



*Jefferson County Health Department will champion positive health outcomes and behaviors through innovative programs and community engagement.*

## Jefferson County Recommends Limits on Attendance at Mass Gatherings

For Immediate Release: March 16, 2020

Hillsboro, MO: Jefferson County Health Officials, in consultation with the Office of the County Executive, the Jefferson County Municipal Mayors and the Jefferson County Office of Emergency Management, recommend that for the next 8 weeks, organizers (whether groups or individuals) cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more. The announcement Monday comes after a change in guidance from the CDC on Sunday.

“This recommendation is part of a larger proactive strategy to reduce introduction of the virus into our communities,” said Health Department Director, Kelley Vollmar. As the COVID-19 outbreak evolves, CDC strongly encourages event organizers and staff to prepare for the possibility of outbreaks in their communities. Creating an emergency plan for mass gatherings and large community events can help protect residents, attendees and the local community.

Everyone can do their part to help plan, prepare, and respond to this emerging public health threat. Large events and mass gatherings can contribute to the spread of COVID-19 in communities by creating an opportunity for large numbers of individuals to be exposed to a single contagious source. Examples of large events and mass gatherings include conferences, festivals, parades, concerts, sporting events, weddings, and other types of assemblies. This recommendation does not apply to the day to day operation of organizations such as schools, institutes of higher learning, or businesses.

CDC has developed recommended actions for preventing the spread of COVID-19 at mass gatherings and large community events which can be found at: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov). This guidance suggests strategies to help individuals plan for and implement ways in which to better protect all involved in a mass gathering. Organizers should continually assess, based on current conditions, whether to postpone, cancel, or significantly reduce the number of attendees (if possible) for mass gatherings.

Events of any size should only be continued if they can be carried out with adherence to guidelines for protecting vulnerable populations, hand hygiene, and social distancing. When feasible, organizers could modify events to be virtual.

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