

## CITY OF NEWARK HOLIDAY GATHERING SAFETY GUIDELINES

**October 14, 2020**

The Department of Recreation, Cultural Affairs and Senior Services staff will engage in the education to Newark constituents regarding the opportunities to enjoy the upcoming holidays with safe practices and fun-filled activities.

### **Halloween Activities**

Grab and Go Event – There will be events in various locations (in each ward) to distribute candy bags for children to pick up and go without gathering in large groups.

Candy will be in pre-packed bags for distribution. Parents and kids waiting in line will be organized into small groups for distribution. There will be a maximum of 50 people at a time.

### **Thanksgiving Activities**

Grab and Go Event – This event entails identifying various locations in each ward to provide food baskets/containers for families experiencing economic disparities during these tumultuous times.

These locations should not operate over a 2-hour period to eliminate crowds. There will be a maximum of 50 people at a time.

Indoor feeding or celebrating will be highly discouraged.

Recommendation to families to minimize Thanksgiving dinner celebration with immediate family only and extend to two or three secondary family member or friends.

### **Winter Celebration Activities**

Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Tree Lighting will have the virtual experience that will be viewed on Newark Television 78. The Director of Cultural Affairs, Fayemi Shakur will create a Run-of Show for the aforementioned events.

Grab and Go Event – This event entails identifying various locations in each ward to provide food baskets/containers for families experiencing economic disparities during these tumultuous times.



## **During these Celebrations, we encourage the following**

Follow these tips to reduce your risk of being exposed to, getting, or spreading COVID-19 during the celebration:

### **Social distance and limit close contact**

- [Maintain a distance](#) of at least 6 feet or more from people you do not live with. Be particularly mindful in areas where it may be harder to keep this distance, such as restrooms and eating areas.
- Avoid using restroom facilities at high traffic times, such as at the end of a public event.
- Minimize gestures that promote close contact. For example, do not shake hands, bump elbows, or give hugs. Instead wave and verbally greet others.

### **Wear masks**

- Wear a [mask](#) at all times when around people who do not live in your household to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.
- Avoid singing, chanting, or shouting, especially when not wearing a mask and within 6 feet of others.

### **Do not use costume masks in place of cloth masks**

- Do not use a costume mask (such as for Halloween) as a substitute for a cloth [mask](#) unless it is made of two or more layers of breathable fabric that covers your mouth and nose and doesn't leave gaps around your face.
- Do not wear a costume mask over a cloth mask because it can be dangerous if the costume mask makes it hard to breathe. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask.

### **Wash hands**

- [Wash your hands](#) often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

### **Keep safe around food and drinks**

Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that handling food or eating is associated with directly spreading COVID-19. It is possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object, including food, food packaging, or utensils that have the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. However, this is not thought to be the main way

that the virus is spread. Remember, it is always important to follow good hygiene to reduce the risk of illness from common foodborne germs.



- Make sure everyone washes their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after preparing, serving, and eating food. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Instead of potluck-style gatherings, encourage guests to bring food and drinks for themselves and for members of their own household only.
- Limit people going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled, such as in the kitchen or around the grill, if possible.
- Wear a [mask](#) while preparing or serving food to others who do not live in your household.
- If serving any food, consider having one person serve all the food so that multiple people are not handling the serving utensils.
- Use single-use options or identify one person to serve sharable items, like salad dressings, food containers, plates and utensils, and condiments.
- Avoid any self-serve food, drink options, such as buffets or buffet-style potlucks, salad bars, and condiment, or drink stations. Use grab-and-go meal options, if available.
- If you choose to use any items that are reusable (e.g., seating covers, tablecloths, linen napkins), wash and disinfect them after the event.
- Look for healthy food and beverage options, such as fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and low or no-calorie beverages, at holiday gatherings to help maintain good health.

### Some of the CDC Guidelines for Holiday Protocols

#### Halloween

Many traditional Halloween activities can be high-risk for spreading viruses. There are several safer, alternative ways to participate in Halloween. If you may have COVID-19 or you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should not participate in in-person Halloween festivities and should not give out candy to trick-or-treaters.

#### **These lower risk activities can be safe alternatives:**

- Carving or decorating pumpkins with members of your household and displaying them.
- Carving or decorating pumpkins outside, at a safe distance, with neighbors or friends.
- Decorating your house, apartment, or living space.
- Doing a Halloween scavenger hunt where children are given lists of Halloween-themed things to look for while they walk outdoors from house to house admiring Halloween decorations at a distance.
- Having a virtual Halloween costume contest.
- Having a Halloween movie night with people you live with.
- Having a scavenger hunt-style trick-or-treat search with your household members in or around your home rather than going house to house.



### **Moderate risk activities:**

- Participating in one-way trick-or-treating where individually wrapped goodie bags are lined up for families to grab and go while continuing to social distance (such as at the end of a driveway or at the edge of a yard).
  - If you are preparing goodie bags, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 second before and after preparing the bags.
- Having a small group, outdoor, open-air costume parade where people are distanced more than 6 feet apart.
- Attending a costume party held outdoors where protective masks are used and people can remain more than 6 feet apart.
  - A costume mask (such as for Halloween) is not a substitute for a cloth mask. A costume mask should not be used unless it is made of two or more layers of breathable fabric that covers the mouth and nose and doesn't leave gaps around the face.
  - Do not wear a costume mask over a protective cloth mask because it can be dangerous if the costume mask makes it hard to breathe. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask.

### **Thanksgiving**

Thanksgiving is a time when many families travel long distances to celebrate together. Travel increases the chance of getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others. If you must travel, be informed of the risks involved.

These lower risk activities can be safe alternatives:

- Having a small dinner with only people who live in your household.
- Preparing traditional family recipes for family and neighbors, especially those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19, and delivering them in a way that doesn't involve contact with others.
- Having a virtual dinner and sharing recipes with friends and family.
- Shopping online rather than in person on the day after Thanksgiving or the next Monday.
- Watching sports events, parades, and movies from home.

### **Moderate risk activities**

- Having a small outdoor dinner with family and friends who live in your community.
  - Lower your risk by following CDC's recommendations on hosting gatherings or cookouts.
- Visiting pumpkin patches or orchards where people use hand sanitizer before touching pumpkins or picking apples, wearing masks is encouraged or enforced, and people are able to maintain social distancing.
- Attending a small outdoor sports events with safety precautions in place.



## Higher risk activities

Avoid these higher risk activities to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19:

- Going shopping in crowded stores just before, on, or after Thanksgiving.
- Participating or being a spectator at a crowded race.
- Attending crowded parades.
- Using alcohol or drugs, which can cloud judgement and increase risky behaviors.
- Attending large indoor gatherings with people from outside of your household.

## Winter Holidays

Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas, and New Year's, typically include large gatherings of families and friends, crowded parties, and travel that may put people at increased risk for COVID-19.

### Before you celebrate

#### Hosting a holiday gathering

If you will be hosting a celebration, follow CDC tips for hosting gatherings. Below are some additional considerations for hosting a holiday celebration:

- Host outdoor activities rather than indoor activities as much as possible. If hosting an outdoor event is not possible, and you choose to host an indoor event, avoid crowded, poorly ventilated, or fully enclosed indoor spaces.
  - Increase ventilation by opening windows and doors to the extent that is safe and feasible based on the weather.
- Host activities with only people from your local area as much as possible.
- Limit numbers of attendees as much as possible.
- Provide or encourage attendees to bring supplies to help you and others stay healthy. For example, extra masks (do not share or swap with others), hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, and tissues.
- If you are planning in-person holiday gatherings with people outside of your household, consider asking all guests to strictly avoid contact with people outside of their households for 14 days before the gathering.

#### Attending a holiday gathering

If you will be attending a celebration that someone else is hosting, follow CDC Considerations for attending an event or gatherings. Below are some additional considerations for attending an in-person holiday gathering:

- Outdoor activities are safer than indoor activities. If participating in an outdoor event is not possible, and you choose to attend an indoor event, avoid crowded, poorly ventilated, and fully enclosed indoor spaces. Increase ventilation by opening windows and doors to the extent that is safe and feasible based on the weather.



- Check with the event host, organizer or event venue for updated information about any COVID-19 safety guidelines and if they have steps in place to prevent the spread of the virus.
- Bring supplies to help you and others stay healthy. For example, bring extra masks (do not share or swap with others), hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, and tissues.
- If you are planning to attend in-person holiday gatherings with people outside of your household, consider strictly avoiding contact with people outside of your household for 14 days before the gathering.

### **Holiday travel**

Traveling increases the chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others.

