

REOPENING GUIDANCE

Social Gatherings

The following is intended as a plain language summary of rules for social gatherings in the Green Phase and does not replace the need to follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

See also:

[Order](#) of the Secretary of Health providing for building safety measures, issued April 5, 2020.

[Order](#) of the Secretary of Health providing for business safety measures (to keep employees and customers safe), issued April 15, 2020.

Protections Needed

Masks

- Even during the Green Phase, masks will remain important protections to avoid a second wave of infections. Wear a mask whenever you are out in public unless you are far away from others.
 - If you think it might be 6 feet, that's too close. Keep your mask on.
 - Find light-weight, comfortable masks. Keep enough around that you always have one handy.
 - Wash your mask in the regular laundry each day that you use it.

Isolate

- Screen yourself before you go out. If you have any cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, sore throat, muscle pain, or new loss of taste or smell, [get tested](#) for COVID-19 and otherwise stay home and away from others.
- If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, quarantine at home for 14 days and do not go to work. If you are an essential worker, notify your employer that you have been exposed to COVID-19. If you develop symptoms, [get tested](#).

Distance

- If you get together with people outside of your household, make sure to stay at least 6 feet apart.
- Sit or stand outside, if possible, for added safety.
- If you will be eating or drinking together, bring your own food and drink and keep it separate.

Reduce crowds

- Think of the people in your household as your bubble. As long as you only socialize with that group and no one else, you are safe. Adding to your bubble by adding one or two people or households that have been staying at home carefully is a relatively safe way to start socializing.
- Limit the number of people you see in person.
- Don't gather in groups of more than 25 indoors and 150 outdoors, even with masks and distancing.
- Consider the exposures of the people you see in person. If they have been going to work or getting together with others, they put you at higher risk.

Handwashing

- Wash your hands frequently and avoid touching your face or eating without washing your hands.
- If you have people over, make sure to offer them a place to wash their hands or put out hand sanitizer if outside.

Clean

- Wipe down any surfaces that may have been touched by guests with disinfectant after they leave. See [CDC guidance](#) for details.

Ventilation

- If possible, increase ventilation in the building by either:
 - Opening windows and/or doors on opposite sides of the building and using fans to blow outside air through the building OR
 - Optimizing ventilation provided by the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system by:
 - Having the HVAC system checked to assure that it is working properly. If it can be adjusted, the system should be set to provide at least 6 air exchanges per hour.
 - Maximizing the amount of outside air circulated by the system.
 - Installing filters with minimum efficiency reporting values (MERV) of 13, or the highest compatible with the filter rack. It is not necessary to use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters or ultraviolet light irradiation systems.
 - Checking that the external air inlet duct is not blocked and that it is at least 15 feet from people.

Masks Required

- Before you get together with others, ask what they have been doing during the COVID-19 emergency.
 - Have they been going to work or gathering with others?
 - Have they been around anyone with COVID-19 or its symptoms?
 - Are they feeling well?
- Talk about safety measures before getting together with others and agree on a plan.
 - Will you stay outdoors?
 - Will everyone stay at least 6 feet apart and avoid hugs, handshakes, and other contact?
 - How will you handle food and drink?
 - If you are uncomfortable with what's happening at the gathering in terms of COVID-19 safety, don't be afraid to say so. Others will likely be thinking the same thing. We are all in this fight together and we need to protect each other.