

## Suggestions for an effective data services request

Have a data request? Working with PHMDC staff and want to conducting a survey or focus group? Other data-related needs? We can help. Filling out the [online request form](#) with the information below will make the process smoother. Our goal is to contact you about your request within 3 business days.

Below are the questions in the online request form. Please complete as much as possible in your data request. If you have any questions feel free to contact an Epidemiologist ([epi@publichealthmdc.com](mailto:epi@publichealthmdc.com)).

We encourage you to think through your entire request and ask for all aspects of what you expect to need -- it is faster and easier for us to do multiple analyses at one time rather than in batches, which means you get your information sooner. We do understand that sometimes the first batch of results leads to more questions, but sometimes a thoughtful process in advance can be more efficient!

1. **Contact info\*** (name, email, and phone)
2. **Date needed\***  
*When do you need this by? We often have competing urgent requests so prioritizing may be necessary.*
3. **Purpose of the request:\*** *Briefly describe your program, grant, paper, or project. Context helps us understand your request, and we may know of other relevant data to help.*  
Examples: program planning, evaluation, grant, research paper
4. **What question(s) do you need answered?\***
5. **How will you use this information? Will data be published or reproduced?**  
Examples: Internal publication or report, PHMDC website, communication with external partners
6. **Is this request related to a past request, and/or do you have a table or chart you want updated? Whom did you work with in the past?**  
*It helps us to see past correspondence and copies of the tables or charts you want us to update. This will help us connect you directly with the person and minimize processing time. Send related files or links to related files to [epi@publichealthmdc.com](mailto:epi@publichealthmdc.com).*
7. **Specific data needed or desired, even if you think it may not be available** *We can help identify available data.*  
Examples: Details on particular cause(s) of death, difference between current asthma vs. ever told to have asthma.
8. **Is this new data collection (primary data/survey) or from an existing database? If from an existing database, see #9.**

**9. Specific data source, if known**

- Vital Statistics (Examples: birth, death, hospitalizations)
- Survey data (Examples: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, WI YRBS, Dane County Youth Assessment Survey)
- Census Bureau data (2010 Census, American Community Survey, other demographic data)
- WEDSS (STI, TB, ACD, Refugee), WIR (Immunization), SPHERE (MCH), ROSIE(WIC clients)
- Other

**10. What time period(s) of data do you need?** *We can clarify for you what is the most recent year of data available.* Examples: specific years, by month, by quarter

**11. Geographic area:** Examples: State, Dane County (DC), Madison city, health planning area, zip, census tract, block group

**12. Demographic characteristics**

Examples: Age groups which age groupings, race/ethnicity, gender

**13. Who is your audience?** *We can assist if the information will be relevant and meaningful for the audience group*

**14. Format preferred:** Examples: Excel table, chart, map, narrative

**Interpretation of data:** *We can assist with the interpretation of data if it involves complex analyses and/or other statistical details such as Margins of Errors, Confidence Intervals, reliability and validity of survey results, generalizability of results to a larger population to make valid conclusions, etc.*