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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Shelby County Health Department

Shelby County Health Department Guidance for Celebrating Halloween

Many Shelby County families are planning for the upcoming holiday season, beginning with Halloween. The Shelby County Health Department is sharing information based upon guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on how to take part in Halloween celebrations in ways that reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Halloween Activities:

Not Permitted: Gatherings and events that are not allowed under the current Health Directive:

- Festivals, fairs, parades, large-scale sporting events and large-scale community events unless the Department has approved a site-specific plan for the event.

Some Halloween traditions are fun, but may increase the risk of exposure to COVID-19. Trick-or-treating may present a risk because it may be difficult for children to maintain social distancing. Trick-or-treating may be made safer by:

- Avoiding direct contact with trick-or-treaters.
- Giving out treats outdoors, if possible.
- Setting up a station with individually bagged treats for kids to pick up.
- Washing hands before handling treats.
- Wearing a mask.

“Trunk-or-treating” where children go from car to car instead of door to door to receive treats poses similar risk to children if they do not maintain recommended social distancing. Following the recommendations listed above may make trunk-or-treating safer.

Safer Alternatives:

Below are some safer alternatives to traditional Halloween celebrations that reduce the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19.

- Online parties/contests (i.e. costume or pumpkin carving)
- Drive-by events, including events where individual participants remain in their vehicles.
- Halloween movie nights at drive-in theaters that meet the requirements of the current Health Directive.
- Decorating homes and yards with Halloween-themed decorations.
- Outdoor activities are safer than indoor activities.

Personal Protection Measures:

- If you are sick or have been in contact with someone who is sick with COVID-19, stay home and away from others and seek testing.
- Correctly wear a cloth facial covering to prevent disease spread. Wear a cloth mask with two or more layers over the nose and mouth and secure it under the chin.
- Avoid confined spaces – Actively avoid indoor spaces that don't allow for easy distancing of at least six feet between yourself and others.
- Avoid close contact – Stay at least six feet away from all other people who are not part of your own household, especially when talking, eating and drinking.
- Wash or sanitize your hands often.
- Clean frequently touched items regularly.

Shelby County Health Department's recommendations will be updated when revised guidance is issued by the Tennessee Department of Health and/or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Know where to get reliable information:

Beware of scams, false news and hoaxes about COVID-19. Accurate information, including announcements of new cases in Shelby County will always be distributed by the Shelby County Health Department through press releases, social media, and our website:

www.shelbytnhealth.com.

- Social media: @ShelbyTNHealth on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram

Other reliable sources of information about COVID-19 are:

- Tennessee Department of Health COVID-19 webpage:
<https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention webpage:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Questions about COVID-19? Call the Shelby County Health Department's COVID-19 hotline at **901-222-6275**. The hotline is open 7 days per week, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. After hours calls are returned as soon as possible the next day.