

## PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ORDER IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

### ADDITIONAL LIMITS ON SOCIAL GATHERINGS AND ORGANIZED EVENTS OCCURRING UNDER APPLICABLE EXECUTIVE ORDERS WITHIN THE CITIES OF ANN ARBOR AND YPSILANTI

The Washtenaw County Local Health Officer issues this Order pursuant to the Michigan Public Health Code, MCL 333.2453 as it has been determined that it is necessary to protect the public health from further spread of COVID-19 within Washtenaw County.

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death. It is caused by a new strain of coronavirus not previously identified in humans and easily spread from person to person. There is currently no approved vaccine or antiviral treatment for this disease. On March 10, 2020, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services identified the first two presumptive-positive cases of COVID-19 in Michigan. On that same day, Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued Executive Order 2020-4 declaring a state of emergency across the state of Michigan. On March 12, 2020, the first presumptive-positive cases of COVID-19 was reported in Washtenaw County.

In response to the widespread and severe health, economic, and social harms posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor issued Executive Order 2020-33 on April 1, 2020. This order declared both a state of emergency and a state of disaster across the state of Michigan. Governor Whitmer has reissued the declaration of emergency on several occasions considering the continuing threat posed by the pandemic.

On July 17, 2020, Governor Whitmer issued [Executive Order 2020-153](#) strengthening requirements for wearing masks, including when outdoors and unable to consistently maintain a distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their household. On September 25, 2020, Governor Whitmer issued [Executive Order 2020-183](#) (Safe Start), which delineates restrictions crucial to addressing the pandemic, including limits and guidelines that must be adhered to for social gatherings and organized events.

Washtenaw County has reported a total of 3,459 confirmed cases of COVID-19 to date. County data shows a significant increase in the proportion of cases among 18 to 22-year-olds, with this age group making up 78% of reported cases in the two-week period of September 17, 2020 to September 30, 2020. This trend of an increasing percentage of young people becoming infected with COVID-19 is present in many states across the country. With thousands of students returning to two large universities in Washtenaw County, many from states with high rates of COVID-19, living in congregate settings, and traditionally disposed toward socializing in large groups, further restrictions need to be put in place to prevent outbreaks related to large social gatherings and organized events. Large social gatherings have demonstrated an increased public health risk with potential for further outbreaks, including super-spreading events.

To help determine the least restrictive means to prevent outbreaks related to large social gatherings and organized events, this order applies only to the City of Ann Arbor and the City of Ypsilanti (note, this order does not apply to the *townships* of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti). As such,

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the Washtenaw County Local Health Officer has updated this order effective October 2, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. within the cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti.

Acting under Section 2453 of Michigan's Public Health Code, 1978 PA 368 (MCL 333.2453) the Health Officer finds it reasonable and necessary to further limit the size of outdoor social gatherings and organized events in residential settings and reinforce COVID-19 protective measures as follows:

1. Based on public health data and the impact of thousands of returning students upon residents, housing density and local businesses, an area of increased public health risk for COVID-19 outbreaks and community spread exists within the City of Ann Arbor and the City of Ypsilanti.
2. The requirements of Section 6 of Executive Order 2020-183 are enhanced by this local order as follows within the City of Ann Arbor and the City of Ypsilanti:  
Section 6. Gatherings and events.
  - a) An indoor social gathering or organized event of 10 people or fewer is permitted at a private residence
  - b) An **indoor** social gathering or organized event of more than 10 and fewer than 500 people occurring at a **non-residential venue** is permitted only to the extent that organizers and venue follow the seating capacity and attendance limitations outlined in Executive Order 2020-183 and require individuals at the venue to wear a facial covering.
  - c) *An outdoor social gathering or outdoor organized event of **25** people or fewer is permitted at a private residence.*
  - d) An **outdoor** social gathering or outdoor organized event of more than 100 people and fewer than 1,000 people occurring in a **non-residential venue** is permitted only to the extent that the organizers and venue follow the seating capacity and attendance limitations outlined in Executive Order 2020-183.
3. Notwithstanding the further limitation on gathering and event size, gatherings and events subject to this local order must continue to comply with all other provisions of Executive Order 2020-183 and any order that follows from it.
  - a. Organizers and venues must ensure that persons not part of the same household maintain six feet of distance from one another, including by designing the gathering or event to encourage and maintain social distancing.
4. Notwithstanding the further limitation on gathering and event size, gatherings and events subject to this local order must continue to comply with mask wearing provisions of Executive Order 2020-153.
5. 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.
6. Any individual, group or entity organizing or hosting an outdoor gathering or organized event are strongly encouraged to make and keep a record of all attendees for 21 days thereafter. If confirmed COVID-19 cases become associated with the gathering or event, the record will greatly facilitate case investigations by the Washtenaw County Health Department.
7. This order does not apply to:
  - a. Social gatherings or organized events that take place outside of the City of Ann Arbor and the City of Ypsilanti;
  - b. Social gatherings or events that must comply with Executive Order 2020-183 including schools, childcare organizations, community centers, places of religious worship and/or religious functions;

- c. If they are outdoors, fitness classes, athletic practices, training sessions, or games, provided that coaches, spectators, and participants not from the same household maintain six feet of distance from one another at all times during such activities, and that equipment and supplies are shared to the minimum extent possible and are subject to frequent and thorough disinfection and cleaning as outlined in Executive Order 2020-183.
- d. Incidental encounters of persons in an outdoor space, including a bus station, restaurant, public pool, workplace, farmers market, or park (although it does apply to social gatherings and organized events held in such places).
- e. Outdoor weddings and funerals/memorial services scheduled prior to August 20th.

The contents of this Order will be published to the members of the public at large by all reasonable means available. This updated order goes into effect on October 2, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. and shall remain in effect until lifted.

Such measures will be enforced, and any violations are subject to citations and penalties as outlined in the Michigan Public Health Code.



October 2, 2020

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Jimena Loveluck, MSW  
Health Officer