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The San Mateo County Pride Center’s Statement Regarding M-Pox (m-pox was previously referred to as “monkeypox”):

Updated September 2022

This document has been updated to include:

- Information about how community members can receive the m-pox/MPX vaccine (also known as the JYNNEOS vaccine)
- A link to the Pride Center’s “Guide to Using Destigmatizing Language in Health Communication Messaging: Lessons Learned from 40 Years in Combatting HIV Stigma”
- In further efforts to reduce the stigma associated with this virus, monkeypox will be referred to as “m-pox” moving forward. Health organizations will rename m-pox soon. This is similar to the language shift that we saw when “Coronavirus” changed to “COVID-19” or “COVID.”

As more information is learned and distributed about m-pox, we would like to acknowledge the impact of stigmatizing language and misinformation. Marginalized populations such as MSM (men who have sex with men) communities, long-term HIV/AIDS impacted communities, and substance overdose communities have experienced ostracization because of negative health messaging. We acknowledge the complicated risk of m-pox exposure amongst these specific populations given its transmission.

The stigma and losses from the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, the Overdose crisis we are currently in, and the freshened stigma from the possible spread of the COVID pandemic all may be leading to additional stigma surrounding m-pox. The San Mateo County Pride Center honors and acknowledges these intersecting traumas many of you are likely enduring.

The following page contains factual information provided by California Public Health, CDC & SMC Health about transmission risks and methods. We hope these links combat any misinformation. The most strategic way to fight disease and stigma is with accurate information.

Vaccines are currently available but are in limited supply. We encourage you to read the information compiled here, stay up-to-date and be aware of your own individual risk factors.

Many of us can engage in these risks and MSM populations are currently overrepresented in the number of positive cases of m-pox that are being reported. If you are in this population and/or concerned about your own risk factors, we encourage you to find out where you can get vaccines in your local areas.

In community,

The San Mateo County Pride Center

The following information contains links to information and resources about m-pox, testing, vaccines, and treatment as well as a link about how community members can access mental health resources.

Information about the M-pox vaccine:

San Mateo County Health is offering residents who are interested in receiving the JYNNEOS vaccine (MPX vaccine) to complete the MPX vaccination interest form. Eligibility criteria may fluctuate depending on supplies. San Mateo County will be prioritizing those community members who are at the highest risk of exposure, those who practice high-risk behaviors, anyone who may have been in close contact with a potentially infected person, AND who are unable to obtain the vaccine from their healthcare provider.

Please learn about the risk factors for m-pox. If you are at high risk, consult your health care provider for information about vaccination. **If you fall into one of the priority groups and have not been able to get vaccinated, learn more on County Health's [website \(smchealth.org/MPOX-response\)](https://www.smchealth.org/MPOX-response) and use the vaccination request form to be notified of local vaccination opportunities.**

More information about the MPX vaccination can be found here:

<https://www.smchealth.org/monkeypoxvax>

SMC Pride Center's Guide to Using Destigmatizing Language in Health Communication Messaging

The San Mateo County Pride Center has witnessed great care in creating and distributing messaging about m-pox that is factual and does not perpetuate stigma against men who have sex with men (MSM), which is currently the population with the most reported positive cases. We know this matter is delicate and have created a guide in how to communicate about this new virus. The LGBTQ+ community is well-versed in this language from what we've learned after living with HIV for over 40 years. This document utilizes those same principles based on what we learned worked well, and didn't, and helps us translate them according to m-pox.

We recognize that discussions about health - both physical and mental - are not limited to healthcare workers. This guide is intended for everyone, including healthcare professionals, social service workers, front desk associates, family members, and friends. We hope it helps increase awareness and understanding. If you have questions or need further support, please contact Pride Center Program Director, Frankie Sapp (he/him) at francisco.sapp@sanmateopride.org. Thank you for all you do to continue to advocate for health, equity, and the LGBTQ+ community.

To access the guide, please click [this link](#).

Please see the following links for more information about m-pox:

- [California Department of Public Health- Information about MPOX](#)
- ["What is MPOX?"](#)- A short video by [Greater Than Aids](#), an information response group from the Kaiser Family Foundation
- [Statement](#) from Bay Area Counties (Released: 6/23/22)
- [SMC Health MPOX Information & Guidance](#)
- [SMC Health MPOX Vaccination Request Form](#)
- [A recording of Trans Talks- MPOX: Overview, Diagnosis, Treatment, Prevention & Local Resources \(~50min – Close captioning utilized\)](#)
- [CDC Guidelines](#)

Throughout these challenging times, we would like to send a reminder that that the Pride Center currently offers clinical services. For more information about how to receive these services, please see this link: sanmateopride.org/programs/mental-health-services.

If you would like information for more mental health resources, including crisis intervention information, please see this link: sanmateopride.org/programs/crisis-intervention.