



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**  
Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD  
*Commissioner*

**Gotham Center  
42-09 28th Street  
8th Floor  
New York, NY 11101**

July 26, 2022

Mary Bassett, MD, MPH  
Commissioner  
New York State Department of Health  
Corning Tower, Empire State Plaza  
Albany, NY 12237

Dear Commissioner Bassett:

Since May 13, 2022, when the first case in the monkeypox outbreak was reported, more than 16,000 people in 74 countries have been diagnosed with the virus.

The first positive case in New York City was detected on May 18, 2022. As of July 14, the United States has recorded 2,891 cases in 44 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Cases in New York City are rapidly increasing, with cases having doubled in the last five days. As of July 25, 2022 there have been 1,040 confirmed cases of orthopoxvirus/monkeypox in New York City. Approximately 30 percent of US cases have been detected in New York City. With the limited vaccine supply unable to match the need to vaccinate those who are at highest risk and most vulnerable, it is expected that these numbers will continue to grow in the weeks and months ahead.

To mitigate the spread of the outbreak, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) has planned and implemented a citywide campaign to contain the spread of the virus in New York City. Among the efforts DOHMH is undertaking are activities to reduce risk exposure, conduct disease surveillance, provide awareness in multiple languages to high-risk populations, assure access to vaccines, support the healthcare system and medical providers, perform laboratory testing and sequencing, provide public education and outreach, and issue reliable health and safety guidelines.

Due to the additional burden of costs associated with this emergency response, and the absence, to date, of designated state or federal grants or funding sources for this important public health epidemic, I am respectfully requesting that you declare an Imminent Threat to Public Health for the current monkeypox virus outbreak, effective immediately, so that the State may reimburse DOHMH at 50 percent for Article VI eligible costs of emergency measures to contain this imminent threat to public health. Your authority to issue such a declaration is provided by Section 621 of the Public Health Law.

Should you need additional information, please contact Sami Jarrah, DOHMH's Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Commissioner, at 347-396-6242 or via email at [sjarrah@health.nyc.gov](mailto:sjarrah@health.nyc.gov). I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ashwin Vasani', written in a cursive style.

Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD  
Commissioner