

# HOLIDAYS & GATHERINGS

Celebrating together during COVID

Holidays and social gatherings are important. And we have many traditions – often ones that include holding festive celebrations, spending time together, and sharing meals.

As vaccines increase in Pennsylvania, we still must remain cautious. While we are making progress in getting vaccines to every Pennsylvanian who wants one, we must continue to follow our prevention measures. It may mean that our holidays look different this year, but we can still find ways to celebrate safely with our loved ones.

To keep you and your loved ones safe, please consider making your holiday gatherings virtual this year.

## Virtual Gatherings & Holiday Ideas

A few ways you can create a sense of togetherness while apart include:

- **Enjoying extra quality time with your immediate household** and take advantage of the time you usually spend on hosting or traveling to a big gathering
- **Hosting a virtual celebration** and invite family and friends who might normally be too far away to participate in your usual in-person events
- **Creating a feeling of togetherness by organizing a drive-by potluck** with each meal participant dropping off a portion of their dish at others' homes (allowing for safe food sharing and minimizing food waste)
- **Taking a break from cooking and support your local restaurants by ordering takeout or delivery.** You and your family and friends can order the same meal from the same place, or mix it up and order different dishes from different restaurants

Whatever you choose to do for your holidays this year, spending a little extra time planning and preparing will go a long way to help protect those most important to you.



# STOP THE SPREAD

Let's help ourselves and each other stay safe by following the health and safety measures we know stop the spread of COVID-19.

## Reducing Risk for In-person Gatherings

If you are hosting or attending an in-person gathering, please take precautions to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. Though we may feel comfortable with family and close friends, we should not let our guard down.

It may be tempting to take off your mask, hug each other, and be physically close when spending time with loved ones. But even if you or others appear to be healthy, you may still be carrying and sharing the virus.

Please follow the health and safety measures recommended by the CDC for hosting or attending a gathering. That includes (but isn't limited to):

- Wearing a mask when not eating or drinking **AND** keeping six feet apart
- Washing your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds
- Limiting shared contact with food and serving utensils
- Bringing your own plates, eating utensils, and drinks
- Cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces and shared items
- Downloading the COVID Alert PA app for exposure notifications from the App Store or Google Play

If possible, try to organize the event outdoors in a well-ventilated space. **Even outdoors, guests should wear masks when not eating or drinking.** And most importantly, if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or are feeling unwell, please stay home.

## Mask Guidance for Fully Vaccinated People

If you're fully vaccinated and you're gathering with others who are also fully vaccinated, you don't have to wear a mask or social distance. What that means from a practical standpoint is that if everyone is fully vaccinated, you can visit with friends and family.

- You are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after your second shot if you received the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines.
- If you received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, you're considered fully vaccinated two weeks after your single dose shot.

Research has shown that fully vaccinated people are less likely to have asymptomatic infection and potentially less likely to spread the virus that causes COVID-19 to others. However, there is still more to learn about how long protection through vaccination lasts and whether vaccines will protect against new variants of the virus.

That means some prevention measures will continue to be in place for all people, regardless of their vaccination status.

**You must continue to wear a mask when you're out in public, including when you visit a business. And if you're ever in doubt, wear a mask just to be safe.**

*COVID is tough, but together Pennsylvanians are tougher. United, we can defeat the virus. You matter, and so do your actions. When we make good choices and follow health and safety measures, we see results. Let's work together to stop the spread. For more information about what you can do to protect yourself, your family, business, neighbors, and community from COVID, visit [PA.GOV/COVID](https://PA.GOV/COVID).*