

Williams County Health District

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Community Talking Points

December 16, 2020

- COVID-19 cases continue to increase in Williams County. In the past 7 days (Dec. 8th-Dec. 15th), there have been 284 new cases, 10 hospitalizations, and 7 deaths. As of 12/10, Williams County remains level 3 (red) on the Ohio Public Health Advisory System (OPHAS) and triggered 3 of the 7 indicators (New cases per capita, New cases increase, and Non-congregate cases) and high incidence.
- As the holidays approach, it is necessary to start making plans for how you and your family will celebrate during the pandemic. Visiting virtually for Christmas is the best way to keep your family and loved ones safe so they can be with you to celebrate next year.
 - **Low Risk Activities:**
 - Host a virtual celebration with friends and family. Host a virtual “ugly” holiday sweater contest. Schedule a time to meet virtually to open gifts together.
 - Build gingerbread houses, decorate cookies, or make holiday crafts and decorations.
 - Drive or walk around your community to look at decorations from a safe distance.
 - Make holiday cards, crafts, or cookies to deliver to friends, family, and neighbors in a way that does not involve contact with others.
 - Attend virtual church or holiday services.
 - **High Risk Activities:**
 - Traveling – Travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19.
 - Hosting a winter holiday celebration – If you must, set expectations with your guests before the event. Wear masks, stay 6 ft away from those who do not live with you, improve ventilation in the space (open windows or doors, if possible), wash hands often, have guests bring their own food, disinfect high touch surfaces, and stay home or cancel the event if you or others in the household feel sick.
 - Christmas caroling with a group – Singing and shouting can spread the virus farther than talking or breathing. Host singing events online, wearing masks, and increasing distance to more than 6 ft between people who may be singing can reduce risk.
 - Gathering with people who do not live with you - If you plan to join a holiday gathering in-person, it’s important to remain vigilant, even when interacting with dear friends and loved ones. The greatest risk for spread of COVID-19 right now is these family gatherings. Try to keep gatherings brief and small. If possible, meet outdoors.
- Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others this holiday season. You may feel well and not have any symptoms, but you can still spread COVID-19 to family, friends, and your community. If you do plan to travel for the holidays, follow this guidance:
 - **Check travel restrictions** before you go. Use this link: <https://bit.ly/3naxc7x>
 - **Follow COVID-19 precautions** - wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet away from people who do not live with you, wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer, and watch your health for signs of illness.
 - **Consider testing** - Testing does not eliminate all risk, but it can help make travel safer. If you are traveling, consider getting tested with a viral test 1-3 days before your trip. Also, consider getting tested with a viral test 3-5 days after your trip and reduce non-essential activities for a full 7 days after travel, even if your test is negative.
 - **Don’t travel** if you are sick, recently tested positive for COVID-19 with a viral test, had close contact with a COVID-19 case in the past 14 days, or are waiting for the results of a COVID-19 test.
 - **After travel** – Avoid being with people who are at increased risk for severe illness, monitor your health, stay at least 6ft from others, wear a mask, wash your hands often, and reduce nonessential activities for at least 10 days after travel.