



**ST. JOSEPH COUNTY**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

# St. Joseph County Department of Health

*"Promoting physical and mental health and facilitating the prevention of disease, injury and disability for all St. Joseph County residents"*

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## COVID-19 Safety Guidance for Halloween and Trick-or-Treating

A number of questions have been raised regarding health and safety concerns associated with trick-or-treating and other fall activities in the setting of the coronavirus pandemic. Given the current burden of COVID-19 infection in our county, we advise all St. Joseph County residents to consider their own personal health risks and the risk profile associated with various activities

Things to consider include when planning to attend or participate in Halloween activities:

- The location of the gathering: Outside activities are best and can be structured in a way to decrease the risk of viral transmission. Inside gatherings pose greater risk; masks and physical distancing are strongly advised.
- The number of people at the gathering: Larger gatherings increase the risk of being exposed to someone with COVID-19 and can make the maintenance of physical distancing more challenging.

Anyone who is positive for COVID-19 or who has been identified as a close contact should **NOT** participate in in-person trick-or-treating or other Halloween activities. Likewise, if you are not feeling well, you should stay home and not participate in activities with other people.

To ensure safety this Halloween, the SJC Department of Health offers the following guidance:

- Trick-or-treating with only members of your own household is the best way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- Costume masks are NOT a substitute for a face covering. If you are trick-or-treating with people from outside your household, you should wear a face covering under your costume mask. Face coverings should fit snugly over the mouth and nose.
- Individuals participating in trick or treating events, should NOT shout "trick or treat" as yelling increases the spread of droplets.
- Individuals handing out candy should wear a face mask and wash or sanitize their hands frequently.
- Trick-or-treaters should not grab candy from a common bowl. Individual treats should be offered on a tray or table, without contact between the host and the trick-or-treaters.
- Trunk-or-treat style events or neighborhood routes should have a one-way traffic flow and allow for adequate physical distance between groups of trick-or-treaters.

## Guidance regarding other Fall Activities:

- If visiting pumpkin patches or orchards: Attend places that require face masks and encourage physical distancing.
- Hay rides should be avoided, unless you are only participating with members of your household unit.
- We discourage bobbing for apples.
- All indoor gatherings involving individuals outside of your household are discouraged. If gatherings are held inside, we recommend gatherings be limited to 10 people or fewer, and that masks are worn and physical distancing be maintained.
- Celebrating virtually or with members of your own household poses the lowest risk for **the** spread of COVID-19.