



COVID-19 Guidance for Small Gatherings

October 9, 2020

The steps outlined in this guide are designed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission from in-person gatherings. In-person connection with family and friends is vital, and we encourage individuals to take gatherings very seriously - even small family gatherings. We should all stay home to the greatest extent possible.

The number of people permitted at a small gathering depends on which phase the county is in based on the [Colorado Dial Framework](#).

- Stay at Home: No small social gatherings
- Safer at Home Level 3: 10 individuals
- Safer at Home Level 2: 10 individuals
- Safer at Home Level 1: 25 individuals
- Protect Our Neighbor: up to [indoor](#) and [outdoor](#) event capacities

Develop a Plan

It may sound silly to develop a plan "for a gathering, but this situation is new to everyone. A plan allows you to think through how you can help guests maintain social distancing, where you can reduce the number of shared surfaces/items, and how you can keep those items sanitized throughout your event.

A plan also ensures that you and your guests are on the same page before gathering. Send your plan to guests before the event to allow them to prepare and ask questions. This is a time to be intentional about taking steps to protect yourself and family/friends; don't leave it to chance.

The Basics

- Attendees should be able to easily maintain 6 feet of distance during your event, even when moving about.
- Everyone [should wear a cloth mask](#) at all times.
- Provide easy access to hand washing and/or hand sanitizer. Provide paper towels by all sinks to avoid sharing a common cloth towel.
- Ask guests to self-screen for [symptoms](#) before coming to a gathering; anyone with symptoms should stay home.
- Take special care in interactions involving people most vulnerable to serious complications of COVID-19, such as those older than 65 and with underlying health conditions.
- Keep gatherings as small as possible.

Safe Gathering Ideas to...

Keep Everyone Six Feet Apart

- Use tape or other markers to identify where people should sit or stand or to illustrate personal distance.
- Use outdoor space whenever possible to increase the amount of space and open air.
- Use signs as a fun way to keep guests aware of spacing.
- Have a separate entrance and exit to reduce the number of people passing each other.
- Consider asking guests to bring their own chairs to decrease the number of touched surfaces.

Prevent Unnecessary Contact

- Video call-in guests, especially family and friends who are vulnerable.
- Have visitors come in shifts to reduce the number of people visiting at one time.
 - Wipe down chairs and other touched surfaces between guests.
 - Invite more vulnerable guests to visit before other guests arrive.
- Use a seating chart for guests to limit movement and shared surfaces.
- Prop open doors and take lids off trashcans to limit the number of items touched.
- Remove unnecessary items that guests may be tempted to touch, such as lawn games.

Increase Sanitization

- Keep disinfecting wipes close to commonly touched surfaces like doors and bathrooms; encourage guests to use them.
- If serving food, ask guests to use their own utensils to serve themselves. Consider a picnic style gathering and ask guests to bring their own food and drink or serve a pre-packaged meal instead of buffet or family-style.
- Identify someone to wipe down surfaces frequently.
- Have hand sanitizer available in multiple areas and encourage people to use it frequently, in addition to hand washing.

Reduce Transmission

- Provide cloth face coverings to guests who don't have one.
- Before allowing young children to participate, consider their ability to understand and adhere to social distancing.
- If inside, open windows and doors to increase ventilation when possible.
- If you plan to use your own private pool, clean handrails often; avoid sharing pool toys (e.g. noodles, goggles, kickboards, toys); avoid using slides and other play structures; take turns swimming to reduce the number of people in the pool at one time; remind visitors to keep their distance; and use EPA-approved disinfectants.
- Consider the level of transmission in your area and in the areas where guests may be visiting from. When transmission rates are high it is riskier to gather, even in small groups.

If you have questions or concerns, please email covidbiz@bouldercounty.org.

Learn more about COVID-19 in Boulder County at boco.org/covid-19.