



TOWN OF HOPKINTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Social Distancing Guidelines from the Hopkinton Board of Health

Below are some recommendations on social distancing. The guidance is constantly changing and we will update this document as new information becomes available.

The Hopkinton Health Department Department is making the following recommendations:

- Large gatherings that include 250 people or more have been banned by Governor Baker as of 3/13/2020 for an undetermined amount of time. The Town of Hopkinton is following this guidance and we strongly urge you to consider following it as well.
 - This includes gatherings such as concerts, conferences, and professional, college, and school sporting events.
- Smaller gatherings held in venues that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person should be postponed or canceled.
 - This includes gatherings in crowded auditoriums, rooms or other venues.
- Gatherings of individuals who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 should be limited to no more than 10 people.
 - This includes gatherings such as those at retirement facilities, assisted living facilities, developmental homes, and support groups for people with health conditions.

A “gathering” is any event or convening that brings together people in a single room or single space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, cafeteria, or any other indoor or outdoor space.

This applies to all non-essential professional, social, and community gatherings regardless of their sponsor. Gatherings that do not meet the aforementioned criteria should only be conducted when they are essential. A gathering is considered essential if it is the only means of conducting the business at hand. Please consider telephone or video conferencing as an alternative.

Why are we making these recommendations?

Social distancing is a proven strategy to reduce the rates of transmission and to reduce the spread of disease.

By decreasing the prevalence of disease we will:

- Reduce the number of people who contract COVID-19 before an effective treatment or vaccine is available.
- Protect those most likely to experience severe symptoms, such as the elderly population or those with underlying chronic conditions.
- Preserve and protect our health care delivery system, including our health care workforce, so they can care for the least healthy individuals in the community for any medical condition, not just COVID-19.
- Minimize the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 over the long run.

How long will these limitations apply?

This guidance will remain in place at least through the month of March. We will review it regularly and update it as information changes.

What is Social Distancing and how is it achieved?

Social distancing is a practice recommended by public health officials to stop or slow down the spread of contagious diseases. It requires the creation of physical space between individuals who may spread certain infectious diseases. The key is to minimize the number of gatherings as much as possible and to achieve space between individuals when events or activities cannot be modified, postponed, or canceled. Achieving space between individuals of approximately six feet is advisable.

What can be done to make a gathering safer if it is essential or small?

- Stagger activities
- Add frequency of an event to spread out attendance, e.g. hold more, smaller gatherings.
- Add distance between where individuals sit or stand around tables.
- Add additional hand washing stations and restrooms.
- Limit the number of people in lines.
- Avoid direct physical contact, such as hand-shaking, holding hands, and hugging.
- Extend hours to allow for staggering of attendance or participation.
- Use phones, videos or video conferencing to reduce the need for close interactions.
- Consider ways to encourage anyone with fever and respiratory symptoms to stay home when sick, such as
 - Offering refunds or support reselling of tickets for persons who become ill.
 - Placing messages on websites, tickets, and venue entrances reminding people to protect one another by staying home if sick.

Examples of Essential Events this Does Not Apply To:

The goal of this recommendation is to prevent people physically coming together unnecessarily, where people who have the infection can easily spread it to others. This guidance does not apply to activities such as attendance at regular school classes, work, or essential services. Certain activities are essential to the functioning of our state and must continue.