

RESOLUTION

Subject: Promotion of Universal Lead Screening in High-Risk Kentucky ZIP Codes

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Referred to: Reference Committee

WHEREAS, lead poisoning remains a serious and preventable public health threat to children, with no safe level of lead exposure and irreversible effects on neurodevelopment, behavior, and overall health; and

WHEREAS, children under six years of age are particularly vulnerable to lead poisoning due to their developing nervous systems and frequent hand-to-mouth behavior; and

WHEREAS, older housing stock built before 1978, especially in impoverished urban neighborhoods and rural Appalachian communities in Kentucky, frequently contains lead-based paint, a major source of exposure²; and

WHEREAS, from 2005 to 2021, nearly 10,000 children in Louisville tested positive for elevated blood lead levels³; and

WHEREAS, children living in the northwest area of Louisville are almost 10 times more likely to develop lead poisoning than those in other areas with mainly five ZIP codes—40203, 40210, 40211, 40212, and 40215—having the highest concentration of housing built before 1978¹; and

WHEREAS, a lead level of >3.5 µg/dL is considered an elevated blood lead level⁵; and

WHEREAS, the CDC and AAP recommend targeted screening and intervention in areas with high prevalence of lead exposure, yet many children in Kentucky's highest-risk ZIP codes are not routinely tested for lead⁴; and

WHEREAS, universal blood lead level (BLL) screening in high-risk ZIP codes would enable early identification and intervention to prevent long-term harm and reduce disparities in health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Kentucky currently lacks a mandate for universal screening of all children in high-risk geographic areas despite significant environmental and socioeconomic risk factors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that KMA support legislation and public health initiatives to implement universal blood lead level screening for all children under the age of six living in ZIP codes identified as high-risk due to older housing, poverty, and other environmental risk factors; and be it further

RESOLVED, that KMA support the development and maintenance of a data-informed list of high-risk ZIP codes requiring screening; and be it further

RESOLVED, that KMA support integration of blood lead level screening alerts into electronic medical record (EMR) systems for pediatric providers in Kentucky to improve compliance and follow-up.

References:

1. Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness. *Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention*. LouisvilleKY.gov. Retrieved June 5, 2025, from <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/health-wellness/childhood-lead-poisoning-prevention>
2. Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Public Health, Division of Maternal and Child Health. "Kentucky lead targeted screening plan". Retrieved June 5, 2025, from <https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dmch/cfhb/CLPPP/KYLeadTargetedScreeningPlan.pdf>
3. WDRB News. "Louisville health department launches dashboard as data shows kids exposed to toxic levels of lead". Retrieved June 5, 2025, from https://www.wdrb.com/news/louisville-health-department-launches-dashboard-as-data-shows-kids-exposed-to-toxic-levels-of-lead/article_6df1edea-5504-11ef-b892-cf89c0616559.html
4. American Academy of Pediatrics. (2016). *Prevention of childhood lead toxicity*. Pediatrics, 138(1), e20161493. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK540604/table/ch1.tab1/>
5. Louisville Metro Department of Health & Wellness. (2022). "Lead levels and definitions" [PDF]. Retrieved July 2, 2025, from <https://louisvilleky.gov/health-wellness/document/lead-levels-and-definitions>