

# 2nd measles case confirmed in Ky.

## Kindergarten vaccine rates drop; Measles could become endemic again, study shows

By Melissa Patrick  
Kentucky Health News

April 27 — Public health officials continue to urge Kentuckians to ensure their children are immunized against measles, as they announced the state's second confirmed measles case in 2025.

The case was a child who was traveling through the state when they sought treatment, according to a news release. The child, who is not a U.S. resident, was diagnosed at a health care facility in Kentucky, which is why the case is counted as a Kentucky incident.

The Kentucky Department for Public Health says the health care facility adhered to strict safety protocols, thus eliminating the risk of spread to other patients.

"There are no other cases and no risks of exposure to Kentuckians associated with this case," according to the release.

A Cabinet for Health and Family Services spokeswoman told the Kentucky Lantern Friday that the child was "unvaccinated, school-aged and is no longer in Kentucky."

The first case of measles in Kentucky in 2025 was reported in February. This case occurred in a resident who had recently traveled internationally to an area with ongoing measles transmission. The state health department reports there were no other confirmed cases associated with the February measles case.

### Measles Could Become Endemic Again

Kentucky's latest case of measles comes as new research from Stanford University, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, found that "at current state-level vaccination rates, measles may become endemic again" in two decades, meaning it would become a common disease again.

Further, the study estimated there would be 11.1 million cases of measles over the next 25 years if vaccination rates for the disease drop 10% and 51.2 million cases over the next 25 years if childhood vaccination rates were cut in half.

The estimates are based on a simulation of what would happen in the U.S. under various vaccination rates for children.

The researchers add that small declines in measles vaccination would cause this to happen more quickly, whereas small increases in vaccine coverage would prevent this.

Senior author Dr. Nathan Lo, assistant professor of infectious diseases at Stanford Medicine, encouraged parents who aren't sure about vaccination to discuss this with their health care provider.

"With measles, we're right on the cusp. Increasing vaccination levels by just 5% brings the number of measles cases down, safely away from returning to endemic levels," Lo said in a news release. "These are the kinds of small percentages that can really be a tipping point. It's empowering that a small segment of the population can make a difference here."

### State's Kindergarten Vaccine Rates Drop

The most recent assessment of Kentucky kindergarten vaccines for the 2024-2025 school year, released Thursday, April 24, shows immunization coverage for all vaccines has dropped to the lowest rates in more than seven years for Kentucky kindergartners, including the measles vaccine.

"Coverage among kindergartners for the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine, which is effective at preventing diseases, including measles, and is legally required for school attendance in Kentucky, has dropped to 86.9%, which is lower than the national average of 93%. By comparison,

son, MMR rates for Kentucky kindergartners were at 90% for the 2023-2024 school year," according to the release.

This decline in MMR vaccine coverage is occurring during the largest outbreak of measles in the U.S. since measles was declared eliminated in the country in 2000, according to the release.

As of April 24, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported 884 measles cases in 30 states in 2025, with 97% of the cases in unvaccinated people — and the numbers continue to grow. For comparison, there were only 285 measles cases reported in the U.S. in 2024.

"These are concerning trends that we are seeing," said Dr. Steven Stack, the state's public health commissioner. "It is really important that folks are properly informed about vaccines so they can take safe steps to protect their children. Vaccines are safe and effective. We urge all parents to have their children vaccinated to ensure they are protected from preventable diseases like measles."

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory virus that can cause serious health complications, especially in young children. It spreads through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes and can survive for up to two hours after an infected person leaves an area.

Early symptoms of measles include high fever, cough, runny nose and red/watery eyes. A measles rash typically appears three to five days after the symptoms begin, usually on the face before spreading down the rest of the body.

Measles is so contagious that if one person has measles, up to nine out of 10 people nearby will become infected if they are not vaccinated, according to the CDC.

The two-dose MMR vaccine is recommended for children at 12 to 15 months old and then at 4 to 6 years old. The CDC says two doses of MMR vaccine is 97% effective against measles.

## Legislative Update

# Closing an open door: House Bill 315 and the protection of our nation

By State Rep.  
Bobby McCool

April 25 — It has been nearly 35 years since the end of the Cold War. While the United States has engaged in other conflicts since then, none have paralleled the scale of the threat posed by the aggression of the communist bloc throughout the latter half of the 20th century.

While the Soviet Union may have fallen, other nations such as China, Venezuela, Iran, and Cuba have persisted in their attempts to do our country harm. Some of their methods are more open than others such as funding terrorist organizations, indefinitely detaining American citizens, and threatening our allies. They have also engaged in tactics which are more hidden from the everyday eye such as cyberattacks on our infrastructure, producing propaganda, and embedding spies across numerous sectors of industry.

However, since the early 2010s the federal government has been sounding the alarm around a new threat posed by these countries which has been growing in our own backyards nearly unchecked for years: farmland. Not just any farmland though, but rather farmland strategically located near some of the most important military installations across the United States which have been slowly acquired by investors, billionaires, and companies with strong ties to our nation's enemies.

To put this issue into perspective, the vast majority of foreign owned agricultural land in the United States is owned by our allies such as Canada, the Netherlands, and Italy. Less than one percent of foreign owned agricultural land is in the hands of entities linked to our adversaries. However, as the following examples show, it is not the size of their holdings but rather their locations:

In 2012, President Obama

ordered a Chinese company to divest from their significant amount of property near the Boardman Bombing Range in Oregon, a site where the U. S. Navy conducts exercises with fighter jets, unmanned drones, and electronic warfare systems. Between 2017 and 2021, a Chinese billionaire with strong ties to the Chinese government purchased over 140,000 acres of Texan ranch land near the Laughlin Air Force Base, the Air Force's largest pilot training facility. In 2023, another Chinese company attempted to purchase 370 acres near the Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota where critical combat surveillance and reconnaissance units are stationed.

Most troubling of all, a Chinese company was forced to divest from a property located less than one mile from the Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming, home to over 150 intercontinental ballistic missiles and their launch facilities.

With Kentucky being home to two critical military installations — Fort Campbell and Fort Knox — we owe a duty to the men and women of our armed forces to ensure they have all the protections needed so they may continue upholding the safety and security of our nation.

This is why we passed HB 315 during this past legislative session. HB 315 prohibits any

foreign investor, company, or other entity from purchasing, leasing, or otherwise acquiring agricultural land in Kentucky or participating in Department of Agriculture programs if they are associated with a hostile foreign government such as China, Russia, Venezuela, Iran, and Cuba.

With this measure, we are doing our part in protecting national security as well as the sanctity of our commonwealth's agricultural industry.

We also join more than 30 other states in their enactment of similar measures to fight back against hostile foreign encroachment on our farmland, and continuing our assurance that the logistics, infrastructure, and operational capacity of our armed forces are protected both at home and abroad.

With this bill becoming law, we are closing a door which has stood open to our nation's enemies for far too long, and proving yet again despite any of their new weapons, tactics, or threats we will always stand ready to defend those who defend us.

As always, I can be reached anytime through the toll-free message line in Frankfort at 1-800-372-7181. You can also contact me via email at Bobby.McCool@kylegislature.gov and keep track through the Kentucky legislature's website at legislature.ky.gov.

# DON'T HESITATE VACCINATE



Kentucky Public Health  
Part of a Healthier Future

We enjoy playing with words...

...jokes, puns, riddles and rhymes.

Kids: color stuff in!

# Newspaper Fun!

www.readingclubfun.com

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We use words when we speak or write. We use them in songs, stories, poems, letters and speeches! We use words to tell others what we are thinking, how we are feeling or how things work. We use words for fun too! We love to "play" on words in jokes and riddles, and in other ways.

Don't be chicken! Some of the words are long, but I sprinkled in letters to help you fit them into the crossword!

personification  
onomatopoeia  
 Spoonerism

## Play On Words

Read the clues to fill in the crossword puzzle with different kinds of word play that we have fun with:

- a \_\_\_\_\_ word shrinks a word, making it easier to say; airplane = plane
- word that is spelled the same backwards and forwards; kayak
- series of words with the same starting sound; big bad boy
- words with the same letters, but moved around; cat - act
- words that resemble the sound they are talking about; whiz, bang
- set of "opposite" words; jumbo shrimp, small crowd
- swapping of letters or syllables in words; bunny rabbit = runny babbitt
- a tongue \_\_\_\_\_ puts together words that are hard to say in a row; Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers
- an exaggerated statement; I died laughing
- putting two words together to make a new word; squeeze + crunch = scrunch
- words that have the same ending sound; very cherry
- a humor-filled story or trick; knock, knock!
- giving human-like abilities to something non-human; the wind howled, time marches on
- a word named after a real person; teddy bear (Theodore Roosevelt)
- a clever question that needs thought to be answered; What loses its head each morning, and gets it back in the evening? A pillow!

Match each expression to its meaning:

- man of few words
- man of his word
- get the word
- play on words
- mum is the word

A. receive the message  
B. to use words with more than one meaning in a joke  
C. to keep quiet, secret  
D. keeps his promise  
E. doesn't talk very much

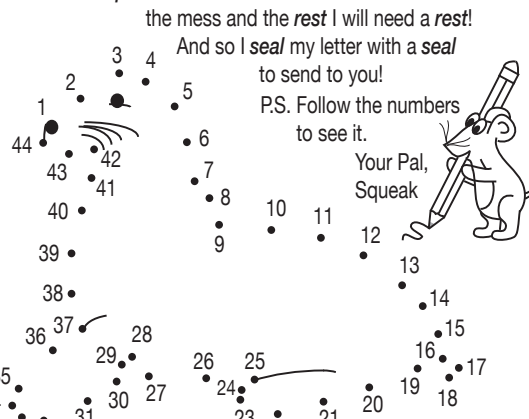
Dear Forest,

At the picnic today, a fast *pitch* from the baseball *pitcher* broke a *pitcher*, and the pieces flew into a warm *pitch* patch that sealed a hole in the walkway! A bowl of *squashed* tomatoes in a basket. After I clean the mess and the *rest* I will need a *rest*!

And so I *seal* my letter with a *seal* to send to you!


P.S. Follow the numbers to see it.

Your Pal,  
Squeak



## Word Ex-Change!

You can make a play on words just by exchanging letters in words. After you finish the activity below, try to write one of your own and share it with a friend.



snail

- Change the "sn" to "tr" and see the "goo". \_\_\_\_\_
- Add an "n" to this word and you'll know what the cow said and what she jumped over. \_\_\_\_\_
- Change the first letter to "b" and you'll know what happened to my car. \_\_\_\_\_
- Change the "k" to "t" and you'll see what a dog gave me as I was riding by. \_\_\_\_\_
- Change the "ch" to "cl" and it will close your snack bag. \_\_\_\_\_

Potato Chips


## Too Hot to Hoot!

A "palindrome" is a word that can be read forward and backward. Sometimes a person thinks up a sentence that can be read forward and backward too! Read these words and sentences, then find them in the puzzle!

mom noon  
dad deed level sees  
pop peep racecar kayak  
did toot madam radar

Step on no pets.  
Was it a rat I saw?  
No lemon, no melon.  
Too hot to hoot!

Whew!  
It really is.



T G R M A D A M Y X U C X W D E E D F I G F P N T S  
T O O H O T T O H O O T V L J S W K W F H R L O O P  
K S T A E R W X K R P O P F O B R F V J Y A L O O E  
U K B A B T S I K A Y A K O N O B W A A D D E N T E  
P R E O S F W P H Y E R A C E C A R J N A A V N D P  
U S C E B A D U N D I D L C O C H T Y F D R E E U B  
N E E C P U E W A S I T A R A T I S A W Z A L M T N  
V S Y O D N O L E M O N N O M E L O N M J M O M I W  
O U P E V E S T E P O N N O P E T S P O N G Z Y B M

Can you find the hidden names? They may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, forwards or backwards.

J	H	N	O	S	L	E	N	E	T	L	L	I	W	B	R	A	V	L	V
S	I	R	R	A	H	U	O	L	Y	M	M	E	G	I	H	V	B	B	S
H	S	A	C	Y	N	N	H	O	J	E	V	L	A	A	V	T	A	C	G
S	R	E	G	O	R	Y	N	N	E	K	E	S	N	V	L	W	R	V	N
M	A	R	T	Y	R	O	B	B	I	N	S	K	E	O	R	N	B	M	I
B	M	I	N	L	C	S	M	C	W	W	R	R	V	L	H	A	P	N	
G	E	G	B	J	T	W	V	A	B	I	R	E	V	N	R	T	R	A	N
O	R	D	A	D	R	O	M	W	L	C	T	I	Z	J	A	J	A	T	E
M	L	L	E	V	H	P	H	L	S	T	A	D	N	M	Z	T	M	S	J
R	E	M	H	L	B	N	I	S	A	N	N	E	M	M	U	R	R	A	Y
C	H	D	G	E	Y	A	O	L	M	R	G	Y	E	A	V	D	N	C	O
H	A	H	L	B	M	A	Y	T	E	A	W	C	O	R	X	C	D	L	L
E	G	L	E	S	B	N	G	E	R	Y	I	A	J	B	L	H	R	I	Y
T	G	B	E	R	N	E	L	L	N	A	B	L	P	J	V	J	E	N	A
A	A	C	L	D	D	A	A	E	A	Y	P	D	L	J	T	C	L	E	W
T	R	P	C	N	D	C	T	H	J	T	N	Y	F	I	J	R	L	A	L
K	D	J	V	N	R	T	D	J	J	Q	S	S	L	M	W	G	L	C	H
I	M	T	E	I	E	W	G	V	L	R	V	Y	B	L	K	N	S	I	J
N	C	R	R	O	G	E	R	M	I	L	L	E	R	C	O	L	O	B	V
S	B	E	D	I	R	P	Y	E	L	R	A	H	C	C	P	D	E	D	B

ANNE MURRAY, BARBARA MANDRELL, BRENDA LEE, CHARLEY PRIDE, CHET ATKINS, CRYSTAL GAYLE, DOLLY PARTON, DON WILLIAMS, EMMY LOU HARRIS, GLEN CAMPBELL, HANK WILLIAMS, JOHNNY CASI KENNY ROGERS, LORETTA LYNN, MARTY ROBBINS, MERLE HAGGARD PATSY CLINE, ROGER MILLER, TAMMY WYNETTE, WAYLON JENNINGS WILLIE NELSON.

## Available For Adoption



This is Cora - a 5 year old female Staffordshire mix, currently at EKCC for training.

This is Sandusky - a male 2 year old mix breed, very sweet boy

**For More Information: contact the Morgan County Animal Shelter at 743-2545 or stop by. Shelter Hours are Mon., - Fri. 10:00--2:00**

Donations can be made to Helping Hands for Animals at P.O. Box 309, West Liberty, Ky. 41472 Located at 1854 Hwy. 205, West Liberty, Ky. 41472