



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

LANSING

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GOVERNOR

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DIRECTOR

Date: February 11, 2019
To: Michigan Local Health Departments
From: MDHHS, Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Disease Section
Re: Guidelines for Reporting Rabies Cases and Exposures Using
the Michigan Disease Surveillance System (MDSS)

As of 2019, Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (RPEP) is considered a reportable condition in Michigan. Reporting is required for any initiation and subsequent doses of RPEP given to individuals potentially exposed to rabies. With this new reporting requirement, there is a need to clarify the use of various Michigan Disease Surveillance System (MDSS) forms available in the system. Rabies is one disease in which several events are reportable including: (1) potential rabies exposures (bite and non-bite), (2) RPEP regimens, (3) cases of animal rabies, and (4) cases of human rabies. The following are general guidelines to promote consistency among health agencies in the transmission of this data in MDSS.

Case Investigation and Reporting Guidance:

(1) Potential Rabies Exposures

- The Public Health Code requires that any animal bite where rabies is suspected be reported to the public health agency where the bitten person resides, as well as where the bite occurred, within **24 hours** of the bite incident. [R325.180 (Rule 10) (6)]
- Once a report of a potential rabies exposure is received, the local health department (LHD) shall conduct a rabies risk assessment for the exposed individual to determine the need for RPEP by utilizing the [*Michigan Rabies Assessment: When a Person Has Been Exposed*](#) flowchart. If indicated, the LHD may also work with partners to facilitate confinement (dogs, cats, and ferrets only) or testing of the biting/exposing animal.
- There is no requirement for LHDs to report these incidents to MDHHS. However, LHDs are encouraged to utilize the “**Rabies: Exposure and Post-Exposure Treatment Investigation**” form in MDSS to track the follow-up of these cases. The MDSS disease condition is “**Rabies: Potential Exposure and PEP.**”
- **Note:** The disease condition “**Rabies: Potential Exposure and PEP (Pre-2019)**” enables users to search for cases prior to 2019. This condition should not be used to report new cases. All cases entered into MDSS as “**Animal Bite**” cases prior to February 14, 2019 were also automatically incorporated into this disease condition. If jurisdictions prefer that these cases be classified as “**Rabies: Potential Exposure and PEP,**” they may manually transfer case information into the new form. We recommend printing/saving a copy of the original report to prevent data loss.

(2) Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis

- Beginning in 2019, all RPEP treatments, which include the administration of human rabies immunoglobulin (HRIG) and/or rabies vaccine, following a potential rabies exposure shall be reported to **within 24 hours** to the LHD where the patient resides.
- Upon receipt of a RPEP report, the LHD shall conduct a rabies risk assessment (if not already completed) to determine if the RPEP was recommended per the [Michigan Rabies Assessment: When a Person Has Been Exposed](#) flowchart.
- LHDs are now required to report RPEP administrations to MDHHS. To report patients receiving RPEP, LHDs will initiate a new or update an existing case report in MDSS using the “**Rabies: Exposure and Post-Exposure Treatment Investigation**” form. The MDSS disease condition is “**Rabies: Potential Exposure and PEP.**” Each individual receiving RPEP should have their own form recorded in MDSS.
- The following are suggestions on how to populate the updated case report form fields for people receiving RPEP:

Case Status: Select “Confirmed” for patients for whom PEP was recommended and/or initiated.

Incident and Circumstances:

Exposure Type: Check all that apply: Bite, Scratch, Bat in Room, or Other

If Bite or Scratch, Was Incident Provoked?: Select One: Yes, No, Unknown, N/A

Disposition of Animal/Quarantine Information:

MDSS Number (if tested): Enter the MDSS number of the “**Animal Rabies**” case associated with the exposure if the animal has been sent for rabies testing.

Status of Animal at End of Quarantine: Select One: Alive/Well, Died/Euthanized, or Unknown/Lost to Follow Up.

Victim Treatment Information:

Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Recommendation:

Select One: Recommended or Not Recommended

PEP Started: Select One: Yes, No, Patient Refused, Lost to Follow Up

Status of PEP: Select One: Series Completed, Series Stopped, Unknown/Lost to Follow Up

Rabies PEP Dose: Record the date, whether or not patient received RPEP dose, and the vaccine product used.

Were There Any Irregularities with the PEP Series?: Select One: Yes, No, N/A

Other Information: No change

- LHDs may export Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis cases out of MDSS by following the instructions provided by the “**Rabies PEP Reporting MDSS Export Guidance**” document.
- **Note:** The disease condition “**Rabies: Potential Exposure and PEP (Pre-2019)**” enables users to search for cases prior to 2019. This condition should not be used to report new cases. All cases entered into MDSS as “**Animal Bite**” cases prior to February 14, 2019 were also automatically incorporated into this disease condition. If jurisdictions prefer that these cases be classified as “**Rabies: Potential Exposure and PEP,**” they may manually transfer case information into the new form. We recommend printing/saving a copy of the original report to prevent data loss.

(3) *Animal Rabies*

- Animal rabies cases include any animal that test positive for rabies in Michigan. This testing is conducted by the MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) and electronic laboratory reporting will generate a case in MDSS under the disease condition “**Rabies Animal.**”
- In most instances, there will be a name associated with the case report, which is typically the exposed person or the owner of an exposed animal and this will be in the “**Patient Name**” field.
- All rabies positive animals in Michigan must have a “**Rabies Animal**” case report completed in MDSS. Do not use the “Reportable Condition” dropdown menu to change the “**Rabies Animal**” form to a “**Rabies: Exposure and Post-Exposure Treatment Investigation**” form as this will prevent the case of animal rabies from being reported to the CDC electronically via MDSS.
- If a LHD wishes to also complete a “**Rabies: Exposure and Post-Exposure Treatment Investigation**” form related to the positive animal, they must create a new case in MDSS.
- The following are suggestions on how to populate the required and other fields for laboratory confirmed cases of animal rabies:

Investigation Information:

Onset Date: date of collection for testing

Diagnosis Date: date of laboratory report

Case Status: Confirmed

Patient Status: Died

Case Disposition: Died

Part of an Outbreak: Unknown (to allow population of “Outbreak Name” field)

Patient Information:

Name, First and Last: Information on exposed person/pet owner

Street Address: Address where positive animal was collected from or exposed person/pet residence.

Demographics: Select “Unknown” for required fields

Referral Information: No change

Epidemiologic Information: Enter any pertinent data including county where exposure to the rabid animal occurred (if different from the exposed person’s address), as well as names, contact information, and exposure details for exposed persons and/or animals.

Other Information: Fill out as usual, except read “Relationship to Patient” as “Relationship to Rabid Animal,” which could include “owner” in the case of a domestic animal or “home owner” or “pet owner” in most cases of wild animal exposure. Use “Comments or Additional Information” as needed to supply other pertinent information not covered by the form.

(4) *Human Rabies*

- Cases of human rabies are extremely rare but **suspect** cases would include any patient with encephalitis of unknown cause for which rabies is a rule-out.
- There is no specific form in MDSS for reporting suspect cases but there are two forms that can be used for this purpose: (1) The “**Encephalitis, Primary**” form and (2) the “**Basic Case Investigation Report**” form.
- The “**Encephalitis, Primary**” form allows for more detailed data entry with regard to clinical information and might be the best choice for suspect cases since alternate diagnoses are usually found.
- If the “**Base Case Investigation Report**” is used, there is a checkbox marked “Rabies, human,” which should **only** be checked when reporting suspect cases of human rabies.
- Exposure to a potentially rabid animal **should not** be entered as a case of human rabies. Instead, these can be entered under “**Rabies: Potential Exposure and PEP**,” which must be completed for any individual receiving RPEP. If the individual does not receive RPEP, then use of this form for potential exposure follow-up is optional for LHDs. Information about potentially exposed individuals can also be entered in the “**Rabies Animal**” form, if the exposing animal tested positive for rabies.

If you have additional questions or concerns about how to enter this data, please call the EZID Section at 517-335-8165.

For up-to-date information about Rabies in Michigan, please visit the Michigan Emerging Diseases website at:
<https://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases>