



**HAMILTON COUNTY  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.

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## **NEWS**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** March 11, 2020

### **Hamilton County Public Health Recommends Following Guidance for Indoor Gatherings**

**HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO** – Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, recommended yesterday that large, indoor gatherings be canceled or postponed to limit potential exposure to coronavirus and subsequently, COVID-19.

“We certainly understand that this guidance can create scheduling issues and disappointment,” says Greg Kesterman, interim health commissioner at Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH). “However, Governor DeWine and Dr. Acton have provided this guidance after consultation with a panel of experts and are acting out of concern for the best outcomes for Ohio citizens.”

Following is the guidance issued by the Governor and Dr. Acton:

**Higher Education:** Governor DeWine has asked all universities and colleges in Ohio to screen students returning to school from international travel or cruises, including, but not limited to, students returning from spring break travel. Governor DeWine also asked that any university-sponsored international travel, non-essential travel, and large gatherings be canceled or postponed. Higher education institutions should also consider offering online/remote learning.

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***K – 12 Schools:*** Governor DeWine is not currently recommending the closure of elementary, middle, and high schools, however, school administrators should begin planning for that possibility. Parents should also begin planning for the potential that they may need to stay home with their children or find alternate child care solutions.

***Athletics:*** Governor DeWine has recommended that all indoor K-12, college, and professional sports competitions be held without spectators. He asks that events take place only with athletes, parents, sporting officials, and media. Right now, outdoor sporting events can continue as planned.

***General Large Gatherings:*** Generally, Governor DeWine recommends that organizers of any events involving a large gathering of individuals in close proximity be canceled or postponed, such as parades.

***Religious Institutions:*** Governor DeWine recommends that all religious institutions consider limiting practices that could spread germs, such as shaking hands or sharing a communal cup of wine during communion. Those in faith-based communities who are high-risk should consider staying home. Faith-based communities should also consider appropriate outreach to those who may not be able to attend regular services.

***Nursing Homes:*** Because nursing homes house Ohio's most high-risk residents, we are recommending that nursing homes screen all visitors, including volunteers and vendors, for symptoms of contagious illnesses.

***Adult and Juvenile Correctional Facilities:*** Governor DeWine has ordered that visitations at Ohio's adult and juvenile corrections facilities be suspended. Contractors who are not critical to the workings of the facility will not be granted entrance. Those who are permitted into these facilities will be screened for symptoms of illness and must submit to a temperature reading.

For more information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit [www.coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov) or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH. For more information on flu and COVID-19, visit: [www.hcph.org](http://www.hcph.org); [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov); or [odh.ohio.gov](http://odh.ohio.gov).

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*Hamilton County Public Health works to assure the 480,000 citizens living outside the cities of Cincinnati, Norwood and Springdale are safe from disease, injury and contamination.*

# NEWS



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