

Measles Toolkit

For Child Care and Early Learning Programs

**What programs need to know
to prepare and respond to a measles case**



What To Know About Measles

Measles is an illness caused by the measles virus. It spreads through the air when a person with measles coughs, sneezes, or talks.

Measles is one of the most contagious diseases. It is so contagious that up to 9 out of 10 unvaccinated people will get measles if they are exposed to the virus.

The virus can stay in the air for up to two hours. This means you can be exposed to the measles virus even after a person with measles has left the room or area.

Measles can cause severe health complications, including pneumonia, encephalitis (swelling of the brain), and death. **People who are not vaccinated against measles, including babies under 12 months, are at highest risk for severe health complications.**

The most effective protection against measles is the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Two doses of MMR provide up to 97% protection against measles for a lifetime.

Each time there is a measles case in the child care or early learning program, **anyone who cannot show evidence of immunity to (protection against) measles may need to stay home for up to 21 days.** This may include:

- babies under 12 months
- anyone with an MMR vaccine exemption
- anyone not up-to-date on their MMR vaccine
- staff or volunteers who cannot provide an MMR vaccination record or proof of a previous measles infection

Measles symptoms appear 7-21 days after being exposed:



Fever



Cough



Runny Nose



Red, watery eyes



Rash
(3-5 days after other symptoms)

A person with measles can spread the virus to others before the measles rash appears. It is easy to mistake the first symptoms of measles for other respiratory conditions. Following the [Keep Me Home If](#) poster helps prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses, including measles.

Understanding the MMR Vaccination Schedule for Children in Early Learning Programs

There are two vaccines that protect against measles: MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) and MMRV (measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella).

Children need two doses of a measles-containing vaccine (MMR or MMRV):

- First dose: 12 to 15 months of age
- Second dose: 4 to 6 years of age

While the vaccine schedule has a recommended age range for a child's first dose (12-15 months) and second dose (4 to 6 years), **children should get the measles vaccine as soon as they become eligible (1 and 4 years of age)**. This is important because, if there is a measles case, anyone who is missing a dose that they are eligible to receive may be excluded from the program for up to 21 days.

Check immunization records monthly, especially for children approaching their 1st and 4th birthdays.

Send reminders and resources to families to help make sure children get vaccines when they are due.

A note on the measles vaccine and travel

A child may have received an early dose of the MMR vaccine at 6 -11 months because of travel. Even though they already received a dose, they will still need the full 2 dose series starting at 12 months of age.



What You Can Do Now to Prepare

Follow these steps so you can respond quickly if a person in your program gets measles



Review this Toolkit.



Start a visitor log.



Continue to follow the exclusion guidelines in the [Keep Me Home If](#) poster.



Check to be sure you have evidence of immunity to (protection against) measles for all staff and volunteers.



Adults can show evidence of immunity by providing one of the following:

- An official immunization record showing at least 1 dose of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. To be acceptable, the record must come from a medical source or include the signature of a health care provider.
- A laboratory record showing a person had measles
- A blood test showing a person is immune. This is called a titer.
- Birth before 1957

Staff who cannot locate records should talk with their healthcare provider.



Inform staff and volunteers they may need to stay home for up to 21 days each time they are exposed to measles if they cannot show evidence of immunity, or if they have an exemption to the MMR vaccine.

Be aware of the number of staff who may be excluded. You **still need to maintain staff-to-children ratios**, even in the event of a measles outbreak. If you are unable to maintain ratios, you may need to close the program temporarily.



For children with a Certificate of Exemption on file for the MMR vaccine: inform families their children may be excluded for up to 21 days each time they are exposed to measles.



Create a system to check immunization records **monthly** to help make sure children get the MMR vaccine when it is due. Children will become eligible to receive the MMR vaccine at different times throughout the year.



Recommend the MMR vaccine to families whose children are not up to date. Children under 19 can get routine immunizations for free.

Find a vaccine clinic at: kingcounty.gov/findaclinic.



Inform families of children who are not yet eligible to receive, or are not up to date on, their MMR vaccine that they may need to stay home for up to 21 days each time they are exposed to measles.

Measles:

What Child Care and Early Learning Programs and Families Need to Know

Measles is extremely contagious.

It is possible to be exposed to the measles virus even after a person with measles has left the room or area.

The virus can live in the air for up to 2 hours

Up to 9 out of 10 unvaccinated people will get measles if just one person in the room has it

In babies and young children, measles can cause:



pneumonia



brain swelling (encephalitis)



death

Children need 2 doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine:

1st Dose

12 months old

2nd Dose

4 years old



2 doses provide 97% protection against getting measles.

This protection lasts a lifetime.



Getting the MMR vaccine on time is the best way to protect against measles and avoid being sent home if there is a case.



A person may need to stay home for up to **21 days** each time they are exposed to measles.

Those who may need to stay home include:

- Babies under 12 months
- Anyone with an MMR vaccine exemption
- Anyone not up-to-date on their MMR vaccine
- Staff and volunteers who cannot provide an MMR vaccination record or proof of a previous measles infection

Programs: Report any case of measles immediately to your licensor and local health jurisdiction. For King County, call 206.296.4774. **Families:** Tell your program immediately if your child has measles.

If There is a Measles Case in Your Program

- Report the case immediately to your local health jurisdiction – Do not delay calling!**

If your program is in King County, call Public Health – Seattle & King County Communicable Diseases Epidemiology and Immunization Section (CD-Imms) at **206-296-4774**. The CD-Imms reporting line is available 24 hours a day.

If your program is not in King County, contact your local health jurisdiction to report.

WAC 246-101-415 requires programs cooperate with Public Health in their investigation and control of cases, outbreaks, and suspected outbreaks that may be associated with the child care facility.



Be prepared to provide CD-Imms with the following information for the person with measles:

- Student or staff first and last name
- Address
- Date of birth
- Phone number
- MMR vaccination date(s)

- CD-Imms will assign your program a disease investigator (point person).**

They will give you a blank “Exposure Line List” to complete. It will be used by CD-Imms to determine who was exposed to measles, who needs to be excluded, and for how long.

To fill out your Exposure Line List, you will need to gather:

- **Sign in and sign out information** for parents, guardians and family members
- **Visitor log**, including delivery people, visiting consultants, and guests
- **Attendance list** for children, staff, and volunteers
- **Vaccine status** (MMR vaccination dates or exemption to MMR vaccine) for children, staff, and volunteers

Your disease investigator will support you by:

- Determining if the person with measles was contagious while at the program.
- Providing you with an exposure notification letter to inform anyone who has been exposed to measles.
- Identifying who needs to be excluded and when they can return.

Reminder:

The virus can stay in the air for up to two hours. This means someone in the same space or building can be exposed to the measles virus even after a person with measles has left.

- Inform your DCYF Licensor** that you have a confirmed case of measles.
- Use the Exclusion Tracking List on page 7 of this toolkit** to help you keep track of who has been excluded from the early learning program and when they can return.

