



April 1, 2020

SCPH Media Contact Phone Number: (330) 812-3700

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Additional Guidance for Mass Gatherings

[Akron, OH] – As the number of COVID-19 cases identified in Summit County increases, Summit County Health Commissioner Donna Skoda is providing additional guidance on public gatherings.

Summit County Public Health is asking that, as a result of COVID-19, funeral homes and religious entities restrict and limit certain gatherings including funerals, burials, weddings, shivas, church services, and other religious ceremonies. Canceling or postponing large gatherings is a prudent public health measure to prevent spread of the virus. When it is necessary to have religious and cultural rituals related to funerals or weddings, they should be limited to no more than 10 immediate family members and practice social distancing. Members of the same household may be closer than 6 feet for necessary gatherings, but all other persons must maintain social distancing. Summit County Public Health cannot close or limit religious centers and gatherings at this time but is asking for voluntary compliance from our religious community.

During this period of social distancing, physically being with family and friends may be difficult or not possible, so remaining in close contact by phone, text, FaceTime and other means of technology is more acceptable and appropriate.

Summit County Public Health Commissioner wants everyone to take an aggressive approach on social distancing. "We need everyone to take responsibility and help slow the curve," Skoda stated.

It is important to continue to follow standard precautions to prevent the spread of infectious disease.

- **Practice social distancing;** maintain 6 feet of distance from others.
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes** with your elbow or sleeve, or a tissue and then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands afterwards.
- **Washing your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds**, especially after going to the bathroom or before eating. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Avoid touching your face** – especially your eyes, nose and mouth – with unwashed hands.
- **Stay home if you have cold- or flu-like symptoms**, for seven days after your illness onset or three days after your fever resolves without fever reducing medicine, and avoid close contact with people who are sick.

The situation surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic is fluid and guidance is continually evolving, for more information about the coronavirus situation in Summit County visit <https://www.scph.org/covid-19>. If you have questions, call the COVID-19 Call Line (330) 926-5795. The call line is open Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday – Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

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