

# COVID-19 guidance

Saginaw County



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

## GRAD PARTIES and Summer Gatherings

With summer comes barbecues, patio and pool parties, backyard weddings and – of course – graduation parties. As restrictions ease, these traditions can continue somewhat normally.

These important safety tips will keep the celebration and all attendees safe.



1

### Choose your venue/location thoughtfully

- Outdoor gatherings are safer than indoor ones, thanks to more space, fresh air, and more opportunities for social distancing.
- Pay close attention to executive orders guiding your region when your event is scheduled. Follow the rules for the numbers of people allowed for safe gatherings inside and out.
- If indoors, follow the same 50% capacity rules that restaurants and bars must adhere to.
- If outside, set up tables in smaller groups to maximize social distancing and minimize the amount of time bigger groups interact with each other.
- Wipe down tables and chairs before guests arrive and as much as possible during the event as guests come and go.

2

### Ask guests to take personal responsibility

- Communicate with guests ahead of time and encourage everyone to wear masks except when eating or drinking
- Greet guests with a warm welcome and an elbow bump rather than hand shaking or hugging
- Provide hand washing stations, hand sanitizer or wipes to encourage people to wash and/or sanitize their hands before getting food
- Leave disinfecting wipes on the bathroom counter with a little sign that says, "We'd sure appreciate it if you would just wipe down the surfaces you touch and keep it safe for the next person."
- Ask anyone with symptoms to celebrate your graduate in other ways than attending the party

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### 3

## Food safety

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- There is no evidence that COVID-19 is spread by food. However, people sharing utensils and congregating around food service areas can pose a risk.
- Always wash your hands before and after handling food and keep the food area, dishes, and utensils clean.
- Food lines are okay but don't do self-serve food or drink options. Instead, provide a server/helper who wears gloves and serves food at each individual food station. Drinks should be individually packaged – no large dispensers.
- Consider wrapping servings individually, like half sandwiches, ice cream or bags of chips rather than a big bowl.
- Minimize or eliminate high touch items like condiment bottles – have individual packets instead.
- Use disposable plates, cups, bowls and silverware.
- With summer's higher temperatures, follow normal food safety precautions for keeping hot foods hot and cold foods cold – remember that bacteria grows 41-135 degrees Fahrenheit. Have a food thermometer handy.
- Serve in small containers and replenish as needed in clean containers that are properly heated or cooled.
- Keep food covered if outside to avoid and flies and other insects.
- Offer hand sanitizer at each table or at the front of the food line.

**When in doubt** refer to CDC's COVID-19 considerations for [restaurants and bars](#) or call the Saginaw County Health Department hotlines at (989) 758-3828.