



News from Livingston County, NY

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Livingston County Department of Health Encourages Residents to Celebrate Safely during Winter Holiday Season

Mount Morris, NY, December 17, 2020 — With the winter holiday season upon us, the Livingston County Department of Health (LCDOH) would like to encourage residents to celebrate safely as the number of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to surge across the nation, including Livingston County.

Jennifer Rodriguez, Livingston County's Public Health Director, stated, "The safest way to celebrate the winter holidays is virtually or at home with the people you live with." She continued, "If you decide to gather with family and friends who do not live with you, consider how your celebrations can be modified to reduce the spread of COVID-19."

Here are some [ideas](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for making winter holiday celebrations safer:

- Reschedule celebrations for next spring or summer
- Go virtual
 - Host a virtual celebration – such as a gift exchange, dance party, “ugly” holiday sweater contest, an arts and crafts activity, or a meal – with friends and family.
 - Attend virtual religious services.
 - Find virtual opportunities to volunteer and help others in need.
- Get outside
 - Take a family hike.
 - Drive or walk around your community to look at decorations from a safe distance, or drive through a local holiday light display.
 - If snow is on the ground, build a snow fort or other snow structure.
- At-home activities
 - Decorate or create a winter holiday scene and take family photos at home.

- Make holiday crafts, cards, or cookies to send or deliver to family, friends, and neighbors in a way that does not involve contact with others, such as leaving them at the door.
- In-person celebrations
 - People with or exposed to COVID-19 and those with increased risk for severe illness should not attend in-person holiday gatherings.
 - Talk with hosts and guests ahead of time to understand expectations for celebrating together.
 - Consider wearing masks if gathering indoors with people outside your household.
 - Limit the number of guests.
 - Avoid direct contact, including handshakes and hugs, with others who are not from your household.
 - Host lower-risk outdoor rather than higher-risk indoor gatherings as much as possible. If celebrating indoors, bring in fresh air by opening windows and doors, if possible.
 - Have extra unused masks available for guests and encourage everyone to wear them inside and outside.
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and items.
 - Bring your own food, drinks, plates, cups, utensils, and condiment packets.
- Travel may increase your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Postponing travel and staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others this year.

**** These CDC considerations are meant to supplement – not replace – any state or local laws, rules and regulations related to the COVID-19 pandemic. ****

“When people who live in different houses or apartments are together at the same time in the same space, the risk of COVID-19 spreading goes up, even when the people are relatives or friends,” continued Rodriguez. “Please celebrate safely this year and protect yourself and your family by including masks and keeping a distance when possible.”

If you have a fever, cough or trouble breathing, please call your health care provider for an assessment of your symptoms. If you feel as though you may have had exposure to COVID-19, call LCDOH at 585-243-7270. Call 1-877-280-6775 if you would like general information on COVID-19 or to learn how to volunteer. Livingston County Mental Health has created a help line for community members who need someone to talk to during these stressful times. This is a free and confidential service. Call 585-243-7251, Monday – Friday from 9:00AM – 5:00PM. For COVID-19 information, please visit Livingston County’s dedicated COVID-19 [webpage](#) and join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and our [YouTube channel](#).

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