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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nicole Maher, PIO  
Humboldt County Health Board  
Phone: (775) 761-2624  
Email: nicole.maher@humboldtcountynev.gov

## NEVADA'S FIRST RURAL CASE OF MONKEYPOX IDENTIFIED IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY

WINNEMUCCA, Nev.— The state's first rural case of monkeypox has been identified in Humboldt County.

The Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health, Office of State Epidemiology, confirmed the positive result on Monday, August 8. According to the state, the individual has not required hospitalization and is isolating at home; no other cases have been identified in Nevada's rural counties.

Monkeypox was first documented in Boston, Massachusetts, on May 19, 2022. As of this week, monkeypox has now spread to 49 states, as well as Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. As of August 8, the nation leads the world with 8,934 confirmations; globally, there are 30,189 cases in 88 countries.

Nevada is reporting 50 cases in Clark County, three cases in Washoe County, and one case in Humboldt County.

Monkeypox is spread through close physical contact, often skin-to-skin contact with infectious monkeypox sores, bodily fluids, contact with objects or fabrics that have been used by someone who has monkeypox, sexual contact, or prolonged face-to-face contact.

The World Health Organization has cautioned that anyone could be at risk of contracting the virus. Children, pregnant women and the immunocompromised are considered particularly vulnerable.

"Anyone who has close contact with someone who is infectious is at risk," said Humboldt County Health Officer Charles Stringham, MD.

Symptoms include rash, which can initially look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy. Other symptoms of monkeypox can include fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, exhaustion, and swollen lymph nodes.

While the overall risk of contracting monkeypox is low, Dr. Stringham encouraged residents to be aware of how monkeypox is spread and limit potential exposure.

"I don't think this is something that we should be afraid of, but instead something that each of us can avoid by taking a few relatively simple precautions," he said.

Recommendations from WHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention include:

- Avoid coming into contact with people recently diagnosed with the virus or those who may have been infected.

- Wear a face mask if you are in close contact with someone who has symptoms.
- Use condoms and keep an eye out for symptoms if you have recently changed sexual partners.
- Avoid coming into contact with animals that could be carrying the virus. This includes sick or dead animals and particularly those with a history of infection, such as monkeys, rodents and prairie dogs.
- Practice good hand hygiene, especially after coming into contact with infected—or suspected infected—animals or humans. For instance, wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Use personal protective equipment when caring for patients with confirmed or suspected monkeypox infection.
- Only eat meat that has been cooked thoroughly.
- Regularly wash clothing and bedsheets at high temperature.

Dr. Stringham said monkeypox can also be transmitted via surfaces and materials, so it's wise to avoid touching materials that have been in contact with a sick human or animal.

Those who suspect they may have contracted monkeypox should isolate from physical contact with others and seek medical advice immediately.

Dr. Stringham said many of the symptoms of the virus can easily be confused with other diseases, such as chickenpox, herpes or syphilis, so medical confirmation is important.

Those who are diagnosed with monkeypox will need to isolate until the virus has passed. The illness is typically mild and most people recover within two to four weeks.

For additional information and resources go to <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/about.html>.

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