

MMWR Weeks

Definition:

The *MMWR* week is the week of the epidemiologic year for which the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS) disease report is assigned by the reporting local or state health department for the purposes of *MMWR* disease incidence reporting and publishing. Values for *MMWR* week range from 1 to 53, although most years consist of 52 weeks.

- *MMWR* week supports reporting of notifiable infectious disease incidence data at the national level. Some states may assign *MMWR* week for data management or reporting purposes more so than for monitoring 'true' disease incidence. Since *MMWR* week may be based on any of several dates relevant to calculating disease incidence and that assignment may vary by state or condition, analyses defining temporal notifiable disease incidence patterns should determine whether analysis by *MMWR* week or another epidemiologically-relevant date type is more appropriate for their needs.

Purpose:

MMWR week is used to support public health reporting in the *MMWR* weekly morbidity tables and the annual *Summary of Notifiable Diseases, United States*. Historically, *MMWR* week has supported aggregated reporting of notifiable disease incidence (e.g., during the transition from hard-copy reporting to NETSS).

Assumptions:

- State health departments assign *MMWR* week based on a hierarchy of dates supported by the NNDSS (below).
- State health departments use the same rules over time to assign *MMWR* week; therefore reporting patterns are assumed to be similar from year-to-year.
- States may choose to assign *MMWR* week differently by notifiable condition (e.g., a state's immunization program may assign *MMWR* week using different 'rules' compared to the state's STD or TB program).

Background:

Traditionally, state health departments collect a number of types of dates that are relevant to the incident case and its management. For NNDSS reporting, these dates have been assigned to a hierarchy as follows:

- Date of disease onset
- Date of diagnosis
- Date of laboratory result
- Date of first report to public (community) health system
- State or *MMWR* report date

The NNDSS NETSS message structure supports the reporting of only one of the above dates [EVENTDATE] and date type [DATETYPE] as specified in a separate data element.

The NEDSS message structure supports the reporting of each of the following dates:

- Date of illness onset. Reported date of the onset of symptoms of the condition being reported to the public health system
- Date of diagnosis of condition being reported to public health system.
- Date of specimen collection. Date specimen was collected for testing to define clinical presentation or to diagnose illness being reported to public health system

- Date laboratory result
- Date of first report to public health system (earliest of date of report to local/district/regional/state public health system)
- Date of first report to CDC (from local/state public health system or other surveillance partner)

Business rules for assigning MMWR week:

The first day of any *MMWR* week is Sunday. *MMWR* week numbering is sequential beginning with 1 and incrementing with each week to a maximum of 52 or 53. *MMWR* week #1 of an *MMWR* year is the first week of the year that has at least four days in the calendar year. For example, if January 1 occurs on a Sunday, Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, the calendar week that includes January 1 would be *MMWR* week #1. If January 1 occurs on a Thursday, Friday, or Saturday, the calendar week that includes January 1 would be the last *MMWR* week of the previous year (#52 or #53). Because of this rule, December 29, 30, and 31 could potentially fall into *MMWR* week #1 of the following *MMWR* year.

State health departments may choose to assign *MMWR* week based on any of the dates listed above. Since *MMWR* week may change or need to be reassigned based on changing information, surveillance information systems should allow the person entering the data to reassign *MMWR* week.

If a number of case reports have not been entered into the surveillance information system for several months, the local or state health department should assign *MMWR* weeks corresponding to the appropriate date of onset or week when the local or state health department would have reported the case information (according to the local or state rules for assigning *MMWR* week). Assigning *MMWR* week appropriately reduces the likelihood of sporadic changes in disease occurrence resulting from batched reporting.