



**PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLNESS  
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY**

GREG FISCHER  
MAYOR

JEFFREY HOWARD, MD, MBA, MPH  
INTERIM DIRECTOR

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**Information**

MEMORANDUM FOR: Louisville Metro Council

FROM: Jeffrey Howard, MD, MBA, MPH, Interim Director & Chief Health Strategist and Medical Director, Louisville Metro Department for Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW)

SUBJECT: Monkeypox response in Jefferson County

**Background**

**Current situation:**

[Monkeypox](#) cases are on the rise in the United States. To date, more than [17,000 cases](#) have been reported across the country. So far in Jefferson County, at least [seventeen cases](#) of monkeypox have been confirmed.

**Who is at risk?**

Although investigations are ongoing, it appears monkeypox is mostly [spreading](#) through close, intimate contact. The risk to the public at large is low. Anyone can contract monkeypox; however, most of the reported cases in the U.S. have been among individuals that identify as gay, bisexual, transgender, gender non-conforming, and/or non-binary people who have sex with men.

**If someone is experiencing [symptoms](#) of monkeypox:**

They should see their healthcare provider or an urgent treatment center for testing and treatment.

**How can I prevent getting monkeypox?**

Following the [recommended prevention steps](#) and getting [vaccinated](#) if you were exposed to monkeypox or if you are at higher risk of being exposed to monkeypox can help protect you and your community.

## **Discussion Points**

### **Vaccine status:**

- The U. S. supply of vaccine is extremely limited.
- The CDC provides vaccines to state health departments. State health departments then allocate the vaccines to their city and county local health departments.
- LMPHW has been allocated doses to enable us to vaccinate documented close contacts of someone who has tested positive for monkeypox. To reach the highest risk individuals in our community, we coordinated with healthcare providers already caring for people in this category and are providing a limited number of preventative vaccines.
- The preferred vaccine to protect against monkeypox is JYNNEOS, which is a two-dose vaccine. People should take precautions to reduce their exposure to monkeypox until immune protection from vaccines has reached its maximum (14 days after getting the second dose).
- We recommend people consulting their healthcare provider to see if they should get vaccinated against monkeypox.

### **What is LMPHW doing:**

- LMPHW has implored our state and federal officials to get more vaccines for our community. We have even explored direct purchasing, but it isn't an option due to the national shortage.
- I am communicating with local health department directors across Kentucky and southern Indiana to coordinate strategies and share lessons learned.
- Our staff is also meeting regularly with the Kentucky Department for Public Health on case investigations and resource coordination.
- When a positive case is identified, LMPHW begins the public health efforts of contact tracing, providing isolation instructions, daily monitoring of positive individuals, and working with providers to coordinate treatment and vaccination.
- To prevent and eliminate monkeypox from our community as quickly as possible, LMPHW activated the Department Operations Center to "Monitoring Status" to track the developing monkeypox outbreak. The response can be scaled up or down based on the necessity of the situation and will be driven by epidemiological data.
- We are working to identify additional primary care providers willing to provide the vaccine as our supply increases.
- We continue to engage with community organizations that serve high risk populations including the LGBTQ+ community, homeless service providers, and healthcare providers to keep them updated and to develop strategies for vaccine distribution and sharing information.
- LMPHW continues to share the latest monkeypox developments in Jefferson County through our [website](#), local news outlets, [social media](#) pages, our [Public Health News & Alerts letter](#) and by sharing education materials with community organizations.

### **Additional information:**

- Shareable education materials and graphics can be [found here](#).
- Residents can call the toll-free Monkeypox Hotline (844) 520-6670 for answers to general monkeypox questions.

- LMPHW: <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/health-wellness/monkeypox>
- KDPH: <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dehp/idb/Pages/monkeypox.aspx>
- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/index.html>

### **Recommendations**

Metro Council can help by providing monkeypox information to different communities and various channels. Being careful to avoid marginalizing groups who may be at increased risk for monkeypox and keeping messages fact-based to help prevent [stigmatizing](#) populations most affected.