



YOLO COUNTY COVID-19 HOLIDAY GUIDANCE

NOVEMBER 9, 2020



As residents plan for winter holiday celebrations, Yolo County offers the following considerations on how residents can more safely interact and protect the health of their families, friends, and communities while reducing the risk and spread of COVID-19. These considerations are meant to supplement, not replace, state or local orders, laws, or mandatory guidance.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

During a typical year, winter is a time for families and friends to gather and celebrate holidays, life, family, and/or faith. During this turbulent year, residents faced a pandemic, protests, elections, and wildfires, while being physically separated from others. Many residents will feel the need to reconnect for mental health, overall wellbeing or sense of normalcy. Yolo County is aware that residents and families may choose to gather despite local and State health orders mandating physical distance. The County hopes that if residents gather, that they do so as safely as possible without jeopardizing the health and well being of loved ones, friends, and communities by heeding the considerations outlined in this document.

There is always a level of risk for contracting COVID-19 during in-person gatherings with others outside of your household. Some gatherings pose a higher level of risk than others, due to proximity, number of attendees or length of time, and some people are already at a higher level of risk due to their health or age. More vulnerable populations, such as residents who are older or immunocompromised, should not gather with others outside their household and should stay home as much as possible. Social gatherings are still a leading cause of COVID-19 cases in Yolo County.

Yolo County only allows private gatherings of 1) up to 16 people (including guests and hosts) 2) from no more than 3 households 3) for up to 2 hours and 4) outdoors only. All private gatherings must follow these restrictions. If the state provides holiday guidance or revises the private gathering guidance, this document may be updated.

The best actions residents can take to prevent COVID-19 are to: 1) stay home as much as possible, 2) always wear a face covering in public, 3) maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance from others, 4) stay outdoors whenever possible and 5) apply good hand hygiene at all times.

GUIDE TO HOLIDAY GATHERINGS

1. Smaller is better.

Gatherings with more people pose more risk than gatherings with fewer people. The more people there are and the more they interact, the higher the chance for contracting and spreading COVID-19. Decisions of attendees and hosts impact not only for their own health and that of household members, but may

also impact the health of coworkers, community members, and others they interact with afterwards, especially if they are high risk. While Yolo County allows up to 16 persons from no more than 3 households to gather, these are maximums and gatherings should be kept as small as possible.

TIPS:

- Keep the households you interact with stable over time and limit how many you interact with. There is a lower risk of transmission if you only spend time with the same few people from the same few households. Gathering with different households at different times increases the risk.
- Indoor gatherings pose more risk than outdoor gatherings. Ensure proper ventilation, such as open windows or doors and good air flow. Wear face coverings while gathering indoors.
- Ask everyone who will be attending the gathering to limit contact with people outside their household for 14 days before the gathering.

2. Fewer is better.



The more gatherings you attend, the higher your risk. To reduce your exposure, limit the number of gatherings you attend, especially gatherings with different households. The more often people gather, the higher the risk for spreading and contracting COVID-19. Gatherings that have attendees from other cities, states or countries pose a higher risk than gatherings with attendees who all live in the same area. For additional guidance from Yolo County on gatherings, [click here](#). For CDPH's guidance on gatherings, [click here](#).

Residents who are older or immunocompromised should avoid gatherings with people who do not live in their household and stay home as much as possible.

TIPS:

- Remind and encourage attendees to adhere to physical distancing and wear face coverings.
- Bring your own hygiene supplies to a gathering, such as hand sanitizer or extra face coverings.
- Limit contact with other people outside your household for 14 days before the gathering.

3. Shorter is better.

The longer the gathering, the more risk for contracting COVID-19. Limit gathering time as much as possible. No gathering should last more than 2 hours.

4. Outdoor is better.

COVID-19 spreads more easily in indoor environments, where small virus particles called aerosols can build up over time. As much as possible, keep gatherings outdoors. If this is not possible, leave windows open and avoid poorly ventilated areas.

5. Distanced is better.

Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from people you don't live with. Be particularly mindful in areas where it may be harder to keep this distance, such as restrooms and eating areas. Minimize gestures that promote close contact, like hugs or handshakes. Seating should provide at least 6 feet of distance in all directions.

6. When in doubt, stay home.



If you are not confident about attending a gathering or that other attendees will physically distance or wear face coverings, consider staying home. If you attend a gathering and notice that health and safety measures are not being followed, you can leave early. Every person is responsible for their own actions and can impact the health of others, such as those they live with, care for, or work beside.

Anyone with COVID-19-like symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, night sweats, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, tiredness, muscle or body aches, headaches, or loss of sense of taste/smell), must stay home and not come into contact with anyone outside their household. If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 within 48 hours after attending a gathering, get tested for COVID-19 and notify the other attendees as soon as possible regarding the potential exposure.

TIPS:

- Ask the host or organizer beforehand what health and safety measures will be in place at the gathering, such as distanced seating, food service, disinfection techniques, face coverings, hand sanitizer, and/or hand washing stations.

7. Be food-smart.

Follow good hygiene habits to reduce the risk of COVID-19 and common foodborne germs. Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that handling food or eating is associated with directly spreading COVID-19. However, it is possible to get COVID-19 by touching a contaminated surface or object, including food packaging or utensils.

TIPS:

- Have everyone wash their hands with soap and water before and after serving and eating food.
- Encourage guests to bring their own food and drinks or for food to be served in single-serve disposable containers.
- Discourage potluck meals where food items from multiple households are brought together.
- Order food from a restaurant that is currently following local health and safety orders and is regularly inspected by health inspectors. (You're also supporting local businesses!) Consider asking the restaurant to place food in single-serve containers ahead of time.
- Designate one person to serve food and drinks. This person should wash their hands frequently with soap and water and wear a face covering.
- Use tongs to hand out food whenever possible.

8. Travel with caution.

Traveling to and from other cities, counties, states or countries increases the risk of getting and spreading COVID-19. You can get COVID-19 at any point in your travel. Airports, bus stations, train stations, and rest stops are all places travelers can be exposed to the virus in the air and on surfaces. The CDC has information on how to protect yourself [on public transportation](#) and [other modes of travel](#).

TIPS:

- Don't travel while sick or showing any symptoms.
- Check the case rate and COVID-19 situation of your destination.
- Wear a face covering that covers your nose and mouth while traveling and stay at least six (6) feet away from others not in your household.
- Use healthy hygiene habits, such as frequent hand washing.

9. Bend traditions.

Modify religious and cultural ceremonies to protect participants from COVID-19, which can be spread by sharing common or high-touch surfaces and by singing or chanting.

TIPS:

- Provide enough items for each attendee or household to have their own so no sharing is needed.
- Designate one person for each item, or one person for all the items. Ensure designees are wearing face coverings and washing their hands with soap and water before and after touching the item.

Singing and chanting are strongly discouraged. If they occur, they must follow these [State rules and recommendations](#):

- People who are singing or chanting should wear a face covering at all times. Since these activities pose a very high risk of COVID-19 transmission, face coverings are essential to reduce the spread of respiratory droplets and fine aerosols. Singing or chanting indoors is highly discouraged.
- People who are singing, shouting, chanting, or exercising are strongly encouraged to maintain physical distancing beyond 6 feet to further reduce risk.
- People who are singing or chanting are strongly encouraged to do so quietly (at or below the volume of a normal speaking voice).
- Instrumental music is allowed as long as the musicians remain at least 6 feet apart. Musicians must be from one of the three households. Playing wind instruments (any instrument played by the mouth, such as a trumpet or clarinet) is strongly discouraged.



10. Cover your face.

Everyone must wear a face covering at all times while gathering, except:

- When eating or drinking, while still maintaining social distancing from those outside your household;
- If the person has a written medical exemption provided by a healthcare provider, though the person should consider an alternative face covering, such as a face shield;
- Children two years or younger; or
- To attend to urgent medical needs, such as to use an inhaler or to take oral medication.

11. Wash your hands.

Frequently wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer. Ensure handwashing facilities or hand sanitizer are readily available for all attendees.

Don't share items with others from different households, including sports equipment, utensils, foods, reading materials, or religious or spiritual items. Any item that must be shared – such as a microphone or podium– must be sanitized between each use.

LOWER RISK ACTIVITIES

The following activities are considered lower risk and safer alternatives:

- Sharing traditional recipes with family/neighbors and delivering them in a way that does not involve contact.
- Decorating your home with winter accents.
- Hosting or attending winter craft activities online.
- Scheduling a virtual holiday dinner.
- Shopping online rather than in-person in stores.
- Video chatting with others and swapping stories.
- Hosting a holiday movie night at home.
- Organizing a virtual game night.
- Holding an ugly sweater contest virtually.

HIGHER RISK ACTIVITIES

The following activities are considered higher risk and strongly discouraged:

- Participating in a spectator at a crowded event.
- Attending parades or large indoor gatherings.
- Using drugs or alcohol which can cloud judgment and increase risky behaviors.
- Traveling to a fall or holiday festival not in your community.
- Attending a sporting event in another state or city.
- Shopping in crowded stores before or around the holidays.
- Attending large indoor gatherings with people from outside your household.



RESOURCES

YOLO COUNTY

Higher and Lower Risk Infographics: [English](#) | [Español](#) | [русский](#)

www.yolocounty.org/coronavirus-roadmap

<https://www.yolocounty.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=67000> (Gathering Guidance)

<https://www.yolocounty.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=66998> (Gathering Health Order Amendment)

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/CDPH-Guidance-for-the-Prevention-of-COVID-19-Transmission-for-Gatherings-10-09.aspx>

CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>