

## Public Health Update: **Red Alert Level 3 Guidance**

### **Allen County returns to Risk Level 3 (Red) for COVID-19 as of October 22, 2020**

Recent public health data has led the Ohio Department of Health to designate Allen County as being in a Red Alert Level 3 as defined by the Ohio Public Health Advisory System. Allen County moves into Red after being in Orange Level 2 since August 13, 2020.

The information contained in this Public Health Update describes the alert and the safety measures everyone needs to take to slow the spread of COVID-19. This update also explains what Allen County residents need to know to comply with current orders of the Director of the Ohio Department of Health. **At this time, there are no new mandated closures or cancellations – businesses, organizations and individuals are provided information here so they can determine how they can best protect themselves, their fellow residents, and their community.** If all safety guidelines cannot be maintained, please reconsider your activity. If people do more than the minimum to act safely, it will benefit everyone.

#### **Risk Level 3 means**

Allen County is experiencing very high coronavirus exposure and spread of COVID-19, and meet 4 data indicators in the Ohio Public Health Advisory System as of October 22, 2020:

- New cases per capita (345.9 cases per 100,000 residents) \*100/100,000 is considered high-incidence by the CDC
- Sustained increase in new cases (15.7 average cases on 10/1 to 32.3 by 10/13)
- Proportion of cases not in congregate settings, such as long term care facilities, indicating community spread
- Sustained increase in outpatient visits due to COVID-19 symptoms (14.1 average visits on 10/4 to 30.9 on 10/20)

Allen County is experiencing widespread community transmission. The majority of our cases are due to people interacting in social settings, not from any one large event. To date in October there have been 651 newly reported cases of COVID-19, which is already 25% higher than the number for August, 2020 which was previously the highest-incidence month.

The Ohio Department of Health announced 9 new counties rising to Red Level 3 Alert on October 22, 2020, for a total of 38 counties at Red Level 3. Northwest Ohio is experiencing some of the highest per capita rates, with 4 area counties listed in the top 5 highest per capita counties in Ohio.

The Ohio Public Health Advisory System is updated every Thursday by the Ohio Department of Health and Governor DeWine's office. The level a county is placed in is determined by how many risk indicators that county triggers based on that county's coronavirus case data. See Page 4 for details.

## Plan to Reduce Your Risk

Every decision regarding participation in an activity should be filtered through the following questions:

- Will all participants present be able to be 6 feet apart from one another?
- Will participants be wearing face coverings, unless actively eating or drinking?
- Will hand washing and sanitizing opportunities be readily available?
- Will cleaning and disinfecting be conducted regularly?

If these measures will not be in place, individuals should reconsider participating in that activity until the spread of COVID-19 subsides in Allen County.

## Steps We Must Take to Slow the Spread of COVID-19

### Everyone:

- Protect others and yourself: Assess your health every day and **stay home if sick**
- **Stay home if you are waiting for COVID-19 test results, or if you are a close contact (within 6 feet for longer than 15 minutes) to someone diagnosed with COVID-19**
- Maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet from non-household members
- Wear a face covering in public
- Follow good hygiene practices: Wash hands, use hand sanitizer, cover coughs and sneezes, avoid touching your face
- Decrease in-person interactions with others when possible, especially with anyone considered high risk
- Avoid traveling to high risk areas; and if you are high risk, consider necessary travel only
- **High risk individuals/People who live with high risk individuals:** Limit attending gatherings of any number/size

### Social/Recreational Activities:

- Consider: Does it make sense to do this activity now when we are trying to reduce in-person interactions?
- Increase virtual interactions rather than in-person gatherings, e.g. church services, club meetings

### Businesses:

- Ensure a minimum of 6 feet between people. If not possible, install barriers to reduce the risk of spread
- Refresh or change up your signage on health and safety guidelines in common areas
- Make visual cues for employee distancing more noticeable, e.g. X's on lunch room seats to promote distancing
- Promote measures to maximize social distancing, e.g. drive thru, pick-up and delivery services, outdoor dining
- Promote phone/on-line transactions
- Use virtual methods for meetings or cancel/postpone in-person meetings when unable to social distance
- Enforce facial coverings for employees

### Retail/Services/Entertainment:

- Stagger entry of customers and guests
- Enforce face mask usage for employees and customers upon entry
- Increase availability for curbside pick-up, if possible
- Establish and enforce maximum capacity
- Remind customers to observe floor markers for spacing, use alternate registers
- Update or rotate social distancing signs/reminders at your entrance
- Disinfect high-contact surfaces hourly
- Make regular announcements to remind customers to follow social distancing and personal hygiene measures
- Designate one-way aisles

Additionally, please keep the following overarching guidance in mind when planning any activity and incorporate as many of the low risk principles as possible.

Lowest Risk		Highest Risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor activities</li> <li>• Space for people to spread out, 6 feet or more apart from each other</li> <li>• Use of face coverings</li> <li>• Fewer people</li> <li>• Limited time in close contact to others</li> <li>• Handwashing facilities and/or sanitizing products readily available</li> <li>• Frequently touched surfaces cleaned and disinfected often</li> <li>• Individually wrapped or served food</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor activities</li> <li>• Confined spaces</li> <li>• Crowded conditions, people close together</li> <li>• No or limited use of face coverings</li> <li>• More people</li> <li>• People spending long periods of time near each other</li> <li>• Limited handwashing/sanitizing products</li> <li>• Limited cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces</li> <li>• Equipment/supplies used by multiple people</li> <li>• Buffet/self-serve food</li> </ul>

**Facial Coverings Order - A face covering is any material covering an individuals’ nose, mouth, and chin.**

The mask mandate issued by Governor DeWine for the entire state is still in effect. All residents are required to wear a face covering:

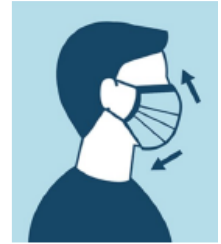
- In any indoor location that is not a residence;
- When outdoors and unable to consistently maintain a distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their household; or
- While waiting for, riding, driving, or operating public transportation, a taxi, a private car service, or a ride-sharing vehicle. This does not apply to private or rental vehicles where members of a family are sharing a vehicle.

The order does not apply to children under the age of 10 or any other minor who cannot safely wear a face covering. Other exceptions are listed in the [order](#).

Wearing a face covering when you’re in public will slow the spread of the coronavirus, allowing businesses to stay open and activities to continue. The order also maintains the face covering guidance in place for employees and businesses. Employees are required to wear facial coverings with limited exceptions, such as if wearing a mask is prohibited by federal regulation, if communicating with the hearing impaired, when not advisable for health or safety reasons, when alone in an office or personal workspace, and other similar measures. See [individual orders](#) for more details. **A [sample sign](#) to post to remind people to wear a face covering is available on our website.**

## Using a cloth face covering (mask)

- Adjust the face covering to cover your nose, mouth and chin and be sure it fits snugly
- Avoid touching your mask while you are wearing it
- Clean your hands before and after touching the mask
- Remove and store mask before eating or drinking. Fold mask on itself, touching only the outside of the mask, so that the insides are facing each other.
- Avoid hanging the mask on one ear, around your neck or pushed onto your forehead.



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- Yellow – 0-1 Risk indicators
- Orange – 2-3 Risk indicators
- Red – 4-5 Risk indicators
- Purple – 6-7 Risk indicators

A county's alert level is determined by seven data indicators:

1. New Cases Per Capita
2. Sustained Increase in New Cases
3. Proportion of Cases that Are Not Congregate Cases
4. Sustained Increase in Emergency Room Visits
5. Sustained Increase in Outpatient Visits
6. Sustained Increase in New COVID-19 Hospital Admissions
7. Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Bed Occupancy

## Additional Resources for Ohio and Allen County Residents

- [ACPH Halloween Guidance](#)
- [ACPH Guidance & Fax Back Form for Sports Plans](#)
- [ACPH Checklist for Sports Venues](#)
- [Allen County Public Health Risk Level Recommendations \(Preventive Actions to Maintain Low Risk Level\)](#)
- [Ohio Sports Order for all levels \(youth, school, collegiate and club\)](#)
- [Ohio Order for Entertainment Venues](#)