



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

**Matthew G. Bevin**  
Governor

**Division of Communications**  
275 E. Main Street, 5C-A  
Frankfort, KY 40621  
(502) 564-6786  
Fax: (502) 564-0274  
[www.chfs.ky.gov](http://www.chfs.ky.gov)

**Vickie Yates Brown Glisson**  
Secretary

**Statewide News Release**

**Media Contact: Beth Fisher or Doug Hogan,**  
502.564.6786 ext. 3101 or 3465

## **Spring Break Travelers Should Protect Themselves Against Zika** *Use Repellant, Protective Clothing if Traveling in High-Risk Areas*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 11, 2016)** — The Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) advises spring-break travelers to be cautious and take steps to prevent mosquito bites if traveling to areas of the globe where the Zika virus has been documented. DPH announced this week a Louisville man, who had traveled to a Central American country where the virus is circulating, has tested positive for the virus. He is doing well and expected to fully recover from the illness.

Zika is an infectious disease spread by the bite of a mosquito and currently circulating in many warm-weather areas outside the United States. Anyone planning to travel during the spring break season is encouraged to learn more about the virus, where it is spreading and ways to avoid mosquito bites. More information can be obtained from the DPH Health Alerts website <http://healthalerts.ky.gov/Pages/Zika.aspx>.

“This is the time of year that universities, school districts and other organizations observe spring break and many Kentuckians will be traveling for vacation or mission and service trips,” said Dr. Kraig Humbaugh, senior deputy commissioner for DPH. “If that is the case, we urge you to research the area in which you’ll be traveling. If Zika has been documented in the area, make sure you take appropriate steps to avoid mosquitos. Pregnant women should consider postponing travel to Zika-affected areas.”

Information about where the virus is circulating and advice for travelers can be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Travelers’ Health Website, <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>.

Zika virus is considered by the World Health Organization to be a serious international public health threat. Although many people who contract Zika virus infection have mild or no symptoms, increasing evidence suggests that pregnant women who are infected with Zika virus are at higher risk for giving birth to babies who have defects of brain formation.

For prevention against mosquito bites, DPH recommends the following:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants with light coloring.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered and approved insect repellents. Always follow instructions for the insect repellents and never use them on children younger than two months of age.



- Use mosquito netting to cover babies younger than 2 months old in carriers, strollers or cribs to protect them from mosquito bites.
- If you are using a sunscreen, apply the sunscreen and wait 20 minutes before applying insect repellent.
- Do not spray repellent on the skin under clothing.
- Treating clothing with permethrin according to label instructions is another option to maximize protection.

-30-

*The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.*