



Department of Health

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

MARY T. BASSETT, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

KRISTIN M. PROUD
Acting Executive Deputy Commissioner

Friday, July 22, 2022
Dear Administrator Letter
Subject: **REVISED-**
Symptomatic/Asymptomatic
Guidance for HC Workers

Dear Chief Executive Officer/Administrator:

The New York State Department of Health continues to monitor the current monkeypox outbreak. The Department would like to remind healthcare facilities (HCF) to encourage staff not to report to work if they are exhibiting signs or symptoms of monkeypox.

The signs and symptoms of monkeypox can vary, but include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and backache
- Exhaustion
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills
- Vesicular/pustular rash that appears on the face, inside the mouth, and on other body parts, like the hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus.

Person-to-person transmission of monkeypox occurs through:

- direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids
- respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact, or during intimate physical contact, such as kissing, cuddling, or sex
- touching items (such as clothing or linens) that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids
- pregnant people can spread the virus to their fetus through the placenta
- contact with infected animals, either by being scratched or bitten by the animal or by preparing or eating meat or using products from an infected animal.

Anyone who has had close physical contact with someone who has symptoms of monkeypox or has traveled to a country with confirmed cases of monkeypox or where monkeypox is endemic, is at risk for infection. If staff believe they have been exposed to someone with confirmed monkeypox and are experiencing the above signs or symptoms including development of a rash, they should isolate at home and contact their employer and primary care provider immediately for further instruction.

Any healthcare worker who has cared for a patient with monkeypox should be alert to the development of symptoms that could suggest monkeypox infection, especially within the 21-day period after the last date of care, and should notify infection control, occupational health, and the health department to be guided about a medical evaluation.

Healthcare workers who have unprotected exposures (i.e., not wearing PPE) to patients with monkeypox do not need to be excluded from work duty, but should undergo active surveillance for symptoms, which includes measurement of temperature at least twice daily for 21 days following the exposure. Prior to reporting for work each day, the healthcare worker should be interviewed regarding evidence of fever or rash.

The Department is committed to keeping all New Yorkers safe and encourages healthcare facilities to work with staff on similar safeguarding measures.

Clinical questions about this letter should be directed to icp@health.ny.gov.

[Monitoring People Who Have Been Exposed | Monkeypox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)