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Dear Los Angeles County School Superintendents and Administrators:

As you know, there are ongoing outbreaks of Zika virus occurring in multiple countries throughout the world. Because residents of Los Angeles County frequently travel to areas where Zika is present (such as Central America and southern areas of Mexico), it is possible that students, faculty and families within your school district could acquire this infection when they travel abroad. Also, while local transmission has not occurred to date in Los Angeles County, because the mosquitoes that transmit the virus are present in the County, this is possible in the future. With these possibilities in mind, I would like to inform you of resources available for schools and to encourage your district's schools to take steps to prevent the spread of mosquitoes that could carry the Zika virus.

About Zika:

Zika is a disease that is spread primarily through the bite of a specific type of mosquito, known as *Aedes* mosquitoes. These mosquitoes can live indoors or outdoors. While they are aggressive day-biters, they can bite at any time, day or night. These mosquitoes have been found in several areas of Los Angeles County, but we have not identified any mosquitoes infected with Zika. Zika can also be spread through sexual contact, but this form of transmission is much less common. Zika does not spread through casual contact. The symptoms of Zika infection usually begin 3-7 days after being infected and can include fever, rash, red eyes and muscle pain. However, the majority of people infected with Zika have no symptoms at all. People very rarely are hospitalized or die from this disease. If a pregnant woman becomes infected with Zika, her baby might be born with birth defects. Because of this, we recommend that pregnant women (or women who are trying to become pregnant and their sexual partners) should avoid traveling to areas where Zika is actively spreading. Because these areas change frequently, the CDC's website should be reviewed for the most current list of locations (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>).

Mosquito Prevention:

The prevention of mosquito bites and reduction of mosquito breeding is essential to reducing the likelihood of contracting or spreading all mosquito-related diseases. Schools can help to reduce any risk for students, families, and the community by implementing mosquito control measures on school

grounds, such as identifying and removing sources of standing water that can serve as mosquito breeding sites. To report mosquito issues and for guidance for eliminating sources of mosquito breeding, contact your local mosquito abatement district. A district locator based on zip code can be found here:

<http://www.socalmosquito.org/>.

Response to Possible Cases of Zika:

In the event that a student or employee of a school is suspected or confirmed to have Zika virus infection, the district should continue to prioritize on-going strategies to prevent mosquito bites. Because Zika virus is not transmitted from person-to-person by casual contact, it is not necessary to issue a school-wide notification, and there is no need to remove students or staff members with travel-related Zika virus exposure or confirmed Zika virus infection from the school grounds. It is very important for schools to continue to maintain privacy and nondiscrimination protections for all students and employees. It is important to point out that there is no evidence that the risk of transmission of this disease will be higher on school properties than in other areas of the local community. Isolation of persons with Zika virus disease or quarantine of exposed persons is neither recommended nor appropriate. Should local Zika virus transmission occur in Los Angeles County, including locations that may be near the district's schools, it is not necessary to cancel school-related activities. Additional information for Zika response and planning for school administrators is available from the CDC at www.cdc.gov/zika/schools.html.

Additional information about Zika is available at: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov>. Public Health urges schools to educate staff members and students about Zika virus and to inform them about what can be expected in the event of a suspected local case. It is our hope that the attached list of resources can assist you in achieving these goals. We thank you for supporting the health and safety of our communities.

If you have questions or need additional information please feel free to contact Bernard Tolliver at (213) 240-8144 or by email at media@ph.lacounty.gov.

Sincerely,


Jeffrey D. Gunzenhauser, M.D., M.P.H.
Interim Health Officer

ZIKA VIRUS: RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS

- Public Health Zika Fact Sheets available in [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Public Health Zika Travel Warning Poster available in [English](#) [Spanish](#) [Korean](#) [Chinese \(simplified\)](#) [Japanese](#) [Tagalog](#) [Thai](#) [Vietnamese](#)
- Zika Virus Disease: Public Health [website](#)
- West Nile Virus: Public Health [website](#)
- Mosquito Abatement District Contact Information [Flyer](#)
- Los Angeles County Veterinary Public Health Reporting Dead Birds [online](#) or by phone: 213-989-7060
- Zika Virus Response Planning: Interim Guidance for District and School Administrators in the Continental United States and Hawaii: [CDC website](#)
- Listing of Countries and Territories with Active Zika Transmission: [CDC website](#)
- Talking to Children about Zika: CDC flyer available in [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- What Parents Should Know about Zika: [CDC website](#)
- Preventing Mosquito Bites—Includes a list of approved mosquito repellants and information for applying mosquito repellant on children: [CDC website](#)
- Mosquito Bites are Bad—Zika Activity Book for Children in the US: CDC workbook available in [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Public Health’s West Nile Virus and Other Arboviral Epidemiology Report, a free newsletter summarizing mosquito-related disease activity in Los Angeles County, email to sign up here: acdc2@ph.lavounty.gov