

# COVID-19 Public Health Guideline: Halloween

This document provides public health guidance on safety precautions to take this year when celebrating Halloween. Waterloo Region residents are strongly encouraged to follow the recommendations listed below to protect themselves and each other from COVID-19. Hosting a virtual party is highly recommended. Do not host Halloween parties and gatherings that exceed the gathering limits set out by province.

**IMPORTANT:** The recommendations below align with provincial guidance provided to public health units on October 4, 2021. This guidance may change depending on the local incidence of COVID-19.

## Trick-or-Treating

- Stay home if you are feeling unwell or are self-isolating.
- Trick or treat outdoors as much as possible
  - If trick-or-treating indoors, maintain physical distancing as much as possible and wear a face covering, especially when physical distancing is a challenge
- Wait for others to leave a house before approaching it. Do not crowd the doorsteps.
- Wear a non-medical mask or face covering when physical distancing is a challenge. A traditional Halloween mask is not a replacement.
  - A costume mask should not be worn over a non-medical mask or face covering because it can be dangerous if the costume mask makes it hard to breathe
- Use hand sanitizer often, especially before and after handling your face covering, after touching frequently touched surfaces, when you arrive home from trick-or-treating, and before and after handling or eating treats.
  - There is no need to clean or disinfect pre-packaged treats
- Be respectful of households that are not handing out treats this year.
- Follow the regular safety measures when going trick-or-treating, such as wearing reflective materials, watching for traffic and using crosswalks.
- If hosting an in-person party or gathering, you must limit the party to 25 people indoors and 100 people outdoors.

## Distributing Treats

- Do not hand out candy if you are feeling unwell or are self-isolating.
- Wash or sanitize hands before touching treats.
- Give out only purchased and packaged treats.
- Keep interactions with trick-or-treaters short and encourage them to move along after receiving their treat from you.
- Do not ask trick-or-treaters to sing or shout for their treats.
- Wear a non-medical mask or face covering when physical distancing is a challenge.
  - If you are dressing up, consider including the face-covering as part of your costume
- Clean your hands often throughout the evening using soap and water or with hand sanitizer.