



Interim Guidance for Winter Holiday Gatherings (November 16, 2021)

Any scenario in which people gather poses a risk for COVID-19 transmission. Follow the guidance below to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 while participating in winter activities and holiday traditions.

Before gathering, attending events, or traveling, NCDHHS strongly recommends that everyone go to [Find Your Spot, Take Your Shot](#) and get vaccinated. For guidance on vaccinations, please refer to our [Interim Guidance for Individuals Who Have Been Vaccinated Against COVID-19](#) and [Recommendations for Protecting Each Other](#).

Holiday Travel

To protect yourself and others, delay your travel plans and stay home until you are fully vaccinated.

- If you do travel and are NOT fully vaccinated, get tested 1-3 days before and 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full **7 days** after travel, even **if you test negative** at 3-5 days.
- All individuals regardless of vaccine status should follow CDC's guidance for [travel during COVID-19](#) and NCDHHS's guidance for [public transportation](#).

Gathering during the holidays:

Attending outdoor or virtual events presents a lower risk for the spread of COVID-19 than events that are in-person and indoors. Consider avoiding large in-person social gatherings.

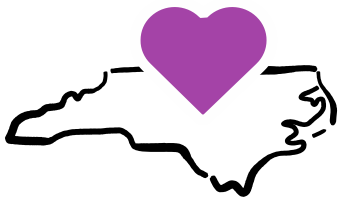
If you do gather:

- Get your COVID-19 vaccine and encourage everyone else to get vaccinated. NCDHHS strongly recommends that hosts direct their guests and family members to [Find Your Spot, Take Your Shot](#) and encourage them to get vaccinated before the event.
 - For guidance on vaccinations, please refer to our [Interim Guidance for Individuals Who Have Been Vaccinated Against COVID-19](#) and [Recommendations for Protecting Each Other](#).
- Guests who are not fully vaccinated should wear a face covering and maintain physical distance from others, especially when they are indoors.
- Guests who are fully vaccinated should also wear a mask in all indoor public spaces if the gathering is in a county with high or substantial levels of transmission, as [defined by the CDC](#).
- Host gathering outdoors, when possible.
 - If gathering indoors, use a space that is large enough to allow for physical distancing and consider limiting the number of attendees. If possible, increase circulation of outdoor air by opening windows and doors.
- If you are sick or have symptoms, do not host, or attend a gathering.
- For tips on general food safety, follow CDC's guidance for [Food Safety for the Holidays](#).

For safer holiday celebrations consider:

- Enjoying meals with individuals in your household only.
- Practicing religious holiday customs at home.
- Preparing and delivering a meal to a neighbor.
- Watching religious and cultural performances virtually or outdoors.
- Attending religious ceremonies or holiday events virtually or outdoors.

Organizers of holiday-related events should create and implement a plan to minimize the opportunity for COVID-19 transmission at their events. For specific action items and recommendations, please refer to our [Events and Festivals guidance](#).



#StayStrongNC

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Protect your family and neighbors.**

Learn more at nc.gov/covid19.



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