

Penn Medicine Guidance on Holiday Season 2020, Celebrations and Gatherings

As we begin the fall season, we are reminded that planning ahead ensures our team's success and safety, and are writing to share guidance related to holiday celebrations for this year. **As we continue our vigilance preventing COVID-19 in our facilities and caring for patients with the disease throughout our health system, we have made the decision to suspend any in-person celebrations across Penn Medicine this holiday season.**

Avoiding large gatherings remains a key part of the best available guidance for decreasing the risk of exposure to and transmission of COVID-19. It is crucial that we maintain the posture of caution that has allowed us to keep our facilities safe for both staff and patients for the past six months and serve as models to the entire community we serve. Continuing this commitment during the holiday season will help us ensure the health and safety of our workforce, our loved ones, neighbors, and friends.

The holidays remain a special time worthy of both celebration and giving to others, and we encourage our teams across Penn Medicine to bring their creativity to these efforts in new ways – including for any gatherings that would typically be held on-site for patients. Celebrate virtually, and bring fresh inspiration to ways to serve others. Consider, for instance, gathering your teams to support the entity-based holiday drives that will continue as planned to help our neighbors who are struggling. Teams may also wish to donate to their local entity food pantry or to the Penn Medicine Employee Assistance fund to help members of our own community who might be facing hardship during the holidays this year as a result of the pandemic.

Consistent adherence to this system-wide guidance is crucial. **If any parties are currently planned, we ask that they be rescheduled for next year's holiday season.**

We know the spirit of the season will continue to shine bright throughout our hospitals and clinical facilities, where we've no doubt our teams will reprise their creative efforts to bring cheer to our patients and families.