



MAYOR JOHN L. VIEAU

CITY HALL • MARKET SQUARE • 17 SPRINGFIELD STREET • CHICOPEE, MA 01013

PRESS RELEASE

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MAYOR VIEAU RECOMMENDS A COVID-SAFE HALLOWEEN

CHICOPEE – Following the Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) recommendation on Monday, September 21, 2020, Mayor John L. Vieau and Chicopee Health Director Lisa Sanders recommend the City of Chicopee residents follow a COVID-safe version of Halloween.

“Trick-or-treating door-to-door is just not safe,” expressed Mayor Vieau. “There is too much potential for community spread. Participation in traditional Halloween activities should be avoided. I feel our residents can come up with some pretty creative options that would be both safe and fun.”

The Chicopee Board of Health and the CDC caution that anyone who has tested positive or may have been exposed to COVID-19 - should not participate in in-person Halloween festivities and should not hand out treats to trick-or-treaters.

Chicopee residents are encouraged to avoid **high-risk activities**, which include:

- Participating in traditional trick-or-treating where treats are handed to children who go door to door.
- Having trunk-or-treat activities, where treats are handed out from trunks of cars lined up in large parking lots.
- Going to an indoor haunted house where people may be crowded together and screaming.
- Going on hayrides or tractor rides with people who are not in your household.
- Using alcohol or drugs, as this can cloud judgment and increase risky behaviors.
- Traveling to a rural fall festival that is not in your community if you live in an area with community spread of COVID-19.
- Halloween parties of 25 or more, *indoor gatherings of more than 25 are prohibited in Massachusetts.*

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Moderate-risk activities could include:

- A safer way to trick-or-treat is "one-way" trick-or-treating, where individually wrapped goodie bags are lined up at the end of a driveway or yard for families to grab and go while continuing to social distance.
 - When preparing treat bags - *wash hands before and after making the bags.*
- Have a small group (less than 25 people), outdoor, open-air costume parade where people are distanced more than 6 feet apart.
 - The CDC says people can attend a "costume party held outdoors where protective masks are used and people can remain more than 6 feet apart."

Low-risk activities could include:

- Carving or decorating pumpkins
 - with members of your household and displaying them
 - outside, at a safe distance, with neighbors or friends
- Decorating your house, apartment, or living space.
- Halloween scavenger hunt (*winning pre-purchased candy*)
 - participants are given lists of Halloween-themed things to look for while they walk or drive from house to house
 - with your household members in or around your home rather than going house to house
- Having a virtual Halloween costume contest
- Having a Halloween movie night
 - inside with people you live with
 - outside, at a safe distance, with friends or neighbors
- Having a scavenger hunt-style trick-or-treat search with your household members in or around your home rather than going house to house.

Costume Masks - are NOT a substitute for a cloth mask, per the CDC.

"A costume mask should not be used unless it is made of two or more layers of breathable fabric that covers the mouth and nose and doesn't leave gaps around the face," the CDC said. "Do not wear a costume mask over a protective cloth mask because it can be dangerous if the costume mask makes it hard to breathe. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask."

For more information on CDC guidelines for safer Halloween activities visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>

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