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**NOTICE: This health alert provides written guidance for health care professionals and others who may need to take action to prevent or control a notifiable condition. It is not intended to provide guidance for the general public.*

Guidance for Potential Measles Exposures in Schools and Child Cares

Actions Requested:

- Measles is an immediately notifiable condition. Report all confirmed and probable cases of measles to Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Department at 360-867-2610 Monday through Friday 8am-5pm and 1-800-986-9050 after hours.
- Identify students and staff who are susceptible to measles, these include:
 - Preschool children who have not received one dose of measles vaccine.
 - K-12 students who do not have documentation of 2 doses of measles vaccine or documentation of immunity.
 - Adults born during or after 1957 who do not have documentation of 1 dose of measles vaccine or documentation of immunity.
 - Staff born before 1957 are not considered susceptible.
- Be aware that if a single student or a staff member in your school develops confirmed measles, the following infection control measures to protect the public's health will be necessary:
 - Exclusion of confirmed measles cases from school until four full days have passed since the appearance of the rash.
 - Exclusion of students and staff without documentation of measles immunization or immunity for **21 days after the last exposure**, even if they receive vaccine doses or immunoglobulin after exposure. See the attached schools' susceptibility worksheet.
 - Daily active surveillance of all school or childcare contacts to assess for prodromal signs and symptoms of rash illnesses compatible with measles for 21 days from the last possible exposure in the school.
 - Contact tracing for those who were exposed. Utilize the attached contact tracing form for school and childcare contacts, complete with as much information you have available, and submit it to Thurston County Public Health and Social Services.
- Inform students, their parents, and staff that they will be excluded from school and public places for **an extended period** if they are not protected against or immune to measles should there be a single case in an individual attending their school.

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Background:

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory viral disease that spreads easily when the infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. Persons who are exposed to the virus and have not been immunized against measles are at high risk of getting sick, with symptoms starting 7 – 21 days after they are exposed. Symptoms include high fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes, and a rash that starts at the head and spreads to the rest of the body. Measles is especially serious for children under 12 months of age, pregnant women, and immune-compromised persons. The time from exposure to onset of fever ranges from 7–18 days (average 10 days), with the rash onset usually occurring within 2–4 days after the first symptoms appear and up to 21 days after the exposure. Temperatures may exceed 40°C (104°F) and usually fall 2–3 days after rash onset.

The contagious period for measles is from 4 days prior to rash through 4 days after rash onset. Immunocompromised individuals may be infectious for the entire duration of illness. People at highest risk from exposure to measles include those who are unvaccinated, pregnant women, infants under six months of age and those with weakened immune systems.

Vaccinations:

Immunization is the best protection against measles. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one dose of the measles vaccine is about 93% effective at preventing measles and two doses are about 97% effective.

A person is considered immune to measles if any of the following apply:

- They were born before 1957
- They have had a blood test result that shows immunity to measles
- They have previously had measles diagnosed by a healthcare provider
- They are up to date on measles vaccines (one dose for children ages 12 months through three years old, two doses in anyone four years and older).

Children: CDC recommends all children get two doses of MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) vaccine, starting with the first dose at 12 through 15 months of age, and the second dose at 4 through 6 years of age. Children can receive the second dose earlier as long as it is at least 28 days after the first dose.

Catchup tool for parents: [Catch-up Immunization Schedule for Children, Birth-18 Years | CDC](#)

Adults: CDC recommends that adults who do not have presumptive evidence of immunity should get at least one dose of MMR vaccine.

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Certain adults may need 2 doses. Adults who are going to be in a setting that poses a high risk for measles or mumps transmission should make sure they have had two doses separated by at least 28 days. These adults include:

- students at post-high school education institutions
- healthcare personnel
- international travelers

Suspect Case Procedure:

If a student or staff member is suspected to have measles you should:

- Promptly isolate them away from other people and provide them with a mask. Anyone with suspected measles should wear a mask covering the nose and mouth. Ensure that people providing care to the person suspected to have measles have documented immunity to measles.
- Contact the parents to discuss isolation and collect as much of the following information as possible:
 - Child's name and date of birth
 - Parent contact information
 - Where and when will the children be tested for measles
 - If there has been any international travel recently or any known exposure to measles
 - Confirm vaccination status
 - Confirm dates of school attendance for 5 days before rash onset and 4 days after

Call Thurston County Public Health & Social Services as soon as possible to coordinate hospital precautions and laboratory sample coordination.

Resources:

- Measles Resources (WA DOH): <https://doh.wa.gov/public-healthhealthcare-providers/notifiable-conditions/measles>
- Spokane Regional Health District Press Release: <https://srhd.org/news/2024/measles-case-identified-in-spokane-county>
- Measles (Rubeola) For Health Care Providers (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp/index.html>
- Recommendations During Outbreaks of Measles (WA DOH): <https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/Documents/Pubs/348-479-MeaslesReferenceforProviders.pdf?uid=646ccb324f9ef>
- Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr6204a1.htm>

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE UPDATE

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION SECTION
THURSTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
412 LILLY RD NE
OLYMPIA, WA, 98506-5132
DISEASE REPORTING: (360)786-5470
WWW.THURSTONCOUNTYWA.GOV/PHSS



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THANK YOU FOR REPORTING

TO REPORT A NOTIFIABLE CONDITION IN THURSTON COUNTY	
Voice mail for reporting non-immediately reportable conditions (24 hours a day): Reporting a Notifiable Condition (thurstoncountywa.gov)	Phone: 360-786-5470 Fax: 360-867-2601
Day time immediately reportable conditions – Calls are answered during business hours Monday-Friday 8am-5pm (excluding holidays) and routed to the appropriate communicable disease team member.	Phone: 360-867-2610 Secure eFax: 1-833-418-1916
After hours immediately and 24-hour reportable conditions or a public health emergency	Call 1-800-986-9050
No one is available with Thurston County Public Health and condition is immediately notifiable or a public health emergency	Call 1-877-539-4344

Communicable Disease Updates are posted online at: [Communicable Disease Updates \(thurstoncountywa.gov\)](#)