



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

ELIZABETH A. CHAR, MD
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 25, 2022

22-092

Monkeypox vaccine distribution focuses limited supply on those at highest risk of infection

Beginning Wednesday, eligible individuals can call 808-586-4462 for appointments

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) will open monkeypox vaccination appointments to Hawai'i residents at higher risk of monkeypox infection or severe illness this week.

Beginning on Wednesday, July 27, Hawai'i residents 18 and older currently eligible for a JYNNEOS vaccine, which is used to prevent monkeypox, will include:

- Individuals who have had exposure to individual(s) with confirmed orthopoxvirus/monkeypox virus within the last 14 days
- Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men and transgender individuals with high risk intimate contact in venues (sex-on-premises events, bathhouses, sex clubs) or areas where monkeypox is known to be spreading in the last 14 days

To date, Hawai'i has received 1,400 doses of the JYNNEOS vaccine. DOH received its allocation from the Strategic National Stockpile and will continue to receive allocations as supply becomes available. Demand is expected to outpace Hawai'i's extremely limited supply.

"We continue to work on equitable distribution of monkeypox vaccine," said Deputy State Epidemiologist Dr. Nathan Tan. "We thank the community for its patience as we vaccinate those most at risk for infection or severe illness, and thank our partners for stepping up to provide vaccines in the community."

DOH is distributing vaccine to healthcare providers in each county who directly reach individuals at higher risk of monkeypox exposure. **Beginning Wednesday, July 27, individuals who fall in either of the above groups should call DOH at 808-586-4462 for an appointment.** The phone line is available Monday-Friday from 7:45 AM – 4:30 PM. Individuals who call outside of

regular business hours can leave a voicemail. Appointment scheduling is not currently available through individual providers.

While JYNNEOS is approved as a two-dose series, DOH and its vaccine partners are prioritizing first doses to reach as many people as possible. The first dose is effective as post-exposure prophylaxis, which can help to prevent infections. DOH and its partners will notify the community when there is sufficient supply to schedule second dose appointments. This approach aims to deploy Hawai'i's limited supply of vaccines to those most likely to be exposed in order to mitigate spread, while DOH plans for additional availability of vaccines in the coming weeks and months.

JYNNEOS is approved by the FDA for prevention of monkeypox disease in adults. However, since no vaccine is 100% effective, it is important for individuals to reduce their risk of potential exposure to monkeypox both before and after receiving a dose of JYNNEOS.

Monkeypox is mainly spread through close, intimate contact with body fluids, lesion material, or items used by someone with monkeypox. Monkeypox may be spread through large respiratory droplets. These droplets generally cannot travel more than a few feet, so prolonged face-to-face contact is required.

Individuals with monkeypox symptoms, including flu-like symptoms, swollen lymph nodes, or new or unexplained rash or sores, should immediately contact their healthcare provider.

Nationwide, the current cases are primarily spreading among social networks of gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. In Hawai'i, at least some of the cases have been reported among gay or bisexual men. However, anyone who has close contact with someone with monkeypox is at risk of infection, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

###

Media Contact:

Katie Arita-Chang

Acting Communications Director

Email: kaitlin.arita-chang@doh.hawaii.gov

Phone: (808) 286-4806