

01/20/2022

Dear Tillamook County Community:

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to reshape how we conduct and celebrate holidays, events, and activities. As Tillamook County enters the anticipated Omicron surge, we are already starting to experience a strain on our healthcare workers and system. A new daily record of COVID-19 cases was set, with 54 new cases in a single day, on Wednesday Jan. 19th.

Given the high transmissibility of the Omicron variant and still circulating Delta variant, local and state healthcare systems are overloaded responding to increased screening, testing, vaccination, and care for sick patients.

We have appreciated your support and dedication to protecting your community over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. We know this request does not come lightly, but we must make it, as it is still crucial to helping to reduce spread and disease burden in Tillamook County. Tillamook County Public Health Officer, Dr. Melissa Paulissen, strongly urges you to be extra mindful of your choices and to take into consideration if it is necessary for your event, gathering or larger activity to occur at this time.

If you are hosting an event, gathering or larger activity, choosing low risk ways to interact or celebrate will help to prevent the spread of COVID-19 illness, decrease the impact on Oregon's health care system, and save lives.

Some ideas for safer, lower risk activities (CDC) include:

- Hosting your event online when you are able.
- Keep gatherings small and outdoors when possible. If indoors, bring in fresh air by opening windows and doors, if possible.
- Wear a well-fitting face covering or mask over your mouth and nose when indoors and when outdoors in more crowded areas.
- Choose to get vaccinated and be up to date on your vaccine including getting a booster, prior to attending events and activities if you are eligible.
- Wash hands frequently and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid crowds and maintain 6ft of distance from those not in your household when gathering with individuals who are not yet vaccinated and individuals at higher risk for COVID-19.
- Consider bringing your own food, drinks, plates, cups, and utensils.
- Avoid shouting or singing.





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While we continue to work together to reduce disease spread in Tillamook County, it is important to have these conversations ahead of time so all can understand expectations for gathering and celebrating together.

If you are not able to substitute or include lower risk activities in your event, activity or gathering, it is advisable to postpone or reschedule. Visit the CDC's *Guidance for Organizing Large Events and Gathering* page for more resources and information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html>.

If you have COVID-19 related questions or need additional support please contact the public health nurse line at 503-842-3940. Calls are returned within 24 business hours. If you are in need of testing, **COVID-19 testing can be sought through:**

- Tillamook County Community Health Center, scheduling line 503-842-3938.
- Adventist Urgent Care-Tillamook
- Rinehart Clinic-Wheeler
- Manzanita Urgent Care- Manzanita

We understand how difficult this time is for everyone. Thank you for everything you do to keep yourself and your community safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Melissa Paulissen

Melissa Paulissen, MD
Tillamook County Community Health Center
Medical Doctor and Public Health Officer



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