

# MPOX GUIDANCE FOR K-12 SCHOOLS



## Audience:

Administrators/School nurses/Teachers of K-12 schools and operators of childcare and youth programs.

## Purpose:

To help school administrators, childcare providers, and youth program operators understand the health and safety practices needed to identify and prevent spread of Mpox in their settings.

## Reminders

Please contact the Cuyahoga County Board of Health to notify them of suspected cases at 216-201-2080 or [disease@ccbh.net](mailto:disease@ccbh.net). Schools are expected to work with local health departments on isolation arrangements and other precautions.

## Background:

- Mpox is a rare disease caused by infection with the mpox virus
- Mpox virus is apart of the same family of viruses as variola virus, the virus that causes smallpox
- Symptoms are similar to smallpox symptoms, but milder, and mpox is rarely fatal
- Mpox is not related to chickenpox
- It is possible for anyone to catch mpox if they have close, personal contact with an infected person
- At this time, the risk in schools and early childhood settings is low
- In the current global outbreak, mpox has been much less common among children, and infections have rarely been life-threatening



# School settings should follow their everyday operational guidance to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases by:



- Having children, staff, and volunteers stay home when sick
- Ensuring access to adequate handwashing supplies, maintaining routine cleaning and disinfection practices
- Identifying private spaces for assessment of an ill child away from others
- Providing personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff who care for students with infectious diseases

## If there is a staff member, volunteer, or child diagnosed with MPOX:

- Clean the classroom/space where the infected person spent time
- Support the health department in contact tracing by contacting them at 216-201-2080 or [disease@ccbh.net](mailto:disease@ccbh.net) if a person with confirmed mpox has been in your facility and identify individuals who might have been exposed to the virus
- Provide information about preventing the spread of mpox to staff members, volunteers, students (when age appropriate), and parents



# Isolation Precautions

- Those with suspected mpox infection should have recommended isolation precautions for mpox until mpox infection is ruled out.
- Those with confirmed mpox infection should have recommended isolation precautions for mpox until all lesions have crusted, those crusts have separated, and a fresh layer of healthy skin has formed underneath.
- If the student has the option to attend classes remotely, this should be implemented immediately.



## If a Child or Adolescent Develops Symptoms of MPOX while in a School, Early Childhood Education, or Other Setting:

- Separate child from other children or adolescents in a private space
- Wear a well-fitting mask (if the child is at least 2 years old)
- Be picked up by a caregiver so they can receive medical assessment (testing)
- Avoid touching the rash, if present, and make sure to cover the rash
- If close contact is required, appropriate PPE should be used if available
- Wash hands routinely



# Contacts

- Encourage children and staff to stay home if they are feeling sick
- Most children can attend school and other school-related activities even if they have had close contact with someone with mpox unless they are experiencing symptoms
- If contacts of the confirmed case have been identified, it is recommended that they receive the mpox vaccine within 4 days of exposure. Your local health department can assist in making sure these contacts can receive vaccine. At the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, please contact Gladys Harris (gharris@ccbh.net) or Mary Drozda (mdrozda@ccbh.net) to coordinate this process.

Resources: click on the following links

[Center for Disease Control](#)

[Signs and Symptoms](#)

[Isolation and infection control at home](#)

[Disinfecting the Home and Other Non-Healthcare Settings](#)