

**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**
October 2, 2020



City, MCPHD Release Halloween Guidance

Alternative activities highly recommended; public health orders remain in effect

INDIANAPOLIS – Today the City of Indianapolis and the Marion County Public Health Department announced public health and safety guidance for celebrating Halloween during the COVID-19 pandemic.

IMPD will schedule extra patrols and enforcement in neighborhoods from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 31.

The Marion County Public Health Department has issued the following public health guidance, based on current public health orders and relative risk levels of different activities:

Personal Protection Measures

However you celebrate, please continue to follow the current Marion County Public Health Order, Marion County Public Health Guidance, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Halloween Guidelines; maintain distance from others; and wear face coverings to keep children and adults safe. Please remember to:

Wash or sanitize your hands often.

Clean frequently touched items regularly.

Avoid close contact – stay at least 6 feet away (3 or more adult steps) from all other people who are not part of your own household.

Avoid indoor spaces that don't allow for easy distancing of at least 6 feet between you and others.

Correctly wear a face covering to prevent disease spread when outside your home and around others that are not part of your household. A costume (Halloween) mask is not a substitute for a cloth mask. Do not wear a costume mask over a protective cloth mask because it can be dangerous if the costume makes it hard to breathe.

Stay home and away from others if you are ill or have been in contact with someone who is ill with, or has symptoms of, COVID-19. For questions, please contact the Marion County Public Health Department.



Halloween Activities Not Allowed

In-person social gatherings or parties more than 50 people are not permitted per the current MCPHD public health order.

Halloween Activities Not Recommended

Close contact (less than 6 feet), door-to-door trick-or-treating or “trunk-or-treating,” and leaving bowls of candy for others to grab are not recommended, because it is difficult to maintain proper social distancing guidelines.

Haunted Houses are not recommended unless they have entrance controls with sufficient monitors inside the facility at entrance/exit areas to make sure there is no lagging or congregating between participants who are members of different households. Close contact between individuals from different households is particularly dangerous in haunted houses because loud voices and screaming can exacerbate the spread of the virus.

Going on hayrides or tractor rides with people who are not in your household is not recommended, unless you are able to maintain two feet of distance from other parties and stay masked during the ride. If you do participate in a hayride or tractor ride, it should start within 15 minutes of the participants being seated and should unload within 15 minutes of the ride’s end.

Attending indoor Halloween parties is not recommended, particularly if a party is held in a crowded or poorly ventilated area.

Safer Halloween Activities

Online parties/contests (e.g., costume or pumpkin carving) and drive-through events and car parades.

Dressing up homes and yards with Halloween-themed decorations.

Halloween movie nights with your own household or at drive-in theaters.

Visiting pumpkin patches or orchards where people use hand sanitizers with 60% alcohol minimum before touching pumpkins or picking apples, masks are worn, and attendees are maintaining 6 feet of distance from others.

Alternatives to Traditional Halloween Activities

Many traditional Halloween activities can be high-risk for spreading viruses. Below are some safer alternative ways to participate:

Make fall recipes and crafts as a family for creative dinners and spooky decorations.

Participate in drive-through events or contests where individuals dress up or decorate their vehicles and receive scores from “judges” who are maintaining appropriate physical distance.

Participate in one-way trick-or-treating, where individually wrapped goodie bags are lined up for families to grab while continuing to social distance (such as at the end of a driveway or at the edge of a yard).

Consider distributing treats other than candy, which parents can then sanitize before giving to kids: stickers in cellophane packaging, pencils, mini pumpkins, erasers, etc.

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