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HEALTH ADVISORY: MONKEYPOX CASES IN NON-HEALTHCARE CONGREGATE SETTINGS

Empire State Plaza, Corning Tower, Albany, NY 12237 | health.ny.gov

What is Monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a rare disease that is caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Monkeypox can cause flu-like symptoms and a rash. In some cases, the rash may start first followed by other symptoms, while others only experience a rash. Human-to-human contact is the main form of transmission of monkeypox virus by direct contact with lesions, infected body fluids, or from respiratory secretions during prolonged face-to-face contact. A person is considered infectious until all scabs separate and a fresh layer of skin is formed.

Non-healthcare congregate settings are defined as facilities, or other housing, where people who are not related reside or are located in proximity to one another and share at least one common room (e.g., sleeping room, kitchen, bathroom, living room). Congregate settings can include correctional and detention facilities, homeless shelters, adult care facilities, group homes, dormitories at institutes of higher education, seasonal worker housing, residential supportive housing, and other similar settings as determined by licensing and/or regulating agencies. If healthcare services are provided on site, healthcare personnel should follow recommendations in <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/infection-control-healthcare.html>

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has also issued general guidance about monkeypox which can be found here:

https://health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/zoonoses/monkeypox/docs/2022-07-08_han.pdf

What actions to take if a case has been identified? Facilities and provider agencies should:

- **Communicate** with staff, volunteers, and individuals about how to prevent and protect themselves against the virus. Include clear information about transmission via close physical contact and sexual contact. Try to keep all messaging fact-based in order to avoid stigma.
- **Respond** to reported cases in your facility appropriately. When responding to reported cases in your facility, consider the following actions:
 - Individuals, residents, staff, and volunteers suspected of monkeypox should be medically evaluated and tested. Any individual who is identified as positive for monkeypox should be informed on how to isolate until they are no longer infectious. Consult with your local or state health department regarding

discontinuation of isolation prior to returning to work, group or congregate setting activities.

- Staff should refrain from reporting to work if suspected of monkeypox until medically evaluated **and** test results are received.
- Ensure isolation spaces have a door that can be shut and a private bathroom. Multiple individuals who test positive for monkeypox may stay in the same room.
- If a separate bathroom is not available, surfaces such as counters, toilet seats, faucets, should be cleaned and disinfected using an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered disinfectant (such as [List Q](#)) after use of a shared space. This may include during activities like showering, using the toilet, or changing bandages that cover the rash. Consider disposable glove use while cleaning.
- Ensure all PPE and waste from isolation areas is disposed of properly. Facilities should also comply with [state and local regulations](#) for handling, storage, treatment, and disposal of waste.
- **Identify** individuals who may have been exposed to monkeypox by taking the following actions:
 - Work with your state or local health department to identify and monitor staff, volunteers, and other individuals or residents who may have had close contact with someone who has monkeypox.
 - Use [exposure risk assessment recommendations](#) (monitoring persons exposed to the virus) and contact tracing where it is feasible.
- **Ensure access** to handwashing
 - Soap and water or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol should be available at all times at no cost.
 - Anyone who has come into contact with lesions, or clothing, linens, and/or surfaces that may have been in contact with lesions should wash their hands immediately.
- **Clean and disinfect** common areas
 - Comply with state and local regulations for cleaning and disinfection
 - Avoid activities such as vacuuming, dry dusting, and sweeping. Wet cleaning methods using liquid/wet wipe products should be used.
 - Standard cleaning and disinfection procedures should be performed using an EPA and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) registered hospital-grade disinfectant with an emerging viral pathogen claim. Products with Emerging Viral Pathogens claims may be found on EPA's List Q. Follow the manufacturer's directions for concentration, contact time, and care and handling.
- **Provide** all appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff, volunteers, individuals, and residents.
 - PPE, including gowns, gloves, eye-protection, and respirators (KN95, N95, or higher) should be worn when entering isolation areas.
 - Soiled laundry from persons with known or suspected monkeypox infection should only be handled when wearing appropriate PPE.
 - Staff and volunteers should also wear proper PPE when cleaning and disinfecting areas where people with monkeypox spent time.
 - The following Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards can be referenced via the links below:
 - Bloodborne Pathogens ([29 CFR 1910.1030](#)).
 - PPE ([29 CFR 1910.132](#)).
 - Respiratory Protection ([29 CFR 1910.134](#)).

Where to find frequently updated Monkeypox information?

Please visit the NYSDOH monkeypox webpage, which is frequently being updated in real time as further information is relayed about monkeypox virus cases in NYS and NYC, and more information on testing, treatment, and vaccinations.

<https://health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/zoonoses/monkeypox/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/specific-settings/congregate.html>