

SARPY/CASS

Health Department

Position Title:	Disease Surveillance Specialist		
Agency Unit:	Health Prevention		
Reports to:	Assistant Health Director	Supervises:	None
Employment Status:	Full-time 40 hours/week	FLSA Status:	Exempt

Position Summary

The Disease Surveillance Specialist (DSS) conducts surveillance, investigation, prevention, and control activities related to communicable diseases to protect and improve community health. The DSS is responsible for program planning, implementation, and evaluation, and for ensuring compliance with applicable state laws, guidelines, and policies related to communicable disease control.

Essential Duties

Under general supervision, the DSS performs the following essential duties in support of the core functions and essential services of public health:

Case Investigation and Client Services

- Conduct communicable disease case investigations for reported, suspected, and confirmed cases, including sexually transmitted infections and other reportable conditions.
- Interview cases and contacts in person and by telephone to obtain epidemiologic information and assess risk.
- Provide disease-specific education on symptoms, transmission prevention, isolation/exclusion guidance, and treatment.
- Coordinate follow-up care and make referrals to medical providers and community resources as needed.
- Use culturally responsive, trauma-informed approaches when working with diverse populations.

Surveillance, Data Management and Reporting

- Enter, update, and maintain accurate case information in designated electronic disease surveillance systems and medical record systems.
- Complete required local, state, and federal disease reports in a timely and accurate manner.
- Ensure completeness, quality, and confidentiality of surveillance and client records in compliance with state and federal laws governing protected health information.
- Gather, analyze, and maintain surveillance data for program monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and quality improvement.

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Monitoring and Outbreak Response

- Conduct ongoing surveillance activities, including syndromic surveillance and school-based surveillance, to identify trends and potential outbreaks.
- Assist in implementing disease control measures during outbreaks, including contact tracing, exclusion guidance, and community mitigation strategies.
- Participate in public health emergency preparedness and response activities as assigned.

Collaboration and Communication

- Serve as a liaison with schools, healthcare providers, laboratories, and community partners to support disease reporting, surveillance, and prevention efforts.
- Provide public health guidance and risk communication to cases, contacts, providers, and community partners.

Program Evaluation and Improvement

- Evaluate outcomes and effectiveness of surveillance and intervention activities and recommend improvements to processes and protocols.
- Participate in quality improvement initiatives related to surveillance systems and response activities.

Additional Duties

In addition to position-specific responsibilities, the employee is expected to contribute to overall Department operations and organizational effectiveness:

Organizational Engagement and Professional Conduct

- Promote and incorporate the Department's mission, vision, core values, and strategic initiatives into daily work and service delivery.
- Adhere to all HIPAA requirements and Department confidentiality and privacy policies.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with coworkers, stakeholders, governmental officials, and the public; address and resolve conflict in a professional manner.
- Represent the Department on committees, coalitions, community alliances, and other groups as assigned.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Professional Development

- Maintain responsibility for professional growth by pursuing continuing education, attending trainings, courses, seminars, and conferences, and participating in professional committees or work groups, as approved.

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- Contribute to a work environment that promotes continuous improvement in service quality and professional practice.
- Assist in training and orientation of new employees.

Planning, Evaluation and Quality Improvement

- Participate in needs assessments, strategic planning, accreditation activities, program evaluation, and quality improvement initiatives.
- Use data-driven decision-making to inform program priorities, goals, and objectives.

Program and Resource Support

- Develop a working knowledge of Department services and programs and provide appropriate information to the public.
- Search for funding opportunities and assist with grant proposals, work plans, and development of program goals and objectives.

Communication, Documentation and Administrative Support

- Perform computer input and retrieval using a variety of hardware and software systems.
- Prepare and maintain accurate records, reports, correspondence, and other Department documents, including mileage and time records.
- Prepare or submit materials for posting to the Department website and social media platforms, as assigned.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

- Participate in public health emergency preparedness training and respond as directed during public health emergencies.

Qualifications

Required

- Bachelor's degree in public health, biological sciences, natural sciences, epidemiology, community health, nursing, business or public administration, or a related field.
- Completion of the CDC's Basic Principles of Epidemiology course within six (6) months of employment.

Preferred

- Licensed Registered Nurse in the State of Nebraska.
- Directly related work experience in public health, health promotion, and/or communicable disease control.

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- Fluency in both English and Spanish.
- Experience or training utilizing database, statistical, and graphics software.
- Completion of the CDC's Advanced Principles of Epidemiology course within one (1) year of employment.

General

- Completion of mandatory Department trainings within 30 days (NIMS/ICS, HIPAA, health equity, etc.).
- National Incident Management System (NIMS)/ICS 300 and 400 certification, when available.
- Valid driver's license and personal transportation.
- Successful criminal records check and drug screen.
- Non-tobacco user.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively in a team environment and interact with diverse populations.
- Commitment to public health principles, including health equity and community engagement.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

The following knowledge, skills, and abilities are necessary to perform the duties outlined above effectively.

Public Health Knowledge

- Knowledge of core functions and essential services of public health.
- Knowledge of communicable disease transmission, prevention, control, and outbreak response.
- Knowledge of epidemiologic principles and methods for disease surveillance, investigation, and public health interventions.
- Knowledge of disease prevention, health promotion, lifestyle risk reduction education, and public health research methods.
- Knowledge of local geography relevant to service delivery.

Technical and Analytical Skills

- Ability to safely handle hazardous materials and specimens.
- Ability to interpret and apply infection control measures, treatment recommendations, regulations, and public health guidelines.
- Ability to perform accurate calculations, analyze data, and present findings clearly.

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- Ability to organize, prioritize, and manage multiple assignments efficiently.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

- Ability to communicate clearly and professionally, both verbally and in writing, with diverse populations, partners, and coworkers.
- Ability to follow verbal and written instructions and convey complex information effectively.

Professional and Operational Abilities

- Ability to make professional decisions within Department policies, work independently, and
- Ability to adapt to variable schedules, including weekends, emergency call-ins, and shifting priorities.

Work Environment and Physical Requirements

Work Setting

- Primarily performed indoors in office settings, community sites, clients' homes, and workplaces; occasional work outdoors.
- May involve variable days, hours, weekends, holidays, and emergency call-ins.
- Work can be fast-paced with multiple priorities and interactions with irate or uncooperative individuals.
- Travel may expose the incumbent to inclement weather conditions within Sarpy and Cass counties.

Physical Requirements

- Requires extended periods of sitting, standing, walking, kneeling, bending, crouching, reaching, stopping, and climbing.
- Ability to frequently lift and/or carry up to 25 lbs., and occasionally lift and/or carry up to 50 lbs.
- Frequent fine motor activity of fingers, hands, and wrists, along with gross motor movement of elbows and arms, requiring hand-eye coordination and manual dexterity.
- Required sensory abilities include vision, hearing, and touch:
 - Visual abilities (correctable to normal) include close, distance, and color vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus.
 - Hearing and speech within normal ranges for effective communication.

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Exposure and Safety Considerations

- Duties may involve exposure to adverse socio-economic conditions, offensive odors, bloodborne pathogens, other body fluids, and infectious materials.
- Must follow proper procedures and use personal protective equipment to minimize exposure.
- All personnel must be able to wear a NIOSH-approved N95 respirator due to potential public health emergency response requirements.

Limitations and Disclaimer

- This job description is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed. It is not an exhaustive list of all duties, responsibilities, or skills required.
- Employees may be required to perform other job-related duties as requested by the Sarpy/Cass Health Department, in compliance with Federal and State laws.
- The requirements listed represent minimum knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the job successfully. Employees must have the abilities or aptitudes to perform each duty proficiently.
- Employment with the Department is at-will, and continued employment is contingent on satisfactory performance.
- Job descriptions may be modified to reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable laws. Some requirements may exclude individuals who pose a direct threat or significant risk to their own safety or the safety of others.
- The Sarpy/Cass Health Department reserves the right to modify essential and additional duties at any time.

Acknowledgment:

I have read and understand the duties and responsibilities of this position. The duties, responsibilities, and minimum requirements have been reviewed with me, and I have received a copy of this job description.

Employee's Signature

Date

Health Director's Signature

Date