

MPOX INFECTION PREVENTION AND ISOLATION GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE HALLS AND SHARED LIVING SPACES

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INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the University requirements and guidelines for mpox infection prevention and isolation in University residence halls, dormitories, and other shared living spaces. These guidelines are in alignment with local, state, and federal public health agency guidelines.

These guidelines apply to and should also be followed by UW students and personnel in shared living environments outside of University-owned and operated spaces.

These guidelines apply to all UW campuses: Seattle, Bothell and Tacoma.

Individuals who have a suspected or confirmed mpox infection are required to stay home and isolate and take precautions to help prevent further transmission. Mpox is most commonly spread through close physical contact, but may also be spread via contact with objects that have been used by a person with mpox, particularly clothing, bedding, and towels. This means that those who are infected need to take additional measures (described in this document) to protect people that they live with.

UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE HALL-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

- If you live in a University residence hall, notify UW Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) right away if your healthcare provider suspects or confirms that you have mpox infection by emailing covidehc@uw.edu or calling 206.616.3344.
 - EH&S will respond within 24 hours to gather more information, to provide you with isolation instructions and determine if you will need to temporarily move into an isolation space in coordination with University housing staff.
 - EH&S will also gather information about University personnel and students who may have been exposed and help facilitate medical evaluation and assessment for prophylactic vaccination as needed for University community members who may have been exposed.
- Stay home. Do not go to work or class. Only leave your home for medical care. If you are isolating and need to leave your room for medical care, wear a well-fitting, disposable mask and cover all skin lesions with clothing, gloves, or bandages.

- If you move to a residence hall isolation space, you must remain there until receiving a negative mpox test result (if not yet tested), or if you test positive until all rash lesions scabs have fallen off, the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. University residence hall staff will provide additional instruction on isolation space protocols.
- Those who are able to isolate at a residence outside of the University (e.g., family home) may do so given the following qualifications are met and confirmed by EH&S and/or University residence hall staff:
 - The off-campus residence has ability to support isolation, including a bedroom and bathroom that is not shared by others.
 - You are able to travel to your permanent residence in a private vehicle, and not on public or commercial transit. Ride share services should be avoided.
 - You are able to follow all other instructions for isolation as stipulated in this document and/or specified by EH&S or your medical provider.

The identity of individuals who are suspected or confirmed to have mpox and their close contacts is protected and is disclosed only on a need-to-know basis to those involved in the public health response, which may include UW residence hall staff, Student Life designees, Hall Health Center Clinic personnel and the Environmental Health & Safety Department.

GUIDELINES THAT APPLY TO ALL SHARED LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS

If you have [symptoms](#) consistent with mpox, especially if you have had exposure to someone with mpox, take the following steps to protect those around you:

- Talk to a healthcare provider right away. Let them know in advance that you'd like to be evaluated for a mpox infection.
- Stay home. Do not go to work, class, athletic practices/games or other on-campus activities until you have been cleared by your healthcare provider.
- Cover the area of the rash with clean, dry, loose-fitting clothing or bandages for lesions that are not covered by clothing.
- Wear a well-fitting, disposable mask when around others.
- Avoid skin-to-skin contact with others.
- Do not engage in sexual activity that involves direct physical contact.
- Do not share clothing, bedding, towels, dishes/utensils or other personal items.
- Advise anyone who has come in contact with your rash/lesions, clothing, bedding, or surfaces that were in contact with the rash to immediately wash their hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Let intimate or sex partners know about any symptoms you have.

ISOLATION GUIDELINES

IF A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER SUSPECTS OR CONFIRMS THAT YOU HAVE MPOX:

Isolate at home until the rash has fully resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed. This is when you are no longer contagious to others. Please note this may last between two and four weeks. Follow the [CDC mpox isolation guidelines](#) during this period. Do not end your isolation period unless instructed to do so by your healthcare provider or a public health representative.

The following are general precautions for those in isolation, which may aid in reducing transmission risk for people you live with:

Limit your interaction with others, and identify a private space to isolate

- Stay home and separate from other people and pets in your household. Avoid skin-to-skin contact, including sexual contact, with others.
- Where possible, designate a private bedroom and bathroom for your use during isolation. This may involve asking a roommate or partner to relocate or identifying a private room and dedicated bathroom you may use temporarily.
- Other household members should wear a respirator or a well-fitting disposable mask when in close contact (e.g., within 6 feet) with you for more than a brief encounter.

Control potential sources of infection for others

- If/whenever you cannot fully separate from others in your household, wear a well-fitting disposable mask and avoid physical contact.
- Wear clothing that covers your lesions when in shared spaces, including long sleeves, pants, and bandages depending on lesion locations. Disposable gloves may also be considered for covering rash on the hands when leaving your isolation space (e.g., when receiving medical care).
- If you must leave home for essential needs or medical care, cover your rash/sores with clothing and wear a well-fitting disposable mask.
- Wash your hands often. Household members should also wash their hands often, especially if they touch materials or surfaces that may have come in contact with your rash or sores. This includes items like clothing, bedding, and towels.
- Whenever possible, change your own bandages. Wear gloves when you do so, dispose of them afterwards, and then wash your hands immediately.
- Contain and dispose of contaminated waste in a designated, sealable bag, such as dressings, bandages, and disposable gloves.

Do not share items you use with others

- Do not share or let others touch your clothing, towels, bedding, or utensils. Do not share a bed.
- Do not share dishes, food, drinks, or utensils. Wash dishes you do use with warm water and soap or in a dishwasher.
- Try to avoid contaminating shared upholstered furniture (or other porous materials that can't easily be laundered). Use coversheets, waterproof mattress covers, blankets, or tarps as a barrier.

Clean and disinfect items/spaces you use

- Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) when cleaning and disinfecting your living space.
- Clean and disinfect shared surfaces especially in common areas, such as countertops and doorknobs, frequently.
- Wash your hands after disinfection, using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- If you do not have a dedicated bathroom, clean and disinfect bathroom surfaces (e.g., counters, toilet seats, faucets, door handles) after using. Consider using disposable gloves while disinfecting if your rash is on your hands.
- Place used clothing, bedding, and towels in a plastic bag until the end of isolation
- Separate and handle and do your own laundry, if possible, following appropriate [laundry](#) precautions.
- Avoid cleaning activities that could spread dried material from lesions (e.g., use of fans, dry dusting, sweeping, or vacuuming) in areas where you are isolating.
- Use a dedicated trash can lined with a plastic bag in the room you are isolating in. At the end of isolation, tie the trash bag tightly and place in a second plastic bag before disposing in a larger garbage receptacle.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING YOUR LIVING SPACE AFTER ISOLATION

- Follow the [CDC Guidance on home disinfection](#).
- If cleaning and disinfection is done by someone other than the person with mpox, that person should wear, at a minimum, disposable medical gloves and a respirator or well-fitting disposable mask.
- Once your isolation period has ended, conduct a thorough disinfection of all the spaces that you have been in contact with, in the following order:
 1. Contain all trash in a sealed bag.
 2. Gather all used clothing and bedding in a plastic bag. Follow [laundry precautions](#).
 3. Disinfect hard surfaces and household items.

4. Wet wipe/disinfect upholstered furniture and other soft furnishings as possible.
5. Mop the floor, disinfect carpet as possible/needed.
6. Dispose of all waste.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Students may choose to contact their instructors to make up coursework when isolating at home; however, students are *not* required to share personal health information with their instructors.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[**EH&S Mpox Information**](#)

[**CDC - About Mpox**](#)

[**CDC - Mpox Transmission**](#)

[**CDC - Mpox Signs and Symptoms**](#)

[**CDC - Considerations for Reducing Mpox Transmission in Congregate Living Settings**](#)

[**CDC - Institutes of Higher Education**](#)