



LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Public Emergency Active exposure and spread. Follow all current health orders.	Public Emergency Increased exposure and spread. Exercise high degree of caution. Follow all current health orders.	Public Emergency Very high exposure and spread. Limit activities as much as possible. Follow all current health orders.	Public Emergency Severe exposure and spread. Only leave home for supplies and services. Follow all current health orders.



COVID-19 Risk Level 4 Guidance

The Ohio Public Health Advisory System for COVID-19 lists Montgomery County at **Risk Level 4**. To control the spread of the virus within Montgomery County, **Public Health recommends the following evidence-based guidelines and recommendations for action:**

- Only leave your home when absolutely necessary.
(except to seek medical care, to work, to get food or medicine, or to care for others)
- The public is urged to stay home when they are sick (except to seek medical care), wear a face covering, cover coughs and sneezes, wash hands frequently, avoid close contact with others and avoid crowds.
- The elderly and those with weakened immune systems should stay at home (except to seek medical care, to work, to get food or medicine, or to care for others)
- Employers should consider a remote work setting if possible.
- All businesses and operations are required to follow social distancing and face-covering requirements set forth by the Ohio Department of Health Director’s Order.
- All employees must wear a face covering when not able to maintain a social distance, including serving customers at check-out and during customer service interactions. Employee face coverings are not required in a private office when alone. Face shields are not a substitute for face masks.
- By order, all individuals in Montgomery County must wear a face-covering in public both indoors and outdoors when they are unable to maintain a social distance. Exceptions include when in your own residence and when it is not medically advisable to do so.
- Businesses should consider alternate hours of operation to limit groups of people gathering. Their choice should depend on the type of business and should allow for a scenario that would reduce the number of people gathering together at one time. (Examples include: A grocery store expands hours to allow crowds to spread out over time. A hair salon reduces the number of appointments happening at one time.
- Elevator use should be avoided when possible.
- Outside airflow should be increased in building air exchange systems where possible.
- In-person meetings in an office setting, if necessary, should be limited to no more than two people.
- Businesses and building management should use enhanced COVID-19 cleaning protocols, with added attention to high touch surfaces.
- The public should not attend large or small social gatherings. Do not host groups in your home.
- Events designed to bring people together should not take place. Examples of events that should not be held include, but are not limited to; festivals, block parties, group picnics, art shows, outdoor concerts, tastes of the city, parades, fireworks, food truck rally’s, conferences/conventions, car shows, running races/walks, spectator sports.
- Churches are encouraged to provide in-vehicle and /or online services.
- For schools that are providing hybrid or full in-person education, holding extracurricular activities or sporting events, high vigilance to safety precautions is essential. Students should not gather in groups outside the school setting and school activities.
- Travel when only absolutely necessary. If you must travel:
 - travel alone or only with members of your household or your consistent quarantine partner(s) and
 - avoid current national COVID-19 hot spots.

Advisory System Background Information

The Ohio Department of Health publishes the Ohio Public Health Advisory System. The systems help residents understand the stages of risk and provide recommendations on what people should do to stay safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The system consists of four levels that provide Ohioans with guidance on the severity of the problem in the counties in which they live. The levels are determined by seven data indicators that identify the risk level for each county and a corresponding color code to represent that risk level.

Our county has now reached Level 4, which indicates severe exposure and spread of the virus. We are trending in the wrong direction. The public needs to take even stronger precautions. The continued increase in spread will only lead to more hospitalizations and deaths.

Residents should stay home and avoid all contact with other people unless you perform essential activities like going to essential work or visiting a grocery store or medical facility, or pharmacy for emergency needs.

Elderly individuals and people with chronic health conditions or compromised immune systems are at even greater risk of more serious illness if infected with coronavirus (COVID-19). It is even more critical that these individuals take the necessary precautions to limit exposure.

Public Messages for Level 4 Counties

The Ohio Department of Health has our county as a Level 4 or “Purple” in the Ohio Public Health Advisory System. Under a Level 4 Public Health Emergency represents a risk for severe exposure and spread, with recommendations to only leave home for supplies and services. <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/OPHASM/COVID-19-Risk-Level-Guidelines-GP.pdf>

1. Self-monitor for symptoms of COVID19. Get tested if you develop symptoms. Community testing locations can be found at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/testing-ch-centers/>
2. If you have been in contact with someone that has recently tested positive for COVID19 or someone with COVID19 symptoms, stay home 14 days after your last contact with that person and monitor yourself for symptoms. If you are tested for COVID-19 during the quarantine period and test negative, you need to remain in quarantine for the full 14 day period in case symptoms develop with more information at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>
3. If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, remain in isolation for 10 days after symptom start and resolution of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and with an improvement of other symptoms with more information at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>
4. There is an increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 among older adults and those who have chronic diseases like asthma or diabetes, have obesity or overweight, who smoke or have a history of smoking. Avoid contact with anyone who is considered high-risk to protect them. High-risk individuals should take extra care to follow precautions <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>
5. Stores should consider offering hours available for seniors only shopping to reduce exposure risk <https://www.aarp.org/home-family/your-home/info-2020/coronavirus-supermarkets.html>
6. Get your annual flu shot and find a location near you at <https://vaccinefinder.org/>

7. Limit in-person interactions with others. Consider alternative events for Halloween celebrations, avoid close contact with those outside of your household and follow the guidance at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/celebrating-halloween.pdf>
8. Limit attending gatherings of any number. Consider postponing gatherings, like wedding receptions or parties with extended family/friends, to prevent transmission of the virus during the holidays.
9. For schools that are providing hybrid or full in-person education, holding extracurricular activities or sporting events, high vigilance to safety precautions is essential. Students should not gather in groups outside the schools setting and school activities <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>
10. Stay at home and do not travel unless necessary. If you must go out, maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet from others and wear a mask.
11. Consider working remotely where options are available <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>
12. Follow good hygiene standards, including:
 - Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - Use hand sanitizer frequently.
 - Avoid touching your face.
 - Cover coughs or sneezes (e.g., into a tissue or elbow).
 - Symptom self-evaluation monitoring.

The Centers for Disease Control offers guidance for election polling locations at [Considerations for Election Polling Locations and Voters](#)

Recommendations for Voters

- **Practice [healthy behaviors to protect yourself](#) and slow the spread of COVID-19**
 - [Wash your hands](#) before entering and after leaving the polling location.
 - While in the polling location, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol frequently, especially after touching surfaces frequently touched by multiple people, such as door handles or voting machines.
 - Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in lined trash cans. [Wash your hands](#) or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
 - Wear a [mask](#). Children under 2 and anyone who has trouble breathing, is incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance should not wear a mask.
 - Maintain at least 6 feet (about two arms' length) of distance from others. It is important to continue [social distancing](#) even when you and others are wearing masks.
- **Consider voting alternatives available in your jurisdiction that minimizes contact.** Voting alternatives that limit the number of people you come in contact with or the amount of time you are in contact with others can help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Check with your local Board of Elections <https://www.usa.gov/election-office> for more information on voting alternatives available in your jurisdiction.
- **Do not disinfect or wipe down the voting equipment yourself.** Cleaners and disinfectants can damage electronic voting equipment. If you use hand sanitizer before touching the voting equipment, ensure your hands are completely dry to avoid damaging the equipment. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer **after** using the voting equipment.
- **Avoid crowds**
 - Use early voting, if available in your jurisdiction.
 - Vote at off-peak times, such as mid-morning.

- If driving to the polls and your schedule allows, monitor the voter line from your car and join it when it's shorter.
- **Be prepared**
 - Check your voting location and requirements in advance because they may have changed due to COVID-19.
 - Verify your voter registration information is correct in advance of reporting to the polling location.
 - Contact your local Board of Elections for additional information for voters with disabilities <https://www.usa.gov/election-office>
 - Make sure you have all the necessary documents to avoid delays at the polling location.
 - If possible, complete any registration forms before arriving at the polling location.
 - Where possible, review or complete a sample ballot at home to speed the process of casting your ballot at the polling location.
 - Bring your black ink pen.
 - Bring a stylus or similar object for use with touchscreen voting machines.

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