



## COVID-19 Guidance for Celebrating Halloween

With the beginning of fall, many in our community start to plan for Halloween fun. Since some of the ways in which this holiday is usually celebrated make it harder to social distance and take other steps to slow the spread of COVID-19, it is important to plan early and find lower risk ways to celebrate Halloween. Here is an overview of the Halloween guidance from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH).

### *Activities that minimize close contact between non-household members.*

- **Carving or decorating pumpkins**
  - Indoors with members of your household.
  - Outdoors, at a safe distance, with neighbors or friends.
- **Online parties/contests** (e.g. costume or pumpkin carving)
- **Scavenger hunt-style trick-or-treat search** with your household members in or around your home rather than going house to house.
- **Car parades** including:
  - Drive-by events or contests where individuals dress up or decorate their cars and drive by "judges" that are spaced apart more than 6 feet.
  - Drive-through events where individuals stay in their cars and drive through an area with Halloween displays.
  - Drive-in events where individuals are given a treat bag (with commercially packaged non-perishable treats) or take away item from an organizer while the individuals stay in their car.
- **Halloween movie nights** at drive in theaters (must comply with state drive in movie theater guidance).
- **Dressing up homes and yards** with Halloween themed decorations.

### *Activities where minimizing close contact between non-household members is more difficult.*

- **One-way trick-or-treating** where individually wrapped goodie bags are lined up for families to grab and go while still keeping distance between individuals (such as at the end of a driveway or at the edge of a yard).
- **Small group, outdoor, open-air costume parade** where individuals are distanced more than 6 feet apart.
- **Outdoor costume party** where protective, not decorative, masks are used and people can stay more than 6 feet apart.
- **Visiting pumpkin patches or orchards** where people use hand sanitizer after touching pumpkins or picking apples, wearing protective masks is encouraged or enforced, and people are able to stay at least 6 feet apart.
- **Outdoor Halloween movie night** with local family friends with people spaced at least 6 feet apart; If screaming will likely occur, keeping more than 6 feet between individuals is recommended. The greater the distance, the lower the risk of spreading the virus.

*Activities where minimizing close contact between non-household members is **very difficult**.*

- **Door to door trick or treating** where treats are handed to children who go door to door.
- **Trunk or treating** where treats are handed out from trunks of cars lined up in large parking lots.

Safety Tips for Trick or Treaters	Safety Tips for Handing Out Candy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Wear a real mask while trick-or-treating.</li><li>○ Trick or treat with members of your household only.</li><li>○ Limit the number of houses/trunks you visit.</li><li>○ Do not crowd at a door or “trunk”; give yourself space between other groups.</li><li>○ Stay local. Avoid the urge to attend events in other towns.</li><li>○ Use hand sanitizer before eating any candy and as needed.</li><li>○ Stay HOME if you or someone in your household is sick.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Wear a protective mask when handing out candy.</li><li>○ Keep hand sanitizer close by and use often.</li><li>○ Place the candy into the trick-or-treater’s bag to keep multiple hands going into the candy bowl.</li><li>○ Don’t take part if you or someone in your household is sick.</li></ul>

- **In-person Halloween parties** held indoors.
- **Indoor haunted houses** where people may be crowded together and screaming.
- **Corn mazes** where individuals take part in groups, often with members of different households.
- **Hayrack rides** that mix members from different households.

**Help Slow The Spread:** *No matter which activity you choose.*

- ✓ Wear a protective mask when outside of your home and around individuals from outside of your household.
- ✓ Avoid confined spaces: stay away from indoor areas that do not allow you to space out.
- ✓ Avoid close contact: stay at least 6 feet away from others outside of your household.
- ✓ Wash or sanitize your hands often.
- ✓ Stay home if you are sick!

**For more information:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [Holiday Celebrations Guidance](#)  
Iowa Department of Public Health: *Halloween 2020 COVID-19 Guidance* document