

## Notification of Measles and School Exclusions

Dear Parent and Guardians:

Confirmed Measles cases are increasing in Clark County, as of 01/30/2019, there are 38 confirmed cases. Of those 38 cases 34 are unimmunized and 4 cases are unverified immunization. In King County currently has 1 confirmed case of measles. There have been no cases within Northeast Washington.

Northeast Tri County Health District (NETCHD) has a duty to protect the public from communicable diseases, including prevention of outbreaks. NETCHD is working with public school nurses on immunization efforts to ensure proper actions can be taken if measles occurs within our area. Part of this effort is to help ensure individual know their immunity to the disease. You are receiving this letter because your child/children have been identified as not meeting requirements for immunity to measles.

Persons are considered immune to measles if they:

- Were born before January 1, 1957 (except for health care workers who should consider receiving at least one dose of measles-containing vaccine), or
- Have documentation of health care provider-diagnosed measles, or
- Have laboratory evidence of immunity to measles, or
- Have written documentation of adequate vaccination to measles that includes the date of administration (self-reported doses or parental history of vaccination alone are not acceptable)
  - Preschool children: one MMR given after 12 months of age
  - K–12 and adults at high risk (i.e., post-high school educational and college students, healthcare personnel, and international travelers): 2 MMR, with the first dose given on or after the first birthday and with a minimum of 28 days between the first and the second dose
  - All other adults born during or after 1957: history of having received at least one dose of live measles virus vaccine on or after the first birthday\*

\*Persons who were vaccinated with an inactivated vaccine that was available from 1963-1967, and have not been re-vaccinated, may however be at risk for measles.

We understand that you may have decided to defer MMR vaccination because of personal, religious or medical reasons. We respect your beliefs and your right to make your health care choices based upon those beliefs. In an outbreak, we as public health, must protect our community from this very serious disease which can lead to hospitalization, lifelong complications or death.

In the event a measles case does occur in Pend Oreille, Ferry and/or Stevens County, exclusions will occur building-wide if a case is identified in a school. Exclusion orders will come to families and staff in the form of a NETCHD Health Officer notification which you will receive from your school.

Individuals who were susceptible or unimmunized\* at time of exposure regardless of whether or not they have received post exposure vaccine will be exclude from school, child care, and/or after school

events from the 7<sup>th</sup> day of exposure through 21<sup>st</sup> day after exposure\*. It takes two weeks to build immunity once the MMR is received.

Measles is extremely contagious. For individuals who are exposed and not immune, there is a 90 percent chance they will become infected. Immunization is the best prevention for measles. The measles vaccine (MMR) is very effective; one dose 93 percent effective and two doses are 97 percent effective, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

If anyone believes they have been exposed to measles or feels sick with measles:

- Stay home
- Contact Primary Care Doctor or clinic and let them know you suspect measles **before** going into the clinic or ER or Urgent Care facility.
- Do not cough near others and wash your hands with soap and water frequently.
- Avoid public areas and transportation
- Notify your school nurse

If someone does get sick with measles, they will feel very sick. Symptoms may include:

- High fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red eyes
- Rash that starts 2-4 days following previous symptoms. co Usually starts on hairline, then face, and spreads rapidly down the body.

For any questions regarding this notification alert please contact your School Nurse or Northeast Tri County Health District Offices:

Colville: 509-684-2262

Newport: 509-447-3131

Republic: 509-775-3111

*\* If there is documented 1 dose of MMR prior to exposure to measles the individual can return once second dose of MMR is given.*

*\* Individuals may be hesitant to get the MMR vaccine if they will still be excluded for 14 days; however, not getting the vaccine could lead to exclusion for the length of the entire outbreak in their school which can be much longer than 14 days.*