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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Moore County Health Department Urges COVID-19 Safety Ahead of the Thanksgiving Holiday**

As Thanksgiving approaches this week, the Moore County Health Department urges everyone to be cautious and take actions to limit exposure and decrease the spread of COVID-19. The safest way to celebrate Thanksgiving this year is to stay home and be with those who live in your household. However, if you do decide to host or attend a holiday gathering, there are things you can do to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

- **Stay home if you are sick or have been exposed to COVID-19.**
- **Consider getting tested for COVID-19 before the event but know that this test is one point in time and you should continue practicing all preventive measures like social distancing and wearing a mask even if you test negative. Keep in mind, test results may be delayed given the Thanksgiving Holiday.**
- **Keep the guest list small.**
- **Host the gathering outdoors. If that isn't possible, make sure the room is well ventilated by opening windows and doors.**
- **Seat people who live together at their own table and keep tables at least 6ft apart from one another.**
- **Higher risk guests should strongly consider not attending Thanksgiving gatherings and instead attend virtually.**
- **Avoid self-serve food. Use single-use options or designate one person to serve food so that multiple people aren't handling food items.**
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces like doorknobs, light switches, and sink faucets.**

***"To Protect and Promote Health through Prevention and Control of Disease and Injury."***  
**<http://www.moorecountync.gov/health/>**

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“This Thanksgiving Holiday, like many other events and celebrations this year, will be different but if we want to prevent and limit illness and even death, we must make some sacrifices to protect our loved ones and the broader community,” says Health Director Robert Wittmann. “We urge everyone to practice prevention measures and when you are around others, follow the 3Ws and wear a face covering, wait 6 feet apart, and wash your hands.”

COVID-19 cases have been on the rise in Moore County leading up to Thanksgiving. The County’s seven day rolling average of new cases has more than doubled in the past two weeks, going from an average of 12.6 new cases per day on November 9<sup>th</sup> to 27 on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Additionally, Moore County is one of 42 North Carolina counties who received an “orange” designation which denotes “substantial community spread” according to the State’s new COVID-19 County Alert System Report.

“We do not want Thanksgiving celebrations to lead to despair in the weeks that follow,” says Wittmann. “Everyone should remain vigilant and take all the necessary steps to keep their friends and loved ones safe.”

For more Thanksgiving COVID-19 guidance, visit the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Website: <https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/guidance/NCDHHS-Interim-Guidance-for-Thanksgiving.pdf>

Moore County’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard can be found here:

<https://moorecounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/4c11e5bf79b64a6e9c8377d5129cc97c>

For more information about coronavirus and Moore County’s response, please visit [www.moorecountync.gov/health](http://www.moorecountync.gov/health), find us on Facebook (Moore County Health Department), and follow us on Twitter (@mocohealth).

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