

## MEMO

### Preventing Measles Outbreaks: Guidance for Schools

March 7, 2025

North Dakota Schools,

The ongoing measles outbreak in [Texas](#) and [New Mexico](#) is a reminder that measles is always just a plane ride away from our schools and communities. This disease can take hold and spread rapidly in settings where MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccination rates are low. A person who has not received any vaccination against measles has a 90% chance of contracting the disease from a single exposure. Conversely a person who has received even one dose of MMR has only a 10% chance of contracting disease. That likelihood goes down to only 3% when they have received both recommended doses.

MMR immunization coverage is reported on our website:

[School Immunization Rates](#)

[Infant Immunization Rates](#)

The North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (ND HHS) provides the following guidance to ensure you are ready to prevent the spread of measles if it enters your school:

- 1.) Know the MMR vaccination status of EVERY student who attends or spends time at your school:
  - Two doses - fully vaccinated
  - One dose - partially vaccinated
  - Zero doses – unvaccinated (may have a medical, religious, philosophical or moral exemption)

- 2.) Remind staff to know their own MMR vaccination status. Information about how to find an immunization record is available on our [website](#).
  - a. People born before 1957 are generally considered immune to measles due to natural infection.
- 3.) Individuals with measles are contagious for four days before until four days after rash onset. Measles is airborne and can linger in the air for two hours after someone with measles was in an area.
- 4.) To prevent the spread of measles, unvaccinated individuals who are exposed will need to stay home five days after initial exposure until 21 days after the last exposure. Plan to provide distance education to these individuals.
- 5.) Encourage vaccination in your school and community. If cost is an issue, ND HHS provides free vaccines to uninsured, underinsured, Medicaid, and American Indian children through the Vaccines for Children Program.

**If a case of measles is reported to you by a parent or doctor, please contact the ND HHS Disease Control and Forensic Pathology Section immediately at 701.328.2378.**

For other questions or for more information contact Danielle Pinnick, Vaccine Preventable Disease Epidemiologist, at 701.328.2378 or [dpinnick@nd.gov](mailto:dpinnick@nd.gov).