



COVID-19 Halloween Guidance Considerations

As Oklahomans enter the fall season, families are starting to plan for the upcoming holidays, starting with Halloween. Because some of the typical ways to celebrate the holiday do not allow for social distancing, the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) is providing this guidance to allow for a happy and safe Halloween.

When planning to host a holiday celebration, check the current COVID-19 levels in your community. Understanding what is occurring in your community can help you best decide how to keep your celebration safe for your guests. You can look up your county online: <https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov/covid-19-alert-system>.

Virtual get-togethers and in-person parties with members of your own household are low risk for spread of COVID-19. In-person gatherings with people outside your household increase the level of risk. Event planners and attendees should consider the risk of virus spread based on the type and size of the event, and use mitigation strategies as outlined in: [Considerations for Events and Gatherings](#) by the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

The CDC recommends the following:

- Vaccination against COVID-19 while continuing to wear well-fitting masks that cover the nose and the mouth when indoors and in public settings.
- Reducing risks of exposure among children who are not able to be vaccinated, by making sure that the people around them are [fully vaccinated](#).
- CDC still recommends delaying [travel](#) until you are fully vaccinated.

Halloween Activities

Some Halloween events can pose a higher risk for spreading viruses, but there are many other safe ways to celebrate Halloween. If you are having symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should not attend any in-person Halloween festivities and you should not give out candy to trick-or-treaters.

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When attending Halloween activities think about:

- Bringing supplies when trick-or-treating to help you and others stay healthy (such as masks, tissues and hand sanitizer)
- Limiting trick-or-treating activities to outdoor settings
- Limiting group activities to family units
- Limiting group activities to less than 10 people
- Avoiding crowded costume parties and indoor haunted houses
- Maintaining social distancing, wearing masks, and using good hand hygiene when attending fall festivals, pumpkin patches and other outdoor events
- Preparing goodie bags for grab-and-go trick-or-treating
- Separate Halloween events by grade to promote social distancing
- Consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask. A costume mask is not a substitute for a cloth mask.

Also consider these safer activities instead:

- Carving or decorating pumpkins with members of your household for display
- Carving or decorating pumpkins outside, safely distanced, 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 using an online program like Zoom
- 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

After the celebration:

If you engaged in [higher risk activities](#) or think that you may have been exposed during your Halloween celebrations, take the following safety precautions:

- Social distance and monitor yourself for symptoms of COVID-19, especially people at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19
- Get tested for COVID-19 if you were likely to have been exposed to COVID-19
- Inform others you may have had contact with if you develop [symptoms consistent with COVID-19](#), such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, or if you [test positive for COVID-19](#)

Contact your health care provider and follow the CDC-recommended steps for [what to do if you become sick](#), and follow the [public health recommendations for community-related exposure](#).