**How to Keep Yourself and Your Students Safe from Measles and What to Expect if a Person with Measles Attends School**

Dear School Staff Member:

There is a measles outbreak in Oregon with 30 confirmed cases reported in Marion, Clackamas, and Multnomah Counties as of 08/25/2024. We understand you may have questions about what can be done to keep students, yourself, and your family safe, and what your school will do if a case of measles is confirmed at your school. It’s a good idea to review your school’s communicable disease management plan now and ask your school administrator questions to help be prepared.

Here are some important points to keep in mind:

* Now is a great time to **review your vaccine records** and **make sure you and everyone in your household are up to date with all recommended vaccines.** This can be done by reviewing paper records you have at home, calling your primary care provider’s office or requesting your vaccine record from the Oregon Immunization Program (<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PREVENTIONWELLNESS/VACCINESIMMUNIZATION/GETTINGIMMUNIZED/Pages/ImmRecords.aspx>).
* Measles is a highly contagious, serious disease. **If a case is confirmed in your school, local public health workers will review all staff and student vaccination records to determine the risk of further spread**. Getting your documentation of vaccination or immunity (see “About measles” below for more details) together now helps to ensure a quick review and less stress for everyone.
* **Keeping schools open is a priority****. In the event of an exposure to measles:** 
  + Local Public Health Authority (LPHA) staff will determine if the person exposed is susceptible to measles.
  + If they are determined to be susceptible, the LPHA staff will work with the **school administrators** to determine if the person needs to be temporarily excluded from school for 21 days or longer to prevent further spread and to ensure their own safety ([[**OAR 333-019-0010**](https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/viewSingleRule.action?ruleVrsnRsn=306682)](https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/viewSingleRule.action?ruleVrsnRsn=306682)).
  + This exclusion period aligns with **state and national health guidelines** and is taken with the **well-being of all students, staff and the school community** in mind.
  + The exclusion period may be extended if there are more measles cases (and thus more exposures).
* Students and staff excluded from school after measles exposure should stay home to avoid exposing others in the community.

There is more information about measles and measles immunity on the back side of this letter.

If you have questions, please contact [insert LPHA contact]. If you have questions or concerns about your health, please contact your doctor.

Thank you for your partnership in keeping our community healthy.

Sincerely,

**About measles:**

* Measles is a very contagious viral disease that can spread through the air when someone sick with measles coughs or sneezes. It can also be spread by direct contact with nose discharge and spit of someone sick with measles.
* The symptoms of measles start with a fever, cough, runny nose and red eyes followed by a red rash that usually begins on the head or face and spreads to the rest of the body.
* People are contagious with measles for four days before the rash appears and up to four days after the rash appears.
* After a person who is not immune is exposed to measles, symptoms usually develop in one to two weeks, but it can take up to three weeks.
* Complications of measles include ear infection, lung infection and, in rare cases, inflammation of the brain. About one in 1,000 children dies of measles.
* Anyone who is not immune to measles and believes they have measles symptoms should **contact their health care provider or urgent care** **by telephone** **before going into the clinic** to avoid exposing others to the virus.
* You are considered immune to measles if any of the following are true:
  + You are an adult who is not a healthcare worker and who has had one dose of measles vaccine
  + You were born before 1957
  + You have had measles, diagnosed by a health care provider and confirmed with a lab test
  + You have had a blood test that shows you are immune to measles
  + You are a pre-school age child with one measles vaccine (MMR – measles, mumps, rubella)
  + You are a school-aged child or college student who has received two doses of measles vaccine
  + You are a healthcare worker who has had two doses of measles vaccine

If you think you might have measles, call your primary care provider or local public health department ([www.healthoregon.org/lhddirectory](http://www.healthoregon.org/lhddirectory)). You can also call 211 for questions about measles or vaccines.

* Up-to-date information on the current outbreak and public exposures can be found on the OHA website: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/diseasesconditions/diseasesaz/pages/measles.aspx>