



The Dallas County Medical Society supports the ongoing response to the Ebola crisis in Dallas. With regard to Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins, we want to assure the public that based on the evidence for how Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) transmits from person to person, the actions taken by him, particularly when working with the family members of Thomas Eric Duncan, present no risk to him, nor would there be any risk to others he comes in contact with, including his family members.

Our assessment of Judge Jenkins' risk is as follows:

- Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, EVD has limited survival in the environment and places 24 hours as the upper limit for virus survival when consistent hospital disinfection practices are carried out. Because the judge was in the apartment well after 24 hours since the last time Mr. Duncan was there, the environmental contamination risk would be minimal to none.
- The judge entered the apartment where Mr. Duncan was staying, following strict procedures set forth by the CDC. Without any direct contact with Mr. Duncan's blood or body fluids, there is almost no risk that the judge will become infected with EVD. To become infected, infected blood or body fluids must enter a break in one's skin, or infected blood or body fluids must be in contact with mucous membranes (mouth, nose or eyes). None of these circumstances occurred while the judge was in the apartment.
- The judge interacted with family members of Mr. Duncan immediately after health officials conducted their assessment and found no signs or symptoms for EVD. All family members were without fever. Persons without signs or symptoms of EVD infection are not contagious.
- The judge rode in the same vehicle with Mr. Duncan's family members to a new location, but this poses no risk for infection, as all family members had been assessed for any signs and symptoms of EVD. EVD is not transmitted through the air, based on available scientific information, so riding in a vehicle, even with someone who is contagious, does not place one at significant risk of infection. Again, because none of the family members of Mr. Duncan were showing EVD signs or symptoms during the ride in the vehicle, no risk is associated with such activities.
- Judge Jenkins does not exhibit any signs or symptoms, so there is no risk to others he comes in contact with, including his family members. All available evidence, which includes the current investigation in West Africa, as well as prior outbreaks of EVD, has not demonstrated asymptomatic transmission.

Based on this assessment, we conclude that Judge Jenkins acted thoughtfully and carefully while performing his job duties. Further, his actions illustrate the commitment of our dedicated officials to continue working in spite of the unnecessary fears that surround this case. It is necessary to reduce the unwarranted fears and stigma surrounding Ebola in our community. Judge Jenkins was mindful of the rules for protecting against avoidable transmission.

The Dallas County Medical Society continues to work closely with those involved in this response. We welcome the opportunity to provide guidance based on current scientific knowledge regarding how the EVD is transmitted from person to person, and we remain available to assist officials during this crisis.

Todd A. Pollock, MD
President, Dallas County Medical Society

John T. Carlo, MD
Chair, DCMS Community Emergency Response Committee