



HOKE COUNTY Department of Public Health

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DATE: March 13, 2020

TO: Community and Faith-Based Organizations

FROM: Helene Edwards, MS, RD, LDN, Health Director
Dr. Karen Smith, MD, Medical Director

SUBJECT: Recommendation to cancel, postpone or modify events that draw more than 100 people

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, Hoke County Health Department recommends that organizers of events that draw more than 100 people cancel, postpone, or modify these events, or offer online streaming services beginning March 13, 2020, until further notice. These events include large gatherings where people are in close contact (less than 6 feet), such as concerts, conferences, sporting events, faith-based events and other large gatherings.

Organizations that gather up to 100 people should create an emergency plan and prepare for COVID-19 in their communities by taking the following steps:

- Consider alternative options to gathering large groups of people, such as streaming video of the event or having patrons participate online.
- Instruct participants to stay home if they are sick.
- Encourage people who are at a higher risk for complications from COVID-19, including people over 65 and those with pre-existing medical conditions, to consult with their doctor before attending.
- Have hygiene supplies available for employees and participants, including hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol, tissues, and lined trash cans.
- Promote behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 among participants and employees using the enclosed resources.
- During and after the event, disinfect frequently-touched surfaces with a cleaning agent that is effective against coronaviruses.
- Decrease close contact between attendees at the event. For example, place seats farther apart or reduce the number of attendees.

Additional guidance can be found at the NC DHHS website here: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-response-north-carolina/community-events>.

Please let us know if you would like additional educational information for distribution or you may access these materials online through the CDC website here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html> or through the NC DHHS website here: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-response-north-carolina/materials-and>

The local risk of contracting COVID-19 remains low; however, we still encourage you to protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19 and any other flu-like illness by taking the following steps:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use a generous amount of hand sanitizer which is at least 60% alcohol on all surfaces of the hands and wrists.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Stay away from sick people.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces – especially ones that are frequently touched – using regular household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Stay home if you're sick and don't send sick children to school or childcare.
- High risk individuals should avoid large gatherings such as concerts, church services, and sporting events.

As questions and concerns about coronavirus (COVID-19) increase across North Carolina, we'd like to encourage promotion of the statewide Coronavirus Helpline (1-866-462-3821) for the public, which is answered 24 hours a day / 7 days a week.