed health care decisions and (2) encourage health care facilities and providers to improve the quality of inpatient care.

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