

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**6 Cases of Measles Identified in Finney County**

*Those who are ill are asked to stay home except to see healthcare provider*

**TOPEKA, Kan.** – In a measles outbreak that began this month in Garden City, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and Finney County Health Department have identified six cases to date. KDHE urges people who are ill or exhibiting measles-like symptoms to stay at home unless they are seeking medical attention.

On Jan. 10, KDHE was notified of two cases of measles. Both cases were within the same family household and had recent international travel. The onset date of rash was Jan. 3 and Jan. 5. The two initial cases were seen by the emergency department before being admitted to the hospital. Four additional cases – two within the same family household and two outside the family household – have subsequently occurred. To date, all cases have been epidemiologically linked by documented contact.

Finney County Health Department and KDHE are working to identify contacts among the general public and health care personnel. With an average incubation period of 10 to 14 days, secondary cases are now appearing outside the initial family.

Measles is a respiratory disease caused by a virus. It causes fever, runny nose, tiredness, cough and a blotchy rash all over the body. Measles is spread through the air by breathing, coughing or sneezing. It is so contagious that any person who is exposed to it and is not immune will probably get the disease. Measles can be spread to others from four days before to four days after the rash appears.

“If you are ill with fever, stay home except to see a healthcare provider. If you need to seek healthcare, call ahead so appropriate measures can be taken to protect other patients and staff. In some cases, measles can result in secondary illnesses, such as bronchitis, pneumonia and encephalitis,” said Robert Moser, M.D., KDHE Secretary and State Health Officer.

Two doses of MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine – the first dose at 12-15 months and the second at 4-6 years – are routinely recommended for all children. Though the second dose of MMR may be given earlier in some circumstances, KDHE is not recommending any changes to the routine schedule at this time. All persons born during or after 1957 should have documentation of at least one MMR or other evidence of immunity. Certain groups of adults may be at increased risk for exposure to measles. Adults attending colleges or other

post high school educational institutions, working in medical facilities, or traveling internationally should be assessed to ensure they are properly immunized.

The KDHE EPI Hotline is available for those with questions about potential disease outbreaks at 877-427-7317.

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*KDHE's mission is to protect and improve the health and environment of all Kansans.*

*Through education, direct services and the assessment of data and trends, coupled with policy development and enforcement, KDHE will improve health and quality of life. We prevent illness, injuries and foster a safe and sustainable environment for the people of Kansas.*