



Shawnee County Health Department

Shawnee County Health Department
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
10/14/2020

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MEDIA RELEASE

SCHD Guidance for Celebrating Halloween Safely

Topeka, Kan. – The fall season is quickly approaching, and with it the holiday season, starting with Halloween. Since some of the more traditional ways in which Halloween is celebrated include prolonged and repeated contact with non-household members, it is important to plan ahead and identify safer alternatives that will help to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

“Many traditional activities surrounding Halloween can be high-risk for spreading all types of viruses, including COVID-19,” said Linda Ochs, Shawnee County Health Department Director. “Halloween, as well as other upcoming holidays, may look and feel slightly different. However, we will be able to still find fun and safe alternatives to celebrate while continuing to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our community.”

Wearing face coverings and staying at least six feet away from people who are not part of your household are two of the most effective ways to avoid the spread of COVID-19. Keep this in mind as you plan activities for Halloween. The Shawnee County Health Department offers the following guidance on how to celebrate Halloween during this pandemic:

Making Trick-or-Treating Safer:

- Avoid direct contact with trick-or-treaters;
- Give out treats outdoors, if possible;
- Set up a station or table with individually bagged treats for kids to take versus handing out treats;
- Wash hands before handling treats;
- Stay away from crowds and clustering, and follow safe distance rules even when outdoors;
- Wear a mask.

Wearing a Mask:

- Make your cloth mask part of your costume;
- A costume mask is not a substitute for a cloth mask;
- Do NOT wear a costume mask over a cloth mask. It can make breathing more difficult;
- Masks should NOT be worn by children under the age of 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing.

Events and Gatherings:

- Avoid gatherings, events, or parties with large numbers of people outside of your household.
- Avoid indoor events such as haunted houses. A local haunted forest or corn maze may be a better option, as long as cloth face covering use, physical distancing and one-way walk through is enforced. If you think there may be screaming, leave extra distance.
- Whether indoors or outdoors, you are more likely to get or spread COVID-19 when you are in close contact with others for a long time. Maintain 6-ft distance when appropriate.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Additional Guidance from Reliable Sources:

Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)

- <https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1468/KDHE-Guidance-for-Celebrating-Halloween-PDF---92320>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) –

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/daily-life-coping/Trick-or-treating.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/daily-life-coping/Halloween-Other-Activities.pdf>

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Shawnee County Health Department is committed to working in partnership with our community to promote and protect the optimal health of all people by bridging gaps to eliminate health inequities, respecting the diversity of our community, through adaptive and innovative processes.

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