



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:** Stephanie Y. Hayden-Howard, Assistant City Manager *SHH*

**FROM:** Adrienne Sturup, Director, Austin Public Health *Adrienne Sturup*

**DATE:** February 10, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Measles Health Alert

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Austin Public Health (APH) was notified that two confirmed travel-related cases of measles were identified in Harris County residents on January 23, 2025. According to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), these are the first confirmed cases of measles reported in Texas since 2023. Two additional measles cases were reported in Lubbock on January 30, 2025. Six additional cases were reported in Gaines County on February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025. APH stands at Level 3 response (Increased Readiness) and is monitoring this situation and providing information to the public and its partners.

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease that spreads through coughing, sneezing or simply being near an infected individual. The virus can linger in the air for up to two hours after an infected person has left an area, making it easy to contract in shared spaces. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that if there is less than 90% vaccination coverage in a school there is a 51% chance of a measles outbreak occurring in that school. APH has met with local childcare providers, schools, and universities, to encourage improved vaccination coverage.

Measles symptoms include a high fever, cough, runny nose, red, watery eyes, and a rash that typically starts on the face and spreads down over the rest of the body.

People with measles can spread this virus four days before the rash begins and four days after the rash appears. Measles can infect anyone, and complications can be severe and include ear infections, diarrhea, pneumonia, or, in rare cases, brain inflammation (encephalitis). Those at highest risk are infants and children under 5 years old, pregnant individuals, people with weakened immune systems, and unvaccinated people.

The most effective way to prevent measles is to receive the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Two doses of MMR provide 97% protection and long-lasting immunity.

APH encourages community members to stay up to date on needed vaccinations.

If you have any further questions, contact Dr. Desmar Walkes at (512) 972-5097 or via email at [Desmar.Walkes@austintexas.gov](mailto:Desmar.Walkes@austintexas.gov).

cc: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager  
CMO Executive Team  
Myrna Rios, City Clerk  
Corrie Stokes, City Auditor  
Judge Sherry Statman, Presiding Judge  
Mary Jane Grubb, Municipal Court Clerk