

February 12, 2019

Dear Partner in Health:

As you may have heard, multiple measles outbreaks are occurring throughout the U.S., leading to a declaration of emergency in Washington state. While there have been no confirmed measles cases in Maricopa County to date, we want you to remind you of the public health requirements and response should measles be identified in our county.

The MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine is required for children to attend school. By Arizona Law, a valid exemption form must be on file for any student who is attending school and not up to date on immunizations.

**If we do get a case of measles in a school, Maricopa County Public Health will be excluding all children who are not fully vaccinated for a minimum of 21 days to stop the spread.** Public health will notify schools as these children are identified to assure exclusion. Staff members who cannot document immunity to measles\* will also be excluded from the school setting if there is a case of measles.

Students who have not received the recommended doses are advised to see their health care provider as soon as possible to arrange for immunizations. If they do not have a health care provider, parents can locate an immunization clinic at <https://www.whylimmunize.org/where-to-go-for-your-shots/> or contact Maricopa County Public Health at 602-506-6767.

On behalf of Maricopa County Department of Public Health, we thank you for helping to keep our community healthy and safe.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Sunenshine, MD  
Medical Director, Disease Control

**\*Immunity to measles** is demonstrated by having one of the following: 2 documented MMR vaccines, a laboratory test showing that you had measles at some point in your life, a lab test showing that you are immune to measles or birth before 1957.

## Measles Background

Measles is a highly infectious disease that can spread quickly through the air when the infected person coughs or sneezes. The Measles virus can survive in the air for several hours and may cause infection even after the infected person left the room.

Measles starts with a fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes, and sore throat. It is followed by a rash several days later that starts on the head at the hairline and moves down the body. Complications such as pneumonia, ear infections and diarrhea can occur in about 30% of people infected. Up to 3 in 1000 people infected develop severe complications such as inflammation around the brain and/or death. Complications are more common in very young children, adults and individuals with depressed immune systems.

What can schools do?

- **Remind parents** to make sure their children's immunizations are up to date. The MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine is safe and very effective in preventing measles infection. Two doses are routinely recommended for all children. Children should receive their first dose of MMR vaccine at 12 – 15 months of age and their second dose routinely at 4 -6 years of age.
- Up-to-date vaccinations are required by law for entry into childcare and school, this includes measles by age 12 to 15 months and a second dose between the ages of 4 to 6 years of age. By Arizona Law, a valid exemption form must be on file for any child who is attending school and not up to date on vaccinations. More information can be found at <http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/immunization/school-childcare/requirements.htm>.
- **Ensure staff** are aware of the requirement to provide documentation of their measles immunity in the event of a measles exposure at school.
- **Report cases:** Schools are required by law to report measles to their local health department. In Maricopa County, contact Disease Surveillance staff at 602-506-6767. More information is available at <https://www.maricopa.gov/2480/Schools>.

### More information:

- [Arizona Administrative Code](#)
- [Reporting to Maricopa County Public Health](#)
- [CDC – Measles](#)