



Dear Team Members, Individuals, Families, and Friends,

For the past nine months we have all worked together tirelessly to battle the coronavirus pandemic, often with great personal sacrifice. I can't thank everyone enough, especially the unparalleled AHRC Suffolk workforce, for your vigilance, resilience, and generosity of spirit. Thankfully, the summer was largely a time when the virus threat slowed a bit in New York, but now, as predicted by many public health officials, a resurgence of COVID-19 is clearly in our midst. There is the promise of vaccines on the horizon, a far better understanding of virus transmission, and more effective treatment regimens. So, while we have cause to show cautious optimism, this is no time to let our guard down.

Despite the difficulties the pandemic has wrought, I try to remind myself that, even if we have to dig a bit, we have reasons for which we should be grateful.

The great African-American jazz musician and bandleader Lionel Hampton once said, "Gratitude is when memory is stored in the heart and not in the mind".

Let's make a point this Thanksgiving, and for many years to come, to hold in our hearts the goodness that has emerged from caring for one another during this difficult time. As someone who has been supported and strengthened by the power and impact of our teamwork, I have much to be thankful for. I'm certain you do as well.

Let's be sure to celebrate that Thursday.

Paul H. Torres
Chief Executive Officer

P.S.: Please [CLICK ON LETTER](#) to see safety protocols from the CDC.

Staying Safe and Healthy During the Holiday Season



As always AHRC Suffolk's highest priority is the health and safety of ALL members of our community. We are closely following the recommendations of the State Departments of Health, the CDC, the NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), and the State Department of Education. We continue to request that all readers of this publication remain vigilant in following the guidelines: wear masks and gloves whenever you are out of your home traveling or engaging in necessary activities and continue infection control protocols like handwashing with soap and water frequently.

The excerpted suggestions that follow are from the CDC. Please read them or you can view the full article [here](#).

Traditional Thanksgiving gatherings with family and friends are fun but can increase the chances of getting or spreading COVID-19 or the flu. Follow these tips to make your Thanksgiving holiday safer.

The safest way to celebrate Thanksgiving this year is to celebrate with people in your household. If you do plan to spend Thanksgiving with people outside of your household, take steps to make your celebration safer.

EVERYONE CAN MAKE THANKSGIVING SAFER

Wear a Mask

- Wear a mask with two or more layers to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Wear the mask over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Make sure the mask fits snugly against the sides of your face.

Stay at least 6 feet away from others who do not live with you

- Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread COVID-19 or flu.
- Keeping 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from others is especially important for [people who are at higher risk of getting very sick](#).

Wash your hands

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Keep hand sanitizer with you and use it when you are unable to wash your hands.
- Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Attending a Gathering

Make your celebration safer. In addition to following the steps that everyone can take to make Thanksgiving safer, take these additional steps while attending a Thanksgiving gathering.

- Bring your own food, drinks, plates, cups, and utensils.

- Wear a mask, and safely store your mask while eating and drinking.
- Avoid going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled, such as in the kitchen.
- Use single-use options, like salad dressing and condiment packets, and disposable items like food containers, plates, and utensils.

Hosting a Thanksgiving Gathering

If having guests to your home, be sure that people follow the steps that everyone can take to make Thanksgiving safer. Other steps you can take include:

- Have a small outdoor meal with family and friends who live in your community.
- Limit the number of guests.
- Have conversations with guests ahead of time to set expectations for celebrating together.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and items between use.
- If celebrating indoors, make sure to open windows.
- Limit the number of people in food preparation areas.
- Have guests bring their own food and drink.
- If sharing food, have one person serve food and use single-use options, like plastic utensils.

Thanksgiving Travel

Travel increases your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others. If you do travel:

- There shall be no travel to any state that is non-contiguous to NY (any state besides VT, CT, NJ, MA or PA) for more than a 24 hour period unless, upon return to NYS, the individual complies with any quarantine and/or testing protocols currently required by the NYS COVID-19 Travel Advisory prior to returning to their certified residence.
- Check travel restrictions before you go.
- Get your flu shot before you travel.
- Always wear a mask in public settings and on public transportation.
- Stay at least 6 feet apart from anyone who is not in your household.
- Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your mask, eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Bring extra supplies, such as masks and hand sanitizer.

Consider Other Thanksgiving Activities

Host a virtual Thanksgiving meal with friends and family who don't live with you.

- Schedule a time to share a meal together virtually.
- Have people share recipes and show their turkey, dressing, or other dishes they prepared.

Watch television and play games with people in your household

- Watch Thanksgiving Day parades, sports, and movies at home.
- Find a fun game to play.

Shopping

- Shop online sales the day after Thanksgiving and days leading up to the winter holidays.
- Use contactless services for purchased items, like curbside pick-up.
- Shop in open-air markets staying 6 feet away from others.

Other Activities

- Safely prepare traditional dishes and deliver them to family and neighbors in a way that does not involve contact with others (for example, leave them on the porch).
- Participate in a gratitude activity, like writing down things you are grateful for and sharing with your friends and family.