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Hawai'i Department of Health offers guidance for a safe Halloween

HONOLULU - Although Halloween traditions in Hawai'i may look different this year, there are still many ways families can have fun while avoiding the scare of being exposed to or spreading the virus.

This Halloween, the Hawai'i Department of Health recommends celebrating with your household members at home and avoiding traditional door-to-door trick or treating where treats are handed to children or children take candy from a shared bucket. These are high-risk activities as they can result in close contact and crowding among people outside your household.

"It's more important than ever to put safety first," said Health Director Dr. Elizabeth Char. "Gatherings on Memorial Day, July 4th and Labor Day led to spikes in positive cases in Hawai'i. This Halloween, be extra mindful as you navigate how to safely celebrate in order to keep the spread of coronavirus as low as possible during this holiday."

Thankfully, people in Hawai'i are creative and caring; some communities have planned fun and safe festivities – such as contactless trick or treating and drive-thru pumpkin patches – to be enjoyed throughout the month. Choosing these low-risk Halloween activities can help to prevent the spread of COVID-19 illness, decrease the impact on our state's health care system, and save lives.

Other ideas for safer, low-risk activities include hosting a scary movie watch party online, organizing a neighborhood pumpkin carving contest and carving the pumpkins with people in your household, and hosting a virtual Halloween costume contest.

Most importantly, DOH encourages everyone to keep following safe practices – avoid large gatherings, keep a distance of six feet from others, wash hands often, and wear a cloth face covering.

"Carefully plan your costume. Because Halloween masks have nose and mouth holes, they will not protect you or others from COVID-19," said Dr. Char. "Do not wear a costume mask over a

protective cloth mask or vice versa as it can be dangerous if the costume mask makes it hard to breathe. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth face mask.”

For more tips to stay safe this holiday season go to [HawaiiCOVID19.com/safe-halloween](https://hawaiiCOVID19.com/safe-halloween) and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html#halloween>.

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