

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Media Contact:**

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August 14, 2025***Public Health officials partner with local school on a TB exposure case***

Ventura County, CA — Ventura County Public Health (VCPH) officials have identified a case of Tuberculosis (TB) disease at McKeveitt Elementary Academy of Visual and Performing Arts in Santa Paula. In conjunction with school officials and staff, VCPH is in the process of evaluating all students, staff and faculty who may have been exposed. The Santa Paula Unified School District has notified parents. The most common way to become infected with TB germs is by spending a lot of time with a person who has active TB in enclosed spaces.

VCPH will hold an informational meeting on Monday, August 18, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. to answer questions from parents, students, and school staff, share information about the risk of exposure to TB, and discuss plans for testing. The meeting will be held in the multipurpose room at Isbell Middle School at 221 South 4th Street, Santa Paula, CA 93060.

“We know that news like this can be unsettling, especially when it can involve our children,” said Dr. Uldine Castel, Public Health Officer. “The top priority is the health and safety of the students, staff, and community. Our Public Health team is working hand-in-hand with Santa Paula Unified School District and others in the community. We'll be here every step of the way to answer questions and provide support. This is a caring, close-knit community, who look out for each other, and we will get through this.”

The TB Control team at VCPH expects to test students and staff who may have had close contact with the individual who was identified with TB disease. The team is carefully examining the possible close contacts to the case. Those identified individuals will receive a letter notifying them that they may have been exposed and that they need to be tested for TB. The testing will begin next week at the school. There will be no cost for the tests.

TB is a serious, treatable, and slow-growing bacterial disease. It usually affects the lungs, but it can also affect other parts of the body. TB is transmitted person-to-person through microscopic droplets that enter the air when a person with active pulmonary TB disease coughs or sneezes. People who breathe in air containing TB bacteria can become infected; however not everyone infected with TB becomes sick.

There is a difference between TB infection and TB disease.

- TB infection: Germs are inactive in the body. The person is not sick and cannot spread TB, but the infection can progress to TB disease in the future.

- TB disease: Germs are active in the body. Symptoms can include frequent coughing, fever, weight loss, night sweats, coughing up blood, and fatigue. People with TB disease can spread the infection to others.

TB can be treated and cured. All individuals who test positive for TB infection will receive follow-up testing and, if needed, medication to ensure they do not develop active TB disease. VCPH has set up a hotline, 805-385-9444, for concerned parents and staff who believe they may have been exposed to get more information.

For additional information on TB, visit the California Department of Public Health at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/TBCB.aspx> or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/index.html>.

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