

MPOX: Information for the Hospitality Industry

February 10, 2023

Background Information

Mpox is a contagious rash illness. It is caused by the mpox virus. In 2022, an outbreak began. There were cases in many places where this infection is not usually found, including in the U.S. and in Virginia.

What You Need to Know

People with mpox can spread the disease, and are contagious until all their scabs fall off and a fresh layer of intact skin forms. This can take 2–4 weeks. Fluids from the body and rash material from an infected person can contaminate the environment. The virus can survive on linens (sheets and towels or bedding) and clothing. It can also survive on surfaces, especially in dark, cool, and low humidity settings. The virus can live for longer on materials like bedding or clothing (porous surfaces) compared to materials like plastic, glass, or metal (nonporous surfaces).

The mpox virus can be killed by many household disinfectants. Disinfection is recommended for all areas (such as bedrooms, bathrooms and living areas) where a person with mpox has spent time, as well as, for items they may have touched.

We are still learning how much environmental contamination plays a role in spreading the mpox virus. It likely depends on many factors, like if their rashes were covered, how long the person was there, and factors in the environment (humidity, temperature, exposure to UV light, type of materials in contact with).

The CDC has guidance on [Disinfecting Home and Other Non-Healthcare Settings](#). This guidance can be used for hotels and similar locations.

Working with VDH

To control the spread, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) works with people who have mpox to identify close contacts who might have been exposed and environments where infected people spent time while they were contagious. These could include locations like hotels or other similar accommodations.

If your business is identified in this process, VDH staff will work with you to ensure that measures are in place to keep staff and customers safe.

Recommendations

- **Monitor** the current outbreak. Visit [VDH's website](#) and [CDC's website](#) for the latest information.

- **Inform and educate** your staff about mpox and how it spreads. [VDH's Mpox Communication Resources website](#) has fact sheets and other educational information in English and Spanish.
- **Ensure** your standard cleaning and disinfection practices are continued at this time, including use of personal protective equipment (PPE) when needed. While mpox is circulating, consider having staff wear gloves when changing linens and bedding. Advise staff to also not shake used linens.
- **Read** [CDC's Disinfecting Home and Other Non-Healthcare Setting](#). This guidance will be recommended **if** someone with mpox stayed at the facility while they were contagious.
 - **Look** at your PPE. Make sure that you and your staff have or know where to get PPE if the LHD notifies you that someone with mpox stayed in your facility. PPE includes gowns, gloves, eye protection, and well-fitting masks or respirators.
 - **Look** at cleaning and disinfectant supplies. Many common disinfectants work against mpox. Make sure that you have cleaning products that are EPA-registered disinfectants ([List Q](#)).
- **If a case of mpox is identified, the local health department will contact you.**
 - If the individual with mpox has stayed in a room while infectious, please do not allow other individuals to stay in the room until it can be cleaned in accordance with [CDC's Disinfecting Home and Other Non-Healthcare Setting](#).
 - Make sure that cleaning staff take increased precautions when cleaning the room, including wearing gowns, gloves, eye protection, and well-fitting masks or respirators.
 - Work with public health staff to provide the names and/or contact information of individuals who may have been exposed to infectious materials from the room and may need monitoring and/or vaccine.