



Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Jerry L. Clayton

MEDIA RELEASE

Local Police, Sheriff Support Executive Order Prohibiting Large Gatherings

YPSILANTI, Mich., March 14, 2020 – The Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office and our law enforcement partners are asking residents to do their part in helping slow the spread of the Coronavirus by following the executive order recently announced by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. The order prohibits gatherings of 250 people or more and recommends that you cancel events with more than 100 people in a shared space. It also recommends that you cancel gatherings of more than 10 people where individuals at higher risk of severe illness are involved.

“For some, the threat of the virus may seem insignificant,” says Sheriff Jerry Clayton. “However, we’re asking for your help in slowing the spread. The sooner the virus is subdued, the sooner we can get back to our normal way of life. One way to do so is to keep your distance and follow the direction of our health experts.”

We are not looking for social isolation, but we are asking for social distancing. Those who disregard the order could be subject to a misdemeanor that includes up to 90 days in jail and/or a fine of up to \$200. More importantly, violation of the order puts us all at significant risk. If needed, the Washtenaw County Health Officer can issue additional, local orders prohibiting gatherings where necessary.

“Now is the time for us to cooperate fully to protect everyone’s health,” says Jimena Loveluck, MSW, health officer with Washtenaw County Health Department. “Our individual and collective actions are incredibly important for slowing the potential spread of illness in our community. Keep washing, covering, and distancing. Together, we will get through this.”

The large gatherings ban is one of several statewide efforts to help stop the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The ban went into effect at 5 p.m. on Friday, March 13 and remains in place until Sunday, April 5 at 5 p.m.

The executive order applies to all gatherings of more than 250 people in a single shared space and includes both private businesses and public locations. A single shared space includes, but is not limited to, a room, hall, cafeteria, auditorium, theater, or gallery. People gathering for the purposes of industrial or manufacturing work; mass transit; or the purchase of groceries or consumer goods are currently exempt from the state ban.

Health experts are still learning about how this new coronavirus spreads. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, between people who are in close contact (within about six feet) of an ill person, through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Therefore, keeping your distance is important.

Prevention

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Information from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is available in [English](#), [Chinese](#), and [Spanish](#).



Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Jerry L. Clayton

MEDIA RELEASE

-
- **Clean your hands often.** Scrub with soap for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer if you cannot wash.
 - **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.**
 - **Stay home when you are sick**, except to get medical care. Call ahead before going to your healthcare provider. Learn [what to do if you are sick](#).
 - **Cover your cough or sneeze** with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Immediately wash your hands.
 - **Clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces.**

Older adults and people who have severe underlying chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness. [View additional prevention steps from CDC](#) for people at higher risk. Consult with your health care provider for more steps you may be able to take to protect yourself.

REMEMBER: [Discrimination harms public health](#). People of Asian descent, including Chinese Americans, are not more likely to get coronavirus than anyone else.

Please continue to rely on official sources of information for local (www.washtenaw.org/covid19), state (www.michigan.gov/coronavirus), and national (<http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19>) updates.