



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
PO Box 47890 | Olympia, Washington 98504-7890
360-236-4030 | 711 Washington State Relay

February 19, 2026

Re: Informative - Resource for preparing for measles in carceral facilities

Greetings Honorable Tribal Leaders, Partners, and Professionals:

In accordance with chapter [43.376 RCW](#), the [Washington State Centennial Accord of 1989](#), and [DOH Consultation and Collaboration Procedure](#), the Washington State Department of Health (WA-DOH) is providing information for measles preparedness and response in Washington carceral settings.

In the last month, we have seen increased measles activity nationally and in Washington State, including our first measles outbreak since 2023. WA-DOH has prepared some information below as a potential resource for your Tribal jails to inform you about preparations for potential measles exposures. You can also find helpful information in the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention's measles preparedness and response checklist](#).

- **In the event of suspected measles exposure, contact public health immediately.** Measles is an immediately notifiable condition in Washington State (WAC [246-101-101](#)). If there is suspected measles in the building, notify your designated health official.
- **Establish a system to keep up-to-date documentation of presumptive immunity for all staff and persons in custody.** Acceptable documentation includes birth before 1957, laboratory-confirmed documentation of prior measles disease, documentation of a positive measles IgG (antibody titer), or written documentation of MMR vaccine. Two doses of the MMR vaccine are required for [healthcare and nonhealthcare personnel](#) who work in a healthcare setting, including for unvaccinated personnel born before 1957 with no other evidence of immunity, for children and adults at high risk. At least one MMR vaccine dose for people 18+ years old not at high risk.
 - Please note that one MMR vaccine dose may not be sufficient to protect people from intense, prolonged contact to measles, such as being in a congregate setting or to a household member. These individuals may be required by the designated health officer to receive a second MMR dose or to be excluded from the setting or quarantined.
- **Create an initial list of susceptible staff and persons in custody for public health follow up and exclusion from work or in-facility cohorting and quarantine.** In the event of a measles exposure at your facility, you will need to quickly identify all individuals – persons in custody, healthcare and other staff, volunteers, visitors, and contractors – who do not have documented immunity to measles and might have been exposed. You will exclude staff, visitors, volunteers, and contractors on this list from the setting for 21 days or until proof of immunity at the time of exposure is provided. Exposed persons in custody will need to be cohorted and quarantined.

- **Allow only staff with documented immunity to measles to work closely with persons in custody who have suspected or confirmed measles.** Do not allow susceptible staff (those without documented immunity to measles) to work in areas where measles is present. Once exposed to measles, susceptible staff must be excluded from the workplace for 21 days.
- **Ensure your respirator program reflects protective measures for measles.** Staff with documented immunity to measles must be provided with a fit-tested N95 mask to work in areas with measles (WAC [296-841](#); [296-842-100](#); [296-842-11005](#)). Staff without documented immunity to measles cannot be allowed to work in areas where measles is present even with a fit-tested N95 mask.
- **Review the Center for Disease Control & Prevention’s [“Preparing And Responding To Measles: Checklist for Correctional Facilities”](#) to inform your communicable disease prevention and response plan ([RCW 70.48.480](#)).** This checklist covers recommendations for non-punitive medical isolation and quarantine, safe transportation, as well as information for what to do in the first 10 minutes of identifying someone with suspect measles symptoms.

For additional information, please contact Sixtine Gurrey, Carceral Health Epidemiologist, at sixtine.gurrey@doh.wa.gov or 206-418-5500. Please contact Candice Wilson, Executive Director, Office of Tribal Public Health and Relations (OTPHR), at candice.wilson@doh.wa.gov or 360-819-7626.

Respectfully,



Tao Sheng Kwan-Gett, MD MPH
State Health Officer

cc: Dennis E. Worsham, Secretary of Health, WA-DOH
Jessica Todorovich, Chief of Staff, Office of the Secretary, WA-DOH
Kristin Peterson, Chief, Office of Policy, Planning & Evaluation, WA-DOH
Candice Wilson–Quatz'tenaut (Lummi), Executive Director, OTPHR, WA-DOH