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## **MONKEYPOX VACCINE ELIGIBILITY EXPANDS; RHHD MAKES CHANGES TO MONKEYPOX VACCINATION EFFORT**

RICHMOND, VA- Today, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) [updated monkeypox vaccine eligibility](#) to include anyone living with HIV or AIDS and anyone who has been diagnosed with any sexually transmitted infection (STIs, formerly referred to as STDs) in the past three months. Richmond and Henrico Health Districts (RHHD) will welcome newly eligible individuals to express interest in a monkeypox vaccine starting on Monday, October 3, 2022. In the meantime, RHHD is preparing by simplifying its vaccine interest form and offering monkeypox vaccine appointments to the remaining eligible individuals on the list.

“We encourage individuals in our communities to review the new eligibility and consider filling out a vaccine interest form next week if you’re newly eligible,” explains Dr. Elaine Perry, Director of RHHD. “Thankfully, we’re seeing the numbers of new cases come down, but getting individuals who are likely to be exposed vaccinated can help ensure our communities are protected.”

Also, due to the slowing demand for monkeypox vaccines in the area and RHHD’s significant progress in vaccinating eligible individuals who have filled out a form, RHHD no longer needs to ask additional questions to assess risk and offer vaccines to people at highest risk first. Because of this, RHHD is shortening its form and removing many questions related to behavior or demographics.

“Sometimes we need to use a prioritization framework to get vaccines to populations at high risk when there’s a high demand and not enough supply or clinical capacity,” explains Dr. Melissa Viray, Deputy Director at RHHD. “It’s always our goal to get vaccines to everyone who is eligible and to get to a place where we can make the process as easy as possible... we’re glad our supply and demand have leveled and we can ask fewer questions of our patients.”

Anyone interested in receiving a monkeypox vaccine can review [eligibility requirements](#) and fill out a vaccine interest form at [rrhd.gov/monkeypoxvax](http://rrhd.gov/monkeypoxvax) or by calling 804-205-3501.

***About Richmond and Henrico Health Districts: RHHD are sister public health agencies serving Richmond’s and Henrico’s communities. Our mission is to expose and address the root causes of health disparities, protect health by preventing the spread of disease, and build health equity by partnering with communities and working collaboratively across sectors.***

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