

Frequently Asked Questions

Washtenaw County Order Further Limiting Outdoor Social Gatherings
August 19, 2020. Updated Oct 2, 2020.



Washtenaw County
Health Department
healthy together

What restrictions does this order establish?

Under this public health emergency order (issued Aug 19, 2020 and updated Oct 2, 2020), outdoor social gatherings, and organized events in residential settings may not exceed 25 people within the cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. At this time, the order does not apply to the townships of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti or other areas of Washtenaw County.

Throughout Washtenaw, all other provisions of Michigan [Executive Order 2020-183](#) are in effect. EO 2020-183 limits residential outdoor gatherings to 100 or fewer people, indoor gatherings to 10 or fewer, and requires that people not living in same household keep 6 feet of distance from one another.

Why are the restrictions only in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti?

Thousands of university students live in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti and COVID-19 cases among college-age individuals have increased. College life often includes large social gatherings such as house or yard parties. Such gatherings come with an increased public health risk during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Washtenaw County Health Officer has determined these orders are necessary and appropriate to protect the public's health and to prevent or reduce the spread of illness. City and university officials support this action.

What about enforcement?

The University of Michigan has established a non-emergency hotline to address issues in off-campus housing areas. **Call 734-647-3000.**

As with other state and local orders, violations can be reported to local law enforcement. Responses may vary according to the urgency of any given situation and the availability of law enforcement. First steps will always include education and engagement rather than penalties. Violations are subject to citations and penalties as outlined in the Michigan Public Health Code.

Health Department staff are also available to answer non-urgent questions or to provide guidance. Leave a message at 734-544-6700 or email L-wchdcontact@washtenaw.org.

Are there exceptions?

Gatherings or events in residential settings that take place outside the designated cities are not subject to this order but remain limited to 100 or fewer people as per state EO 2020-183. Under this same state order, indoor gatherings in residential settings remain limited to 10 people not in the same household. Specific limits for indoor or outdoor social gatherings in non-residential venues are described in EO 2020-183.

Exemptions: Schools, childcare organizations, community centers, places of religious worship and/or functions and demonstrations are exempt but must continue to comply with EO 2020-183 as well as the mask provisions in [EO 2020-153](#). Similarly, the local order is not intended to apply to incidental gatherings of in outdoor spaces, such as a bus station, restaurant, public pool, workplace, farmers market, or park. Outdoor weddings and funerals/memorial services scheduled prior to this order being issued are exempt.

Any restaurant or bar that is open within the City of Ann Arbor and the City of Ypsilanti must continue to comply with Executive Order 2020-161 that limits capacity to 50% of normal seating. Any social gathering or organized event held at a restaurant must follow guidelines specified in EO 2020-183.

How long will this be in effect?

This order takes effect on Oct 2, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. and remains in effect until amended or rescinded.

How can I get more information?

Information on local and state orders as well as local cases, testing options and more are available at www.washtenaw.org/covid19. Health Department staff are also available to answer questions. Leave a message at 734-544-6700 or email L-wchdcontact@washtenaw.org.