



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER

Ministerial Building
Harvey Street
Private Bag 13198
Windhoek

Tel: No: +264-61-203-2019
Fax No: 061-304145
Email: Minister.PA@mhss.gov.na

Ref. No: 8/2

19 October 2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

DECLARATION OF MPOX OUTBREAK IN NAMIBIA

The Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) has received a report of one confirmed case of Mpox from Swakopmund, Erongo Region, on 18 October 2025. The patient is receiving comprehensive treatment and is isolated at the Swakopmund District Hospital in stable condition. The preliminary investigation has linked the current Mpox transmission to a history of crossborder travel within the SADC region. In line with the World Health Organisation (WHO) protocols, one confirmed case of Mpox constitutes an outbreak. The identification of additional cases and monitoring of immediate contacts is ongoing through the health authorities in the Erongo region.

Namibia's robust surveillance system ensures that all individuals showing signs or symptoms consistent with Mpox are promptly identified, tested, and monitored. The MoHSS wishes to reassure the public that Namibia is adequately prepared to respond to public health emergencies and disease outbreaks, such as Mpox. In addition, isolation facilities across the country are readily available or have been repurposed to accommodate and admit suspected infectious diseases that may require hospitalization.

Mpox is a zoonotic disease (an infectious disease that is transmitted between species from animals to humans or from humans to animals) caused by an orthopox virus, which results in a smallpox-like disease in humans. However, the current global Mpox outbreak is predominantly human-to-human transmission. Historically, the Mpox virus was initially discovered in monkeys in 1958 and in humans in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since then, Mpox has been reported in recent years in numerous countries around the world, and currently, about 17 countries in Africa are having active outbreaks, including countries in the SADC region such as DRC, Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania.

Signs and Symptoms

The incubation period (interval from exposure to the virus and onset of symptoms) of Mpox is typically from 6 to 13 days, but can range from 5 to 21 days.

Mpox symptoms include:

- fever,
- intense headache,
- swollen lymph nodes,
- muscle aches,
- a rash that appears some days after the onset of symptoms and turns into blisters and crust over time.

All official correspondence must be addressed to the Executive Director.



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- the rash tends to be concentrated on the face, palms of the hands, and soles of the feet.
- the mouth, genitals, and eyes may also be affected, and
- the symptoms and skin rash generally last for 2-4 weeks, during this time a person can transmit the infection to others.

Transmission

Human-to-human transmission can result from close contact with respiratory secretions, bodily fluids, and skin lesions of an infected person or recently contaminated objects. People with Mpox are infectious while they have symptoms (normally between 2 to 4 weeks), or until the crusts that have formed separate and a fresh layer of skin has formed. A person can contract Mpox through direct contact with an infectious skin or other lesions, such as in the mouth or on the genitals. This includes:

- face-to-face (talking or breathing)
- skin-to-skin (touching or vaginal/anal sex)
- mouth-to-mouth (kissing)
- mouth-to-skin contact (oral sex or kissing the skin), and
- respiratory droplets or short-range aerosols from prolonged close contact,

Ulcers, lesions, or sores in the mouth can also be infectious, meaning the virus can spread through saliva. Transmission can also occur via the placenta from mother to fetus (which can lead to congenital Mpox) or close contact during and after birth.

Mpox can infect anyone and is not associated with any particular group of people or race. Clothing, bedding, towels, or objects such as eating utensils/dishes that have been contaminated with the virus from contact with an infected person can also infect others.

Risk factors

Common risk factors for acquiring Mpox infections are:

- People engaged in intimate skin-to-skin contact with Mpox infected individuals,
- Healthcare workers and other employees working in healthcare settings,
- Employees and other people handling imported infected animals and animal products originating from Mpox endemic areas,
- People living in congregated settings such as incarcerated populations, refugee camps and school hostels, children and youth, and
- People staying in prolonged close contact with persons infected with Mpox or having signs and symptoms consistent with Mpox infection, including sexual partners and household members.

Preventive Measures

Several measures can be taken to prevent infection with the Mpox virus:-

- Isolate infected patients from others who could be at risk for infection,
- Practice good hand hygiene after contact with infected animals (imported from endemic countries) or humans. For example, washing your hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer,
- Avoid direct contact with any materials, such as bedding or laundry, that have been in contact with a sick animal or patient, and
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when caring for patients, which includes a gown, gloves, a respirator, and eye protection.

In the wake of this outbreak, the Ministry of Health and Social Services has activated the public health emergency response and has mobilized the resources to respond to the confirmed Mpox outbreak.

The Namibian public is urged to remain calm and refrain from circulating unverified information on Mpox or any other public health matter, as this may cause unnecessary panic. In addition, the public is further requested not to stigmatise, intimidate or harass the affected individuals and families. As the institution mandated to provide and protect public health, we will always provide accurate, truthful, and timely information concerning public health issues. Further updates on the Mpox situation will be provided as necessary. We appreciate the ongoing support and cooperation of the public, as we work together to safeguard the health of the Namibian people. Your health and well-being remain our utmost priority.

For further enquiries, kindly contact the nearest health facility or the following Ministry of Health and Social Services Hotline (Toll-free) Numbers: 0800100100 or 0851100100, or the Public Relations Officer at +26461-203 2054 or email public.relations@mhss.gov.na.


DR. ESPERANCE LUVINDAO, MP
MINISTER

