



Leading the Nation Again, Florida Successfully Balances Personal Responsibility, Parents’ Rights, and Public Health

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Tallahassee, Fla.—Today, Florida is providing an update on the measles outbreak in southeast Florida. Since January 2024, [sixteen states](#) have reported measles cases including: California, New York, New Jersey, Michigan, Washington, Indiana, and Arizona. Unfortunately, the measles cases in Florida have received disproportionate attention for political reasons.

The national medical health establishment and the media lost the public’s confidence with their botched response to COVID-19. Conversely, Florida under the leadership of Governor Ron DeSantis has set the standard for public health with evidence-based leadership.

“Once again, Florida has shown that good public health policy includes personal responsibility and parents’ rights,” **said Governor Ron DeSantis**. “While the national medical health establishment and media have lost the public’s confidence, Florida continues to restore sanity and reason to public health, and will always do so under my leadership.”

“It’s important that public health leaders consider all available data and make decisions that promote health while respecting the rights of individuals,” **said State Surgeon General Dr. Joseph Ladapo**. “Under the leadership of Governor DeSantis, I will always serve with integrity and prioritize a holistic approach to public health that tunes into the needs of Floridians – and tunes out the noise.”

Once again, Florida leads. **To date, no additional cases have occurred at Manatee Bay Elementary since Friday, February 16, 2024; thus, the 21-day infection period has ended.**

In response to the initial cases that were identified, the Florida Department of Health in Broward County [notified](#) its community of multiple cases of measles under investigation at Manatee Bay Elementary on Sunday, February 18, 2024. On Tuesday, February 20, 2024, State Surgeon General Dr. Joseph Ladapo sent a letter to

the parents and guardians of students attending Manatee Bay Elementary School providing additional information regarding the outbreak and guidance for parents, stating:

“Because of the high likelihood of infection, it is normally recommended that children stay home until the end of the infectious period, which is currently March 7, 2024. As the epidemiological investigation continues, this date could change. However, due to the high immunity rate in the community, as well as the burden on families and educational cost of healthy children missing school, DOH is deferring to parents or guardians to make decisions about school attendance.”

The State Surgeon General communicated that people with a history of prior infection or vaccination of the full series of the Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) immunization are 98% protected and are unlikely to contract measles. A holistic approach to public health best serves the community and protects individual liberty. Florida’s recommendation balanced these priorities – *without* forced isolation or heavy-handed government intervention. Florida’s dedication to empowering families to make the best decisions for their children continues to prove successful.

To date, no additional cases have occurred at Manatee Bay Elementary since Friday, February 16, 2024; thus, the 21-day infection period has ended. Due to the contagiousness of measles and the rate of international travel, there is a possibility for more sporadic cases throughout Florida and the United States. Florida’s approach to managing future cases will remain the same.

About the Florida Department of Health

The Florida Department of Health, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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