

BILH Holiday Guidance for Staff

The tips below are based on information from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about traveling and safe gatherings over the holidays. The MDPH and the CDC encourage staying home and celebrating virtually, or keeping celebrations small and limiting the number of people handling and serving food.

Tips for Safer Holiday Gatherings

(Includes gatherings with colleagues outside of work or holiday celebrations with family and friends)

For any celebration

- Wear a mask at all times when not eating or drinking.
- Avoid touching your mask, eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others who do not live with you.
- Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer.
- Open windows whenever possible.
- Limit the number of people attending and avoid direct contact with those from different households as much as possible.
- Consider a shorter gathering this year to reduce the time in an enclosed space. Try an outdoor gathering, if weather permits at your location.
- Have one person serve food to limit contact with serving utensils and use single-use options whenever possible.
- Stay home if you or anyone in your household are sick; seek out testing as indicated
- Do not host or attend gatherings with guests with any symptoms or who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the prior 14 days.

Traveling to or hosting a holiday celebration

We strongly discourage travel over the holidays. We want staff to be able to celebrate with immediate family, but recommend limiting the number of people attending holiday gatherings and avoiding direct contact with those from different households.

- If you are considering travel or your guests are coming from out of state, be aware of [Massachusetts Travel Orders](#) and comply with testing and quarantine restrictions.
- **If you are traveling over the holiday**, and need a COVID-19 test before returning to work based on the [Massachusetts Travel Order](#), please reach out to your local Employee Health department to pre-book your return to work test. Please plan ahead of time and schedule your test at least 24 hours before your expected return to work date to ensure adequate time before your next scheduled shift.
- Consider the COVID-19 infection rate at your destination or your guests' home state.
- If traveling, bring extra supplies, such as masks, hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes (for airplane/train/bus tray tables and arm rests).
- Have a plan for what to do if someone at the gathering becomes sick.

For more information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

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

Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH)

- <https://www.mass.gov/doc/stop-covid-19-tips-for-a-safe-thanksgiving-english/download>

Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA)

- https://www.idsociety.org/globalassets/idsa/public-health/covid-19/idsa-thanksgiving-infographic_10.22.20_v2---for-idsa.pdf