

For Immediate Release

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**Washtenaw County Health Department Updates Public Health Emergency Order
Restricting Gatherings in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti**

Outdoor social gatherings in residential settings remain limited to no more than 25 people

YPSILANTI, Mich., Oct 2, 2020 – Washtenaw County Health Department is updating a public health emergency order to limit the size of social gatherings or events within the City of Ann Arbor and the City of Ypsilanti. No more than 25 people may gather at outdoor, social events that take place in residential settings. The local order is being updated because state orders have changed. The updated local order takes effect Oct 2, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. and will remain in effect until amended or rescinded.

The local order reduces the allowable size of an outdoor social gathering at a residence down to 25 from 100 in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. Restricting the size of social gatherings in areas at increased risk for COVID-19 outbreaks because of large student populations and congregate housing on and near university campuses remains critical to controlling the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

“We are currently seeing a sharp increase in cases among local, college-age individuals” says Jimena Loveluck, MSW, health officer for Washtenaw County. “We know social gatherings without precautions are a primary source of exposure. We can prevent additional spread by keeping all gatherings small, using face coverings and distance, and fully cooperating with case investigators and contact tracers.”

Michigan [Executive Order 2020-183](#) (Safe Start) includes guidelines for social gatherings and events and now distinguishes between those held in residential settings or in non-residential venues. For the rest of Washtenaw County, the state limit on outdoor, social gatherings in residential areas of 100 or fewer people remains in effect.

Face coverings continue to be required in indoor settings and any crowded outdoor settings under [Executive Order 2020-153](#). Both the [University of Michigan](#) and [Eastern Michigan University](#) are requiring face coverings at all times on their campuses. The City of Ann Arbor has also enacted [emergency orders](#) to limit gatherings and require face coverings.

Washtenaw County has reported a total of [3,412 confirmed cases](#) of COVID-19 to date. County data shows a significant increase in the proportion of cases among 18 to 22-year-olds, with this age group making up 78% of reported cases in the two-week period of September 17, 2020 to September 30, 2020.

State law provides local health officers with the authority to issue orders to protect the public health under Section 2453 of the Public Health Code (MCL 333.2453). Any violations are subject to citations and penalties as outlined in the Michigan Public Health Code.

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To reduce the spread of illness in our community, the Health Department recommends wearing a face covering, maintaining 6 feet of distance from others not in your household and cleaning hands frequently. Testing is recommended for anyone reporting to work in person, with known exposure or with any mild or unusual symptoms. Symptoms may take up to 14 days after exposure to appear, and individuals are considered contagious two days before symptoms appear.

The number of local cases, guidance for employers, prevention information, testing options and more are available at www.washtenaw.org/covid19. Health Department staff are also available to answer questions. Call 734-544-6700 or email l-wchdcontact@washtenaw.org.

Resources from Washtenaw County Health Department

- [Order](#): Limiting Outdoor Gatherings in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti Updated Oct 2020
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#): Washtenaw County Order Further Limiting Outdoor Social Gatherings
- For testing, see www.washtenaw.org/covid19test
- [COVID-19: What You Need to Know](#) Fact Sheet

Washtenaw County Health Department

The Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs.

The Washtenaw County Health Department has achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board and maintains state accreditation through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Visit us at washtenaw.org/health or call 734-544-6700.

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