

March 19, 2021

Safety Tips for Gatherings

To avoid putting your loved ones at risk as COVID-19 cases remain high, the NJ Department of Health has offered safety tips for in-person gatherings:

- [Wear a mask](#), wash your hands, practice social distancing, and stay home if you are sick.
- Given the current surge in COVID-19 cases, only gather indoors with immediate household members if possible. Indoor gatherings are particularly dangerous places for the virus to spread. Host outdoor activities rather than indoor activities as much as possible.
- If you do host indoors, increase ventilation by opening windows and doors or by placing central air and heating on continuous circulation.
- The smaller the gathering is, the less likely it is that someone is infected and put loved ones at risk.
- Require guests to wear masks when not eating, whether indoors or outdoors.
- Plan ahead and ask guests to avoid contact with people outside of their households for 14 days before the gathering.
- Guests should avoid direct contact, including handshakes and hugs, with others outside their household.
- Make hand sanitizer available for guests.
- Gatherings that last longer pose more risk than shorter gatherings.
- When hosting activities, do so with people only from your local area as much as possible. Activities with attendees traveling from different locations increase the risk of infection and spread, especially if they are coming from or traveling to a location with higher levels of COVID-19 cases and community spread.
- Remind invited guests to stay home if they have been exposed to the virus in the last 14 days, are showing COVID-19 symptoms, or recently travelled [to an area or a state with high COVID-19 infection rates](#).
- Limit the number of people handling or serving food—for example, consider identifying one person to serve all food so that multiple people are not handling the serving utensils.
- Remind guests to wash their hands before serving or eating food.
- Use single-use hand towels or paper towels for drying hands so guests do not share a towel.
- Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and any shared items between use when feasible.
- Consider keeping a list of guests who attended for potential future contact tracing needs. If you are called by a contact tracer, it's critical that you answer the call to protect us all. Your help is the key to stopping the spread of COVID-19 and saving lives.
- **Download the [COVID Alert NJ App](#).** The app is New Jersey's free and secure mobile app that anonymously alerts users if they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. COVID Alert NJ uses Bluetooth proximity technology, never records any identifying data, and all users will remain anonymous. Download the app from the [Google Play Store](#) or [Apple App Store](#).

Sources:

For more information on rules for indoor gatherings, refer to paragraph 1 of [Executive Order No. 225](#) and paragraph 1 (b-i) on page 6 of [Executive Order No. 152](#).

For more information on rules for outdoor gatherings, refer to paragraph 4 of [Executive Order No. 204](#) and paragraph 2 (b-i) on pages 7 of [Executive Order No. 152](#).

Source: [Executive Order No. 152](#); [Commissioner Persichilli's Remarks 7/29/20](#); [Executive Order No. 183](#); [Commissioner Persichilli's Remarks 10/15/20](#); [Executive Order No. 204](#); [Executive Order No. 225](#); [Executive Order No. 230](#)