



Bell County Public Health District

www.bellcountyhealth.org

Phone: 254-773-4457

Twitter: @BellCountyPUBH

Facebook: Bell County Public Health District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 16, 2020

As many are aware we recently saw the start of a third wave of COVID-19 in Bell County, causing the health district to raise the risk level to 2, signifying significant, uncontrolled community spread. This wave has been moving rapidly across Texas, which now has the largest number of cases of any state. Gatherings associated with Halloween appear to be the major catalyst behind the most recent increases. COVID fatigue is also having an impact with more people letting down their guard, attending more family and community events, and unknowingly contributing to the spread.

The upcoming Thanksgiving holiday poses a significant risk of further worsening the spread of COVID-19 within our community as families and friends gather, and people travel to other areas and congregate with people outside their usual network. We know how quickly this virus can move through a household and disrupt everything for a family, and the potential for spread is greatly multiplied when people from different households gather and share a meal, and it is particularly devastating when someone gets severely ill, hospitalized or even faces death due to a family and friends gathering.

For this reason, The Bell County Health District urges you to limit family gatherings and travel this Thanksgiving. Consider utilizing social media or other internet platforms for gathering virtually instead. For those that do decide to take the risk and gather please at the very least consider only including those that are not high risk due to health conditions or age. See the CDC guidance on COVID-19 risk (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>) Masking, social distancing, and outdoor dining (weather permitting) are strongly encouraged.

During this time of uncontrolled spread, we also strongly encourage you to limit all non-essential and social activities in order to help prevent putting an undue strain on our hospitals, healthcare workers, and essential services, and to try and avoid any further restrictions. No one wants to see another shut down of services in Bell County. In order to avoid that we need your help, which includes more compliance with social distancing, avoidance of gatherings and the use of face coverings.