ADULT VACCINE ACCESS COALITION

Statement from the Adult Vaccine Access Coalition (AVAC) on the Loss of Measles Elimination Status in the United States

November 17, 2026

The United States losing its measles elimination status is a serious setback for our nation's health. Widespread immunization led to measles being declared eliminated in the U.S. and kept it from spreading continuously for more than 25 years. As vaccination rates have declined, that protection has weakened. More people are now getting sick and some are dying from a disease we know how to prevent.

Adults cannot be overlooked in the response to measles. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adults ages 20 and older account for 41 percent of measles cases this year, up from 29 percent last year. For those who get sick, measles can cause pneumonia and other complications that require hospitalization and can be fatal. Contracting measles during pregnancy can also increase the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth and premature delivery.

We urge adults who are unsure whether they are protected to ask their health care professional or pharmacist whether they need the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. They should be able to act on that advice without worrying about cost. The Department of Health and Human Services must maintain no-cost coverage for recommended adult vaccines across Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance, and give adults and their clinicians clear, consistent guidance about which vaccines they need.

Americans across the political spectrum want to protect themselves and their families from measles and other preventable diseases. Regaining measles elimination status will require higher vaccination rates among children and adults to stop current outbreaks and prevent sustained spread in the future.

1640 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202.540.1070 • info@adultvaccinesnow.org