



Preventing Monkeypox in Non-health-care Workplaces and Other Settings

This document applies to activities and non-health-care workplaces. Use the following guidance in a way that makes sense for your workplace, setting or activities. Some employers or activity leaders may choose to use this guidance to develop specific protocols to meet their circumstances.

For guidance for schools, child care settings and after-school programs, visit on.nyc.gov/preventing-monkeypox-schools. For guidance for health care settings, visit cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/infection-control.html and click on **Infection Control in Healthcare Settings**. For guidance on workplaces where people share living space, such as shelters, visit cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/specific-settings/congregate.html. For guidance on monkeypox, including how to have safer sex, visit on.nyc.gov/monkeypox-sick-guidance.

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a contagious disease caused by the monkeypox virus. It can cause sores that may look like pimples or blisters, be firm to the touch and have a dip in the center. Eventually, a scab will form on the sores, then fall off. Some people also have flu-like symptoms like fever, chills, sore throat, swollen lymph nodes, headaches and tiredness.

Do not assume someone has monkeypox if they have a rash or sores. Most rashes and sores are not caused by the monkeypox virus.

How does monkeypox spread?

Monkeypox is most often spread through direct contact with the sores of someone who has the virus. In this outbreak, the monkeypox virus has spread mainly during close, intimate contact, such as during sex (oral, anal and vaginal), kissing, cuddling and massage. Monkeypox can also spread by touching surfaces or items that have been in contact with the sores of someone who has the virus, or breathing in respiratory droplets from them while in very close contact for a prolonged period of time. Anyone can get monkeypox regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

What is the risk of monkeypox transmission at work or during activities?

- The risk of monkeypox transmission is low at most workplaces and during most activities. For example, monkeypox is unlikely to spread just from being near someone with monkeypox in an office, restaurant or grocery store, or sitting next to someone with the virus on the subway or in a movie theater.

- The risk of monkeypox transmission is higher where skin-to-skin contact occurs, or when costumes, uniforms or towels are shared with someone who has monkeypox.
- To reduce risk for your employees, provide gloves and masks to workers who have skin-to-skin contact with patrons, such as in nail salons, barbershops, or massage and tattoo parlors. Wash shared costumes and uniforms between uses and do not share towels. If you offer activities where there is skin-to-skin contact such as wrestling, judo or dance, ask participants to pay attention to new sores or flu-like symptoms.

When can an employee or participant who tests positive for monkeypox return to work or activities?

People who test positive for monkeypox can return to work or activities when they have been fever-free and flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, runny nose or sore throat have resolved without taking any fever-reducing or other medicine. Depending on the type of work or setting, some people must wait for all sores to heal:

- A person who works in a **high-risk** setting must wait until all sores have healed and a new layer of skin has formed, which can take two to four weeks. A high-risk setting or job includes, for example:
 - Programs for young children or for children with special needs who require close physical contact
 - Long-term care, adult and senior care facilities, and in-home services involving physical care
 - Salons that offer services such as massage or beauty enhancement
 - Sex work
 - Health care settings
 - Residential congregate settings such as homeless shelters and residential drug treatment facilities
- A person who works in a **low-risk** setting can return to work or the activity even if they still have sores that have not yet healed if the person:
 - Keeps the sores completely covered at all times
 - Wears a high-quality, well-fitting mask that covers their mouth and nose
 - Avoids physical contact with others and crowded spaces
 - Does not share dishes, food, drink or utensils
 - Cleans shared surfaces that may touch their sore, such as a toilet seat in a shared bathroom
 - If possible, employers should consider allowing employees who have sores that are still healing to work remotely or extend their sick leave.
 - If the person's sores or rashes cannot be covered, because, for example, they are on the face, the person must remain at home.
- A person who works in a food service establishment and has sores on their hands may not return to work until the sores have completely healed.

How does the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC Health Department) find out about monkeypox cases?

The NYC Health Department receives reports from laboratories and health care providers. The NYC Health Department will investigate reported cases. An investigation may include contact tracing and follow-up testing.

Medical information is confidential. If an employee tells you they tested positive for monkeypox, do not share this information with others.

Do employees or participants need to stay home if they were exposed to monkeypox?

People who are exposed to someone who is confirmed to have monkeypox do **not** need to quarantine and may go to work if they do not have symptoms. They should check for symptoms for 21 days and contact their health care provider if they develop monkeypox symptoms. If they do not have a provider, they can call **311** to be connected to care. NYC Health + Hospitals provides care regardless of immigration status, insurance status or ability to pay. For more information, visit nyc.gov/monkeypox and click on **Symptoms**.

The JYNNEOS vaccine has been approved in the U.S. for the prevention of monkeypox in people who have been exposed to the monkeypox virus. The NYC Health Department will advise people identified as close contacts of someone who has monkeypox whether vaccination is recommended and, if so, help them get vaccinated. Vaccines are free in NYC regardless of your immigration status, insurance status or ability to pay.

How should I clean my workplace?

Maintain your usual cleaning practices. Additional cleaning is only needed if someone who is confirmed to have monkeypox was at your workplace while they had symptoms. Their workspace and shared spaces they have been in should be closed until they have been cleaned and disinfected. To protect the privacy of staff members who test positive for monkeypox, try to avoid cleaning their workstation, office or other work areas while other employees are present. For more information on cleaning and disinfection, visit on.nyc.gov/monkeypox-cleaning-guidance.

For more information, visit nyc.gov/monkeypox.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves. 8.30.22