



GRANVILLE VANCE

public health

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 23, 2020

CONTACT

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UPDATE: Granville Vance Public Health is really proud of our communities in their collective efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We know so many people and agencies are working hard. A better economy depends on keeping everyone safe and healthy. We are grateful for our continued partnerships with individual citizens, businesses, and organizations that make our communities better. Thank you! We must keep practicing those 3 W's – washing our hands, waiting six feet apart, and wearing a mask – and as tired as we all are of this virus, it's time to double down on these behaviors, not let up. In this "land of the free and home of the brave," we want EVERYONE to be around in 2021 to celebrate holidays together and to pursue life, liberty and happiness individually.

Public health is not about restricting freedoms, it's about preserving life and quality of life so we can enjoy more of those freedoms in the future. THANK YOU for being with us in this community effort.

Although the number of active cases in our counties had been trending downward over the past few months, our data have quickly begun trending in the wrong direction again. Unfortunately, we have set numerous records this week for number of new cases and deaths in North Carolina and the United States. As of today, November 23rd, we have 255 active cases of COVID-19 in Granville County and have recorded 56 deaths over the course of the pandemic response. In Vance County, we have 414 active COVID-19 cases and 54 deaths.

Community spread of COVID-19 in both Granville and Vance Counties is increasing. If you are looking at the state of North Carolina's data dashboard and notice the new COVID-19 County Alert System, you will see that the alerts for Granville and Vance Counties changed color today. Granville turned from yellow to orange on the map and Vance turned from orange to red. North Carolina has established the COVID-19 County Alert System to give individuals, businesses, community organizations, and public officials another tool to understand how their county is faring and to make decisions about actions to slow the spread of the virus. The COVID-19 County Alert System uses metrics informed by the White House Coronavirus Task Force and North Carolina's key metrics to categorize counties into three tiers:

1. Yellow: Significant Community Spread
2. Orange: Substantial Community Spread
3. Red: Critical Community Spread

Because no one metric provides a complete picture, the COVID-19 County Alert System uses a combination of three metrics: case rate, the percent of tests that are positive, and hospital impact within the county.” More about the alert system online here:

<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/county-alert-system>.

As we move into the holiday season, we have the power to prevent more spread and more death. In considering how you’d like to celebrate with family, remember that any scenario in which people gather poses a risk for COVID-19 transmissions. Getting together with others will always pose some risk. Therefore, we encourage you to consider hosting virtual events. Zoom has announced it will be lifting the 40-minute limit from midnight ET on Nov. 26 through 6 a.m. ET on Nov. 27 to enable easier virtual connections with loved ones. If you do choose to gather in-person, North Carolina Department of Health and Human services has provided the following suggestions for reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19:

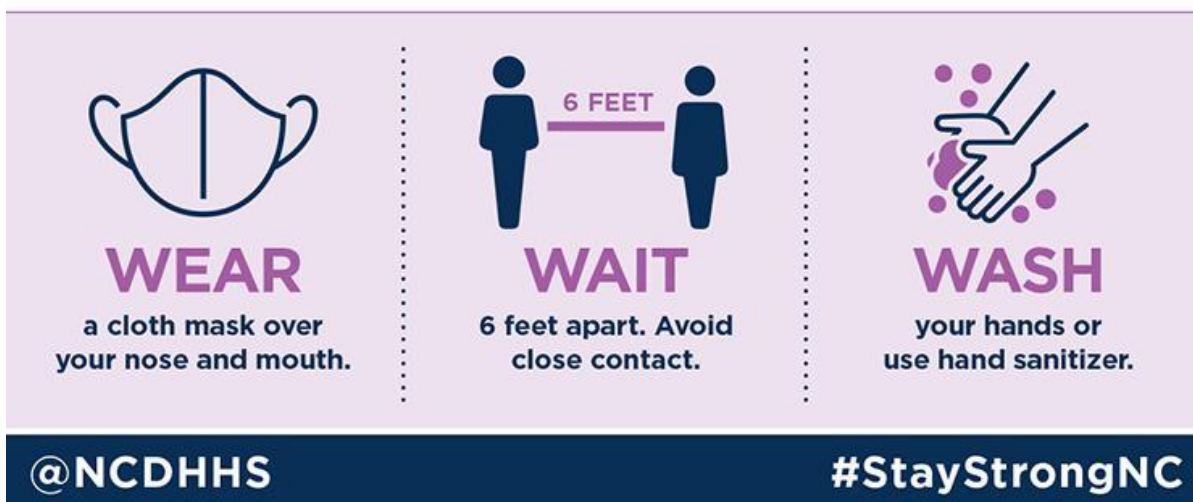
- Consider getting tested for COVID-19 3 to 4 days prior to travel or attending family gatherings.
- Do not host or attend a gathering if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are waiting for COVID-19 test results, are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, have been told by the local health department to quarantine or isolate, or if you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Consider asking all guests to avoid contact with people outside of their households for 14 days before the gathering.
- Practice the 3 Ws during the gathering: Wear a face covering, Wait six feet apart from others, and Wash your hands regularly.
- Arrange space so people from different households can stay distant (at least 6 feet apart) and plan activities where social distancing can be maintained. If you take your mask off to eat or drink, make sure you are 6 feet from others when you do so.
- Outdoor activities are preferred over indoor because it is easier to stay apart and there is more wind and air to help reduce the spread of the virus. However, even in outdoor settings, the more people that interact increases the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- Gatherings should not exceed current mass gathering limits in North Carolina which are 10 people indoors and 50 people outdoors.
- Even with smaller gatherings, it is still very possible for the virus to spread so when deciding how many people to invite, consider the amount of space you have and the ability to maintain social distancing.
- As difficult as it may be, try to limit physical contact and substitute waves and air kisses for handshakes and hugs.

- Limit the number of people handling or serving food. If serving food, have one person serve all food so that multiple people are not handling serving utensils. Encourage guests to bring their own food and drinks and use disposable utensils and dishes.
- Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces, such as door handles, sink handles, and bathroom surfaces.
- People at high risk of complications for COVID-19 (e.g., people over 65 years of age or with underlying chronic conditions) should avoid social gatherings. Consider having a virtual option for individuals that are higher risk to join safely from their home. If they do attend, ensure the 3Ws are strictly practiced.
- Anyone who develops COVID-19 within 48 hours after attending a gathering should notify other attendees as soon as possible regarding the potential exposure.

We cannot stress enough that just because we are tired of the virus and done with it, it is far from being done with us. Coronavirus can easily transfer through microscopic respiratory droplets and it's hard to always know the source and avoid it, especially when we're around others or inside. Another tricky thing about this virus is that some people who do not feel bad and do not have symptoms yet can be spreading Coronavirus – this makes the mask wearing and distancing so very important.

Please remember - every action you take to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in a given setting, whether at the grocery store, in your workplace, or at a family gathering, adds up to make it harder for the virus to transmit from person to person. And, the more we can reduce the spread, the more lives we can save. We want to gather again for the holidays next year, so let's do all we can to preserve our health this year.

If you leave home, know your 3 Ws!



The infographic is divided into three vertical sections by dotted lines. The first section features a line-art icon of a cloth mask, the word 'WEAR' in purple, and the instruction 'a cloth mask over your nose and mouth.' The second section features an icon of two people with a horizontal line between them labeled '6 FEET', the word 'WAIT' in purple, and the instruction '6 feet apart. Avoid close contact.' The third section features an icon of hands being washed with purple dots representing water, the word 'WASH' in purple, and the instruction 'your hands or use hand sanitizer.'

WEAR
a cloth mask over
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WAIT
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close contact.

WASH
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@NCDHHS **#StayStrongNC**