

# News Release

**Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive**  
**Donna Skoda – Summit County Health Commissioner**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Date: December 14, 2020**



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## County Executive and Health Commissioner Extend Stay at Home Advisory

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—On Tuesday, December 14, 2020, Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and Summit County Health Commissioner Donna Skoda extended their Stay At Home Health Advisory, originally issued on November 19, 2020, in response to the rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases, emergency room visits, and COVID-19 related deaths. The advisory now extends to January 31, 2021.

The advisory urges all residents to stay at home to the greatest extent possible due to the rise of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in Summit County. Residents should only leave home to go to work or school, or for essential needs such as seeking medical care, going to the grocery store or pharmacy, picking up food, or receiving deliveries.

“It has never been more challenging to fight through quarantine fatigue and adhere to what we know works best—staying home and staying apart from each other. Conversely, it has never been more important to do just that,” said Executive Shapiro. “Failing to adhere to the best practices advised by public health experts puts not only the individual at risk, but the entire community as well. Please, be safe.”

Residents are strongly advised to avoid traveling in and out of the state, forgo having guests in their homes during holiday gatherings and utilize online communications wherever possible. The advisory encourages employers to move as many employees as possible to working from home. Businesses and local governments are advised to move as many transactions and functions as possible to online, and schools are directed to monitor cases within their district and community.

“We are beginning to see the surge of COVID-19 cases as the result of folks gathering at Thanksgiving. Our hospitals and emergency rooms are overwhelmed” said Health Commissioner Donna Skoda. “As the year winds down and the holidays are upon us, please keep your gatherings limited to those who live in your house. And, as always—stay home, and if you have to go out, wear a mask, stay six feet apart and wash your hands.”

Much like an advisory issued upon an impending weather event, this advisory is based on best practices identified by experts. While not a legally enforceable order, the advisory is issued in

hopes of protecting the greatest number of residents in the community. The orders of the Governor and the State Health Director remain in place in Summit County.

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# COVID-19 Stay at Home Health Advisory

Issued: November 19 2020

Ends: December 16, 2020

**Extended to: January 31, 2021**

**WHEREAS**, Summit County is experiencing a rapid increase in the number of SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19) cases, and

**WHEREAS** the number of hospitalizations locally and within our region has continued to increase, and

**WHEREAS**, positivity rates for our state have risen from 3% to 12% and NE Ohio hospital systems are reporting positivity rates even higher than this, and

**WHEREAS**, additional guidance, advisement, warning and intervention is warranted to mitigate case growth and preserve hospital capacity, and

**WHEREAS**, it is more important than ever to follow guidance from local, state, and federal officials on how to stop and slow the spread of the COVID-19 disease, and

**WHEREAS**, taking the steps listed below is critical to preventing the spread of the virus, protecting the lives of you and your loved ones, and preserving our acute and other healthcare services and capacity,

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ADVISED by the Executive of the County of Summit, State of Ohio, and the Commissioner of Health, Summit County Public Health, that:**

## **Section 1. Stay-at-Home Advisory**

Beginning on Thursday, November 19, 2020, the Summit County Executive and the Commissioner of Health for the County of Summit advises all residents to stay at home to the greatest extent possible due to the rapid rise of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in the county. Residents are advised to only leave home to go to work or school, or for essential needs such as seeking medical care, going to the grocery store or pharmacy, picking up food, or receiving deliveries.

Additionally, residents are strongly advised to:

- a) Wear a mask and observe social distancing in the presence of others
- b) Avoid traveling in and out of the state
- c) Forgo having guests in their homes during the upcoming holiday season
- d) Use online communication platforms wherever possible

This advisory shall remain in place through December 16, 2020 unless an additional advisory is issued prior.

## **Section 2. Adherence to All Current Orders**

All orders set forth by Governor R. Michael DeWine, the Ohio Department of Health, County, and Municipal governments shall continue to be enforced and adhered to by all residents.

### **Section 3. Advisory on Indoor and Outdoor Meetings and Social Events**

Residents are advised to limit meetings and social events to 10 individuals, from the issue date of this advisory. The advice applies to both indoor and outdoor events, birthday parties, and other events that may occur at a banquet hall, event venue or other similar space. Furthermore, houses of worship are recommended to continue to implement all virus transmission prevention protocols and are advised to limit the number of individuals in attendance to ensure safe distancing at all regular services. A meeting or social event that is outside of normal operations is advised to have no more than 10 individuals. All gatherings should provide space for adequate social distancing and shall require the wearing of masks.

### **Section 4. Private Gatherings**

Residents are strongly advised to not have any indoor gatherings with guests in their homes unless they require services from essential workers (e.g. plumbing, heating, electrical repairpersons) and should wear a mask and observe social distancing if such services are necessary.

### **Section 5. Response to Illness and Exposure – Isolation and Quarantine**

Residents that are exhibiting any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 should shelter in their place of residence. They should not go to their workplace or congregated setting and should only leave their place of residence to seek necessary clinical care, or for essential life sustaining needs, such as obtaining medicine or food.

COVID-19 symptoms include, but are not limited to, new onset of fever, cough, shortness of breath, congestion or runny nose, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, body aches, or unusual fatigue.

Residents diagnosed with COVID-19 by a laboratory test of their medical provider must isolate for 10 days from the date of their symptom onset, or from the date of test collection (until you are not experiencing symptoms). In the home, sick or infected individuals should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific “sick room” or area, and use a separate bathroom, if available.

Residents that have been identified as a contact to an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 should quarantine for one full incubation period (14 days) from the date of last contact. Individuals in quarantine should stay home, separate from others, monitor their health, and follow all instructions from their local health department.

Residents who are either confirmed positive or a close contact should not wait to hear from the health department and immediately follow the guidance as described. Information about isolation and quarantine can be found on the website of the health departments.

### **Section 6: Employers and Schools**

Employers are strongly encouraged to identify and accommodate as many employees as possible to work from home during this time. All businesses and local governments are advised to transition as many transactions and functions as possible to online. Public and private K-12 schools are advised to

maintain awareness of case numbers both within their district buildings and the general community. Shifts to learning modality could become necessary.