

Prepare for and respond to measles at work

Checklist for businesses

Adapted from a resource by the Utah Department of Health & Human Services



Measles is a **highly contagious virus** that spreads through the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes, speaks, or breathes. Measles virus can stay in the air for up to 2 hours after a person has left. If 1 person has measles, up to **9 in 10 people nearby** will become infected if they are not protected.

Measles is more than just a rash — it can cause serious health complications or even death. About 1 in 5 people who get measles will be hospitalized. The best protection is the **measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine**.

Measles can spread quickly in workplaces if staff are not vaccinated, especially in places where they spend a lot of time together and in close contact with each other.

Keep your staff and customers healthy.

Prepare for measles

- **Encourage employees to stay home when they are sick.** We encourage businesses to offer sick leave or an option to work from home for employees who are sick with measles and for those who are not immune and have been exposed to measles.
- **Encourage employees to have at least 1 dose of the MMR vaccine.** One dose will provide 93% protection, and two doses provide 97% protection. Employees who were vaccinated as children are still protected. The more employees who are vaccinated, the less likely it is for an outbreak to happen at your facility.
- **Employees who need to locate immunization records** can contact their healthcare provider or the Brunswick County Immunization Clinic to pull records, if a family member does not have a copy. **Consider having a plan** in place to notify employees if there is a measles exposure in the workplace.

- **Educate your employees on the symptoms of measles:**



- » **First symptoms:** High fever with cough, runny nose, and/or red, watery eyes
- » **3-5 days after symptoms start:** Rash

Note: The rash is usually made up of flat, red spots that appear on the face at the hairline and spread downward to the neck, torso, arms, legs, and feet.

Immediate actions

What to do immediately if an employee or customer is at your workplace and suspects they have measles



- **Give the person a face mask to wear until they can leave.** Face masks should fit well and cover their mouth and nose to stop respiratory droplets from getting into the air.



- **Offer them a private room** away from others. Keep the door to the room closed and a window open if possible. Close off the room and do not let anyone in for a minimum of 2 hours after the person has left. You can also use an outdoor space, weather and safety permitting, or the individual can isolate in their car. They should not go on public transportation.



- **Tell the individual to contact their healthcare provider, if they have one. If they do not, they should contact Brunswick County Health Services at 910.253.2250.** After hours advice line can be reached at 910.294.8086. They will have further guidance for isolation, testing, and care, if needed, for the person who may have measles.

What to do after the person who may have measles has left the workplace

- **Close off the rooms** the person had been in and do not reopen them until it has been 2 hours since the person left the room.
- After 2 hours, **clean and disinfect** the spaces with a disinfectant like Lysol disinfectant spray or Clorox disinfecting wipes. You may also use a mix of 1 part bleach to 9 parts water. Let the solution sit on the surface for at least 1 minute before you wipe it off.

Additional actions

Be prepared to **work with Brunswick County Health Services** on the following actions, based on their recommendations:

- **Make a list of people who might have been exposed to the person with suspected measles.** They may recommend employees who are not immune to measles stay home from work to protect their health and prevent further spread. They may also offer them medication to prevent them from getting sick after exposure.
- **Inform** staff that someone who may have measles has been in the workplace. Ask staff to watch for measles symptoms for 21 days after the exposure (even if they are immune).

How long should employees with measles stay at home?

Employees who are diagnosed with measles should stay home and away from all public places until 4 days have passed since the rash began and they are physically able to return to work.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Day the rash first appeared

Day you can go back to work

 = contagious period

Employees who have been exposed to measles may be recommended to stay home if they are not immune to measles. They will work with Brunswick County Health Services to determine how long they need to stay home.

Scan for additional measles resources:

