



nyc.gov/health



## What is ECLRS?

Electronic Clinical Laboratory Reporting System (ECLRS) is a web-based reporting system developed by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). The system provides laboratories with a uniform interface for reporting Communicable Diseases, Tuberculosis (TB), Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD), HIV, Lead, and Cancer. ECLRS enables participating laboratories to use recognized standards to report positive test results over secure channels to the NYSDOH and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH).

ECLRS is available for receiving reports 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Reports of positive test results associated with a reportable condition will be delivered to the NYCDOHMH in real time thereby enhancing the surveillance and intervention capabilities of the Health

Department. Data confidentiality is ensured by the use of 128-bit encryption technology for data storage and transmission. Data received through ECLRS is channeled to specific program areas at the NYCDOHMH with strict limitations on access to authorized personnel. In addition, ECLRS ensures that HIV, Lead, and Cancer test results are sent directly to the NYSDOH, while Communicable Diseases, STDs, and TB are processed only at the local level by the NYCDOHMH.

ECLRS is being implemented at every lab licensed to serve New York residents. In general, the process of enrollment and system implementation could take anywhere from four to six months depending on the laboratory's information systems capabilities and level of prioritization.

## Why is participation in ECLRS beneficial?

- **ECLRS enhances NYC's Surveillance Infrastructure and Bioterrorism Preparedness.** ECLRS reduces response times, improves the completeness and accuracy of reports, increases the understanding of the epidemiology of communicable diseases and provides greater coordination between laboratories and public health agencies. ECLRS thereby improves New York City's public health response to infectious disease outbreaks and provides a great public health benefit.
- **ECLRS reduces the effort, cost, and time needed to transmit laboratory test results.** Laboratories participating in ECLRS, when certified, will no longer have to submit paper copies of results. Instead, laboratories can electronically transmit all infectious disease results to a single centralized database.
- **ECLRS provides an integrated system for Mandatory Reportable Conditions.** In order to maintain a complete, accurate and timely database of cancer cases in New York State, Public Health Law Section 2401 requires that all laboratories report cancer results electronically to the New York State Cancer Registry (NYSCR). ECLRS enables the electronic transmittal of cancer reports from laboratories to the NYSCR, while simplifying reporting of all other positive results by minimizing the number of information systems that needs to be maintained and used.
- **ECLRS is NEDSS compliant.** ECLRS is 100% compliant with the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NEDSS) architecture. Thus, adopting ECLRS will enable your institution to standardize its reporting methodologies and to interface with other NEDSS compliant programs currently and in the future.

# Electronic Clinical Laboratory Reporting System

You are applying for access to the ECLRS System.  
Select the option below that describes the type of access you are requesting:

- Laboratory
- Laboratory Implementation Specialist
- Local Health Unit Staff
- Regional Health Unit Staff
- State DOH Staff

**Submit Request**

[Back](#) [HPN Home](#)

## What are the necessary steps?

### 1 Completion of HPN and ECLRS Access Forms

The first step in the adoption of ECLRS is to gain access to the New York State Health Provider Network (HPN) and the ECLRS network—both required for the transmission of data files. To gain access to the HPN for your facility, you must complete the *HPN Participant Organization Security and Use Policy Form*. If personnel in your facility are already HPN Coordinators and Administrators, then this document is not required.

The *HPN Individual User Account Request Form* must be completed for each individual user who will log onto the Health Provider Network to enter or upload data. Please note that if a physician is applying for access, the *HPN Access Form for Physicians* must be substituted for the *Individual User Account Request Form*. Individuals who are granted access to the HPN will be assigned a unique user ID and password.

The *ECLRS Access Form* must also be completed for each individual requesting access to the ECLRS system. Each facility should establish at least two users with ECLRS access and training for back up purposes.

Please note that each of these forms has detailed instructions. However, if your organization has any questions regarding the completion of the forms please call the NYSDOH ECLRS Help Desk Toll Free at 1-866-ECLRSHD (1-866-325-7743) or the NYCDOHMH ECLRS Coordinator at 212-442-3380.

All forms must be mailed to New York State for processing. Before mailing the forms, please fax them to the ECLRS Help Desk at (518) 474-4880. The ECLRS Help Desk will check the forms for completeness and will call your organization directly to confirm the completion of the forms. Once the State confirms completion, the originals should be mailed to:

**NYSDOH  
ECLRS Help Desk  
ESP, Corning Tower Building Room 1143  
Albany, NY 12237**

The NYSDOH and the NYCDOHMH will work with your facility to expedite the processing of the HPN applications and ECLRS access forms.

## 2 Selection of Format

In order to participate in ECLRS, a laboratory must encode and transmit laboratory test results in a standardized format. The data submission options are as follows:

- Upload test results as a file in either HL7 or ASCII format
- Manual entry of test results via an online HTML web page

Test volume and availability of technical resources will be the most important factors in choosing the reporting method. The resources required to report positive conditions in a timely and effective manner can be significantly reduced if data can be extracted from existing systems into a file. A combination of file and web reporting may also be used.

## 3 Adoption of a Coding Scheme and Creation of an Interface

For laboratories using either an HL7 file or one ASCII file for all diseases, a coding scheme that standardizes laboratory terminology must be adopted for data transmission. ECLRS uses the nationally accepted LOINC (Logical Identifier Names and Codes) and SNOMED (Systemized Nomenclature Of Human and Veterinarian Medicine) coding schemes to standardize test names and results. For example, organisms are not always named or spelled the same at different institutions and this ambiguity disrupts an electronic surveillance system. Laboratories using LOINC and SNOMED coding schemes will be able to submit test results in a single file.

## 4 Pre-Certification Phase (Creation and Sending of Test Files or Practice of Web Entry)

The pre-certification phase starts once the interface is developed and the coding is complete. During this phase, the laboratory aims to verify, successfully generate, and transmit laboratory test result data in a format consistent with established ECLRS specifications. It involves a coordinated effort of verification and preparation, cumulating in the transfer of test files to the ECLRS test system. During the pre-certification

phase, the NYCDOHMH and NYSDOH work closely with the laboratory to determine the factors that will result in optimal data submission. Since each laboratory has a unique set of circumstances, reporting frequencies and reporting capabilities, a unique, customized criterion for transmitting data is established during this phase. Reporting frequencies and methods are also established.

The laboratory should call the ECLRS Coordinator once it is ready to send the initial test files. If the files are not properly formatted, they are rejected and the NYSDOH is automatically notified. NYSDOH will work with the laboratory to make the necessary changes. If the files are uploaded successfully, the ECLRS Coordinator will assess the completeness of the data in the files. Once deemed complete, the facility will be moved from the test environment to production, where they will begin uploading their files to a different web site that will deliver the data to the specific program areas.

## 5 The Certification Process

Once complete test files or web entries have been successfully received electronically by the NYCDOHMH, the certification process will begin. During this phase, the laboratory undergoes a period of parallel reporting to verify that the data submitted matches or exceeds the current paper reporting in quality and quantity.

When City and State personnel determine that a laboratory has met expected certification criteria, Final Certification will be approved. Laboratories that successfully complete this process have approval to transmit all reportable laboratory results directly to ECLRS and they are no longer required to submit paper reports to the NYSDOH and NYCDOHMH.

Please note that the status of certification may vary by disease. A laboratory, especially those using LOINC/SNOMED coding and file upload systems, may choose to be certified disease by disease, and therefore, the length of certification may fluctuate by disease. Once the certification process has been initiated for a particular disease, the laboratory will be notified via email by the ECLRS Coordinator.

# What resources will your organization need to join ECLRS?

---

## ECLRS Hardware Requirements

To transmit information to the ECLRS system, your laboratory must have a personal computer that is minimally configured as follows:

- Pentium processor
- 28.8 Kbps modem (recommended minimum) or higher
- 32 MB RAM minimum, 64 MB RAM recommended
- Printer (recommended)

## ECLRS Software Requirements

No computer software to perform the transfer of electronic data is provided by the NYCDOHMH. The following is a list of the software requirements for accessing ECLRS from a personal computer:

- Windows 9x, NT or 2000
- Internet access
- Netscape Communicator 4.7 or higher or Internet Explorer 5.0 or higher with 128-bit encryption and browser options enabled.
- The latest Netscape Browser software is available free to download from the following web site: <http://home.netscape.com/computing/download/>.

- The latest Internet Explorer browser software is available free to download from the following web site: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/IE/>.
- For both browsers, ECLRS requires Java and JavaScript support, the use of cookies, Secure Socket Layer (SSL) version 3.0 with 128-bit encryption, and image display.
- Your laboratory is responsible for obtaining Internet access with an Internet Service Provider (ISP) and for installing a browser capable of supporting 128-bit encryption (USA grade) as identified above.
- Active Login ID for the NYS Health Information Network (HIN) or NYS Health Providers Network (HPN)

## Personnel

For facilities that choose the file upload method, laboratory personnel will need to go through local codes associated with reportable diseases and link them to LOINC/SNOMED codes. Laboratory Information Systems (LIS) personnel or a software vendor is needed to create an interface that is able to interface medical record information (e.g., patient demographic information, provider name and location) with the laboratory data generated for a specific test result and deliver this information to the ECLRS system in an approved format.

# What assistance is available?

---

## NYCDOHMH ECLRS Coordinator and Technical Director

The NYCDOHMH ECLRS Coordinator and Technical Director are accessible on a full-time basis to assist facilities with ECLRS implementation. Both members of the ECLRS team are available to make on-site visits to provide hands-on programmatic and technical assistance. They can be reached at (212) 442-3537 or (212) 442-3380.

Examples of potential areas for assistance include:

- Expediting HPN access requests to the NYSDOH
- Determining the most suitable reporting method of data transmission
- Discussing the use and applicability of LOINC and SNOMED codes
- Assisting in the creation of uploadable files
- Ensuring prompt and timely feedback from NYCDOHMH and NYSDOH programs

## NYSDOH Help Desk

For additional assistance with ECLRS, the NYSDOH ECLRS Help Desk is available Monday through Friday from 8am-4pm. The Help Desk's Contact Information is as follows:

Telephone: (866) ECLRSHD (866-325-7743)  
Fax: (518) 474-4880  
E-mail: [ECLRS@health.state.ny.us](mailto:ECLRS@health.state.ny.us)

Assistance from the NYSDOH in expediting HPN access requests is available by calling (518) 473-1809 or e-mailing [hinweb@health.state.ny.us](mailto:hinweb@health.state.ny.us).

In addition to providing assistance, the NYCDOHMH actively seeks feedback from ECLRS participants to continually improve and simplify the overall process.