



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
Department of Health  
Office of Policy, Planning and Assessment  
Cordell Hull Building, 4th Floor  
425 Fifth Avenue North  
Nashville, TN 37247

**HEALTH DATA RELEASE POLICY  
RELEASE OF AGGREGATED DATA**

The Tennessee Department of Health has the responsibility to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the citizens while also adequately presenting information and data concerning conditions that affect public health. With regard to these two responsibilities, the following guidelines should be followed when presenting data for public consumption including publications or public web sites:

Rates

- (1) Any rate may be presented if the population at risk is at least 100 persons. If the population is less than 100, the rate may be presented in certain circumstances as noted in the Exceptions section below. If all Exception criteria are not met, the rate will be suppressed (replaced with an asterisk or similar symbol) and a footnote added to the page indicating "rate not calculated due to population less than 100".

Numbers

1. Counts for the state, region and county totals can be shown irrespective of the number of events or population size.
2. Counts for state, region and county totals, by sex, can be shown irrespective of the number of events or population size.
3. Counts for state, region and county totals, by race, can be presented if the number of persons in each race group being presented is at least 50.
4. Counts for state, region and county totals, by race and sex, can be presented if the number of persons in each race-sex category presented is at least 50.
5. Counts for the state, region and county totals, by age group can be presented if the number of persons in each age group presented is at least 50.

Exceptions

1. If the Rates criteria are not satisfied, rates may be presented only if both of the following conditions are met:
  - a) Appropriate confidence intervals are presented with all rates.
  - b) Table cell subtracted from the number of total events in the same data file for the same characteristic is at least 10 ("Numerator and Denominator Rule").
2. If the Numbers criteria are not satisfied, counts may be presented only if the following condition is met:
  - a) Table cell subtracted from the number of total events in the same data file for the same characteristic is at least 10 ("Numerator and Denominator Rule").

It is understood that a program within the Department of Health may adopt more strict (conservative) guidelines for data presentation. In addition, specific situations related to a public health threat could dictate more detailed data presentation, at the direction of the Commissioner of the Department of Health.