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Kentucky Reports First Positive Measles Case in 2026

Jessamine County Resident Exposed in Fayette County by Out-of-State Visitor

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 15, 2026) – The Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) announced today that an unvaccinated Jessamine County resident has tested positive for measles. This is the first confirmed case of measles in a Kentucky resident since July 2025.

This person was exposed to measles when an out-of-state traveler who was infectious visited Fayette County between Dec. 31, 2025, and Jan. 2, 2026. This resulted in community exposures first announced by the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department on Jan. 9. This case of measles is not related to community exposures between Dec. 28-30, 2025, in Grant County, which were linked to a different out-of-state visitor.

Public health officials are investigating additional community exposures to measles as a result of this Jessamine County case. Information about measles and public exposures can be found on the Kentucky Department for Public Health's measles webpage, which can be accessed [here](#).

“Measles is a serious and contagious virus that has seen a resurgence in recent years,” said Dr. Steven Stack, Secretary of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services. “We continue to urge families to take these risks seriously and to protect themselves and their communities by getting the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.”

The Kentucky Department for Public Health is supporting the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department and other local health departments as they contact individuals believed to have been exposed to measles.

“People who may have been exposed should monitor themselves for symptoms for 21 days after potential exposure,” said Kentucky Department for Public Health Commissioner Dr. John Langefeld. “Symptoms include fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes, and rash. If you believe that you have been exposed to measles and you have symptoms, please call your health care provider.”

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory virus that can cause serious health complications, especially in young children. Measles is spread through the air, where it can remain for up to two hours. The best way to protect against measles is through the MMR vaccine. Receiving two doses of MMR vaccine is 97% effective against measles. While the two-dose vaccine is typically administered to children, people of any age can contact their doctor, pharmacy, or local health department about receiving the vaccine. Anyone unsure of their vaccination status can visit the Kentucky Department for Public Health’s [Kentucky Immunization Registry Public Portal](#) or contact their health care provider.

Currently, the risk to the broader public remains low. Health officials encourage good health habits to prevent transmission of measles and other contagious illnesses, such as washing hands often with soap and warm water, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying at home from work or school when sick. Kentuckians are encouraged to speak with their health care provider about the best ways to keep themselves and their families healthy.

For more information about measles visit the Kentucky Department for Public Health’s [measles webpage](#).

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