

# SOUTHWESTERN

LAW SCHOOL  
Los Angeles, CA

## Mpox Protocols

**Administrative protocols approved August 23, 2022.**

**Revision history:** Updated June 2024; updated December 2024; technical edits made in March 2026.

**Related policies:** Attendance Policy; Attendance Section of SCALE Program Policies

**Scheduled Review Date:** December 2027 (Health & Safety Manager)

### A. Overview

Mpox is a virus caused by a virus similar to smallpox. Infections can be painful but are rarely fatal. Anyone can acquire Mpox, but the risk to the greater campus community is low. The virus does not spread as rapidly or in the same way as COVID-19 or the flu.

Mpox causes a distinct rash and other flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, swollen lymph nodes, and fatigue. Symptom onset ranges from 5 to 21 days after exposure. Flu-like symptoms can appear 1-4 days before or after the rash starts.

Mpox can be confirmed through a swab test administered by a medical provider.

For additional information about Mpox, consult the [CDC website](#) or the [L.A. County Department of Public Health website](#).

These protocols are designed to guide Southwestern community members about how to proceed if they are diagnosed with Mpox or have been exposed to Mpox and are experiencing symptoms associated with the virus.

## **B. Individuals Diagnosed with Mpox or Exposed to Mpox**

Individuals who have been diagnosed with Mpox by a medical provider using the swab test and individuals who have been exposed to Mpox and are exhibiting symptoms associated with Mpox should not access campus.

Southwestern encourages individuals who suspect they have Mpox to isolate, contact their medical provider immediately, and take the swab test. Individuals who need assistance because they do not have a regular medical provider should call 2-1-1.

Individuals diagnosed with Mpox may not return to campus until no new lesions have appeared for at least 48 hours, all lesions are resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed over all infected areas. Individuals must also be free of fever or respiratory symptoms for at least 48 hours without fever-reducing medication. Southwestern reserves the right to require the individual to submit a clearance-to-return note from a licensed medical provider.

Individuals exposed to Mpox and experiencing symptoms should not return to campus until their medical provider clears them after administering an Mpox swab test.

Individuals exposed to Mpox but not exhibiting symptoms should monitor themselves closely for the 21-day incubation period. During this incubation period, they must (i) wear an N95, KN95, or KF94 mask while indoors on campus in common areas or when around others indoors and (ii) not use the Fitness Center. They should isolate as soon as symptoms manifest.

### **1. Staff members**

A staff member diagnosed with Mpox or who has been exposed to Mpox and is experiencing symptoms should contact the Health & Safety Manager, [health@swlaw.edu](mailto:health@swlaw.edu), to ensure compliance with these protocols. Regular paid time off and medical leave policies will apply to employees who cannot work due to exposure to or infection with the Mpox virus. Employees who report to work while sick will be sent home in accordance with public health policies and guidelines. Remote work may be an option and should be discussed with Human Resources.

### **2. Faculty members**

A faculty member diagnosed with Mpox or who has been exposed to Mpox and is experiencing symptoms should contact the Health & Safety Manager, [health@swlaw.edu](mailto:health@swlaw.edu), to ensure compliance with these protocols.

The Health & Safety Manager will coordinate with Human Resources and the Vice Deans. Remote teaching may be an option and should be discussed with the Vice Deans.

### **3. Students**

A student diagnosed with Mpox or who has been exposed to Mpox and is experiencing symptoms should email the Health & Safety Manager at [health@swlaw.edu](mailto:health@swlaw.edu) to ensure compliance with these protocols. Information will be shared only with the Associate Dean for Student Services and, if necessary, the Dean and Vice Deans to help coordinate the student's schedule and address other needs.

Because of the way Mpox spreads, its physical manifestations, and the long recovery period, the Health & Safety Manager, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Student Services, may approve the student to attend classes remotely following a written medical diagnosis of Mpox.

The Health & Safety Manager, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Student Services, may also approve remote class attendance for a student who has been in isolation for at least five days due to symptoms following exposure to Mpox. The Health & Safety Manager may ask the student to provide information about when a swab test was or will be administered.

If a student is approved to attend classes remotely, the Health & Safety Manager will immediately inform the Vice Deans and each of the student's professors that the student may attend classes remotely until further notice, without sharing or revealing the diagnosis. If the rash appears on the student's face, neck, or hands, the Health & Safety Manager may, if the student wishes, inform the professors that the student may attend classes with their camera off.

The Health & Safety Manager may require the student to provide a medical note to return to campus and to check in weekly to discuss their symptoms and status.

### **4. Students in The Residences @ 7<sup>th</sup>**

In addition to following the protocols in Section C below, students who live in The Residences may be instructed to take specific safety precautions, especially if they have a roommate. The Health & Safety Manager will work with the student on these safety precautions.

## **C. General Health Precautions**

Mpox is spread through:

- Direct contact with an infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids;
- Respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact or intimate contact;
- Touching objects (e.g., utensils, cups) or fabrics (e.g., clothing, bedding, towels) that previously touched the rash or body fluids of someone with the virus; and
- Being scratched or bitten by an animal infected with the virus.

Mpox can be transmitted beginning four days before symptoms onset and remains contagious until all lesions have fully healed and a new layer of skin has formed, which usually takes two to four weeks.

Individuals can take the following general precautions to help avoid contracting or spreading the Mpox virus:

- Avoid close contact with an individual who has Mpox;
- Do not try on clothes in a store; handle new clothes with care, and wash them before wearing them;
- If traveling, be cautious about using linens and towels if you are not certain if or how they were cleaned;
- Wipe down exercise equipment in a gym before and after each use;
- Bring personal-use items when possible (e.g., your own towel or yoga mat);
- Use toilet seat covers;
- Wear clothes that cover larger areas of your skin to create a barrier and reduce potential exposure; and
- Wash your hands frequently.

## **D. Policy Revisions**

Southwestern expressly reserves the right to change or modify any aspect of this policy at any time, with or without prior notice.