



National LGBTQ Institute on Intimate Partner Violence

A PROJECT OF THE LOS ANGELES LGBT CENTER

In partnership with the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs and In Our Own Voices, Inc.

Mpox & Intimate Partner Violence in the LGBTQ Community

The first case of mpox, formerly known as Human Monkeypox, in the United States was confirmed in May 2022. Mpox is a viral infection primarily spread through close skin-to-skin contact. Symptoms can include painful blisters and rash, fever, headaches, muscle aches, and swollen lymph nodes. Although anyone can get infected, the outbreak has largely impacted men who have sex with men. The COVID pandemic and AIDS epidemic have shown us that when people from marginalized identities are blamed for the spread of the disease, they are at risk for identity-based hate crimes and violence, and this has the very likely potential to increase the risks factors associated with LGBTQ IPV. Service providers must respond swiftly and effectively for LGBTQ survivors' safety and wellbeing.

Strategies to Combat Anti-LGBTQ Stigma, Bias, and Violence

Public Education: Promote messaging that emphasizes that *anyone* can contract mpox and provide fact-based messaging on symptoms, prevention, testing, and vaccines; avoid fear-based messaging that promotes abstinence-only education, mischaracterizes it as only affecting LGBTQ individuals, or as spread only through sexual activity.

Domestic Violence Providers: Be ready to address LGBTQ survivors being denied shelter due to perceived risk of mpox. This may not be explicitly stated as the reason for denial but may be a result of unconscious bias.

Discrimination and Harassment: Be aware that hate violence and hate speech against LGBTQ individuals related to mpox is likely to increase. It is important for us to be aware of how mpox-based stigma may show up interpersonally by perpetrators of violence and systemically from service providers, law enforcement, and others.

Considerations When Working with IPV Survivors

Financial Vulnerability: Individuals may experience financial instability due to having to take time off to quarantine and/or recover, which creates an additional economic vulnerability to survivors of IPV who may be in a position of financial reliance on an abusive partner. Service providers should work with survivors to find ways to creatively mitigate financial impact from mpox and proactively connect survivors to financial assistance programs.

Risk of Outing: LGBTQ survivors of IPV who are seeking care, quarantining or need time off for work are at risk of being outed if they seek services or request accommodations to treat mpox. Additionally, an abusive partner may use the virus as a tool to threaten to out them in situations that may be unsafe. Service providers should take care to safety plan with individuals around risk of outing.

Isolation: Isolation is often used as a tool of abuse and can leave survivors disconnected from sources of support and trapped with someone who causes them harm and danger. Service providers should work proactively with those living with mpox to develop strategies to mitigate isolation during quarantine periods and be aware that mpox may impact their safety plan, exit plan, and access to shelter and resources.

Vaccines, Testing, Treatment

For more information on mpox symptoms, transmission, treatment, and prevention, visit: bit.ly/lalgbtcenterhmpvx

For up-to-date information on the mpox, as well as safety protocols in congregate shelter settings, visit:

<https://bit.ly/CDCmpx>

For training and technical assistance on supporting LGBTQ survivors of IPV visit: lgbtqipvstitute.org

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