

CSTE Position Statement Overview

So You Want to Develop a Position Statement...



POSITION STATEMENTS

- Founded in 1951 as the “Conference” of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
 - May 1951: first convening of State Epis to “consider nationwide problems of morbidly reporting,” organized by ASTHO at request of CDC
- Original function: to decide which diseases and conditions should be nationally notifiable
 - Continues today through annual position statement process
 - Function has expanded to include standardization of case definitions
 - Position Statement Archive: <https://www.cste.org/page/PositionStatements>
 - Goes back to 1980s

- Annual, consensus-based process with strict templates and timeline
- Member-driven, in close partnership with CDC
 - Public health importance and action
 - Topics may be identified by CDC but must have CSTE member champion
 - Engages broad CSTE membership, Executive Board, and Council
 - CSTE membership:
 - Active Members (Voting Members): Employed at STLT public health agencies
 - Associate Members: Federal employees, academic or association partners, etc.
 - Student Members: Students (ideally without full-time employment at STLT public health)
- Two types: policy or **standardized surveillance position statements**

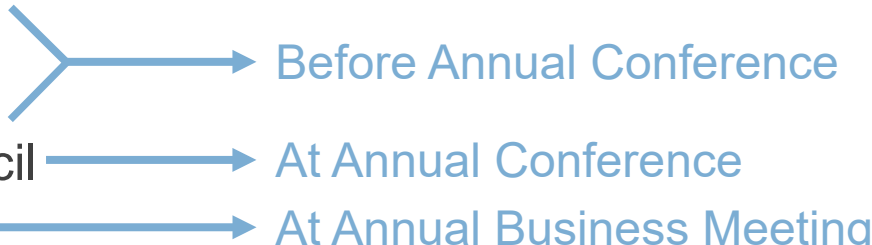
- CSTE standardized surveillance position statements:
 - May be developed for infectious OR non-infectious diseases or conditions
 - Explain goals of public health surveillance and surveillance data sources
 - Define what patient information should be reported to public health by data reporters on potential cases
 - E.g., clinical, laboratory, vital records, other administrative data
 - Define or classify cases using information gathered by public health
 - E.g., Confirmed, Probable, Suspect
 - Guides governmental public health on which cases should be released in case counts
 - May recommend national notification of certain cases to CDC
 - Are intended solely for public health surveillance purposes
 - Are NOT intended to be used for clinical diagnosis purposes

Annual Process Steps

Development: fall/winter preceding submission, includes vetting

Submission: spring of each year, 13 weeks prior* to Annual Business Meeting

Approval:

- First level: Executive Board accepts into the process
 - Vetting takes place with all membership for consensus building
 - Second level: Active membership approves to present to Council
 - Third level: Council approves to become CSTE policy
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- Before Annual Conference
- At Annual Conference
- At Annual Business Meeting

Finalization:

- Final technical reviews by National Office and SMEs (post submission, post approval)
- Approved statements posted on CSTE website and communicated to Agencies for Response and Information and CDC CSELS no later than 8 weeks after Annual Business Meeting

Implementation**

- Case definitions go into effect January 1 of the following year, but states may choose to implement new case definitions sooner

**Urgent topics may be submitted as interim position statements year-round.*

***For ordinary process position statements.*

2023 Timeline

- **Dec 2022:** 2023 Position Statement Templates Released
- **Mar 30, 2023:** **Submissions DUE**
- **Apr 1-13, 2023:** Technical review of submissions
- **Apr 13, 2023:** Submissions sent to Executive Board for acceptance
- **Apr 13-27, 2023:** Executive Board member review of submissions
- **Apr 27, 2023:** Executive Board decisions due, feedback shared with submitting author
- **May 11, 2023:** **Revised submissions DUE**
- **May 18, 2023:** Accepted (aka “proposed”) submissions posted to website – Members Only
- **May 18-Jun 22, 2023:** Formal membership vetting, including discussion webinars
- **Jun 22, 2023:** **Final revisions before conference DUE**
- **Jun 25-29, 2023:** CSTE Annual Conference and Annual Business Meeting
 - **Jun 26-28:** Position Statement Roundtable Discussions
 - **Jun 27-28:** Position Statement Committee Voting Sessions
 - **Jun 29:** Business Meeting

- Authorship

- All authors must be CSTE members (dues valid through next Annual Business Meeting)
 - Submitting and Presenting Author(s): Active Members ONLY; ideally same person for both roles
 - Co-Authors: Active (includes AEF), Associate, Emeritus, or Student Members
- All authors should follow own agency's policies for authorship or clearance
- Co-authors should actively contribute to writing group conversations, writing content, and/or editing content
- If being developed within a workgroup, workgroup members do not need to be CSTE members.
- Just remember: CSTE position statements should represent CSTE member views!

- Subject Matter Expert Consultants
 - SMEs do NOT have to be CSTE members
 - Allowed access to any member-only discussions before and during Annual Conference and Annual Business Meeting
 - SMEs advise authors on content development or may draft content
 - Primary SME should be CDC main point of contact for the disease/condition
 - To ensure appropriate CDC program(s) involved in content development
 - Must be engaged throughout development
 - Additional SMEs may be CDC, APHL, etc.
 - National Office can help identify SMEs at CDC or APHL

- Partners to Engage
 - Early APHL representation is critical for case definitions with laboratory criteria for reporting or case classification
 - National Office shares template requests and submissions with CDC NNDSS and APHL
 - Agencies for Response vs. Information
 - If authors want an agency to respond formally, especially if an action to be taken is directed toward that agency, include as Agency for Response
 - CDC is always included as an Agency for Response for standardized surveillance position statements
 - If authors want an agency to be aware only, include as Agency for Information
 - Any Agency for Response should be engaged during development process and should be informed of submission prior to approval

Before Submission

- Request template
- Participate in position statement orientation
- Lead discussions and writing of position statement
- Ensure all parts are complete (inc. Tech. Supplement, NNC Rec. Statement if applicable)
- Present draft to CSTE Committee(s) and stakeholders
- Vet position statement with SMEs and partners
- Confirm ability to participate in entirety of Annual Conference

After Submission, before Annual Conference

- Address/incorporate feedback received from Executive Board, National Office, general membership, partners etc. in collaboration with co-authors and SMEs
- Present position statement on formal discussion webinar(s), State Epi forums (as invited)
- Register to attend Annual Conference, ensure travel arrangements don't conflict with Business Meeting

During Annual Conference

- Edit position statement in on-site Position Statement Office based on feedback received
- Present position statement in position statement discussion roundtable
- Present and live edit position statement during Committee Voting Session(s) (and vote!)
- Present position statement during Annual Business Meeting

After Approval

- Approve final technical review
- Answer questions received; coordinate with co-authors and SMEs, as necessary
- Follow-up on agency responses, as needed
- Participate in annual process evaluation
- Provide update(s) to National Office on implementation (TBD)

Co-Author Responsibilities

Before Submission

- Participate in discussions and writing of position statement
- Confirm membership status
- Join presentations for support, as able

After Submission, before Annual Conference

- Continue to participate in discussions and revisions to position statement based on feedback received
- Join presentations for support, as able and invited
- Register to attend Annual Conference, as able
- Encourage own State Epi to review

During Annual Conference

- Continue to participate in discussions and editing, as able
- Attend roundtable and Committee Voting Session(s) for support, as able
 - All ACTIVE members may vote in Committee Voting Sessions!
- Attend Annual Business Meeting for support, as able

After Approval

- Direct questions received to submitting author

Before Submission

- Participate in discussions and review/editing of position statement
- Vet position statement with agency leadership
- Join presentations for support, as able

After Submission, before Annual Conference

- Continue to participate in discussions and revisions to position statement based on feedback received
- Continue to vet position statement with agency leadership
- Join presentations for support, as able and invited
 - Primary SME should delegate if unable to attend
- Register to attend Annual Conference, as able
 - Primary SME should delegate if unable to attend

During Annual Conference

- Continue to participate in discussions and editing
- Attend roundtable and Committee Voting Session(s) for support
- Attend Annual Business Meeting for support

After Approval

- May provide response to agency concurrence letter
- May review NNDSS case definition (led by CDC NNDSS team)
- Direct questions received to submitting author or coordinate responses to questions

- Development (and vetting) is iterative process: revise, rinse, repeat!
 - It can be helpful to report out to and solicit feedback from many different CSTE groups and partners
 - For standardized surveillance, state examples of case definitions can provide a great springboard for discussion
- Document discussions that lead to important decisions:
 - Conversations can often become circular
 - Workgroup call notes or, at a minimum, a few notes on decision logic can prevent déjà vu
- Don't wait until the end to complete the Technical Supplement
 - Technical supplement tables = machine-processable representation with logic statements
 - Critical to ensure narrative and tables match (and make sense)
- Don't forget to rely on each other
- Don't wait to ask for help
 - positionstatements@cste.org (CC mlichtenstein@cste.org)





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