

8. Data release and suppression

Generally, data that does not contain the 18 person-level identifiers (see [Safe Harbor method](#)) and with suppression rules in effect are able to be released. The following suppression rules should be used to guide release of data.

The data release policy aligns with South Dakota Codified Law 34-22-12.1. The release of any data must be approved by an Overall Responsible Party, their designee, and/or State Epidemiologist.

a. Population data

1. Counts

- State Level
 - The numerator for an event, health behavior, or disease occurrence is not restricted from release at the state level.
 - Present small counts (e.g., 1, 2, 3, or 4).
- County Level
 - Suppress counts between 1 to 4 observations and note as “<5”.
 - No restriction for displaying a count of zero.
 - If data are provided in tabular form, it may be necessary to suppress another cell (or cells) to prevent calculation of the field (i.e., subtraction of remaining values from the total). In such a case, the next smallest value should also be suppressed.
- Other geographic scale less than state (region, district, census tract, etc.)
 - If the grouping has 10,000 or more population
 - Suppress counts between 1 to 4 observations and note as “<5”.
 - No restriction for displaying a count of zero.
 - If data are provided in tabular form, it may be necessary to suppress another cell or (cells) to prevent calculation of the field (i.e., subtraction of remaining values from the total). In such a case, the next smallest value should also be suppressed.
 - If the grouping has <10,000 population
 - Do not release due to concerns for confidentiality.
- Suppression rules may be superseded by the State Epidemiologist if, in consultation, s/he believes unsuppressed release of the data are warranted.

2. Rates

- If the numerator for the rate has less than 20 observations, program should present the rate and include the cautionary note, “Unstable rate due to <20 observations. Data should be interpreted with caution.”
- If the numerator for the rate has >20 observations, rate can be presented with no restrictions.

b. Survey data

1. Numerator

- There is no restriction for displaying estimates based on small counts at the state level.
- If creating estimates at any geographic scale less than state (county, region, district, census tract/block, etc.), please consult the State Epidemiologist due to concerns for data confidentiality.

2. Denominator

- If sample size has 50 or more records, and
 - If the relative standard error <30%, present the estimate with no restriction.
 - If the relative standard error is 30% or more, estimate may be presented with the following cautionary note, “Too few cases to meet precision standard, interpret finding with caution.”
- If sample size has fewer than 30 records
 - Do not present the estimate.
- If sample size has between 30 and 50 records
 - Please consult the State Epidemiologist due to concerns for data confidentiality.