

# TOWN OF SUFFIELD

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First Selectman  
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October 27, 2020

Dear Suffield Community,

Due to the ongoing pandemic and in the face of rising COVID-19 cases throughout the area, including the Town of Suffield, the offices of the First Selectman and Emergency Management strongly discourage residents from participating in high-risk activities such as Halloween parties and traditional door-to-door trick-or-treating. This recommendation is based upon guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the State Department of Public Health, and the North Central Health District.

It is important to understand the impact that high-risk activities may pose to community spread and the broader implications. After evaluating the current case statistics, Suffield clearly continues to see active COVID-19 transmission particularly when associated with high-risk activities such as organized athletics. These cases directly impact the school system resulting in multiple instances of students and staff requiring 14-day isolation periods. Thankfully, due to diligent planning by Suffield Public Schools, cohorts are able to be isolated and the impacts limited to the particular schools versus the entire school system. This of course, can drastically change dependent upon spread within the community. We all play a role by following social distancing guidelines and avoiding high-risk activities.

As parents of young children, we understand the disappointment this recommendation brings but want to reiterate its importance in keeping our families and community safe. As an alternative, the Town of Suffield will host a drive-thru Halloween Spooktacular – a family-friendly event for all ages with holograms taking center stage (see [Town News Post](#) which includes details and flyer). Free to all but donations welcome to benefit the Suffield Community Aid COVID-19 Fund (collection barrel available at event). All participants must remain in their cars. Please note the event takes place at Bruce Park on October 28, 29, 30 but NOT on Halloween (October 31).

We truly hope residents heed this advice but acknowledge it is an individual choice. If you choose to participate in a high-risk activity, please follow the guidance below to help reduce the associated risks.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Communications/Guidance/Connecticut-Halloween-Guidance>

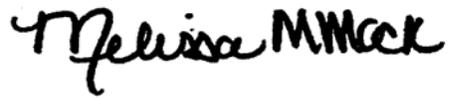
<b>PARTIES AND EVENTS</b>	
<b>Events to consider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In lieu of in-person house parties, host virtual Halloween events, e.g. virtual costume contests.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Host drive-by Halloween events, e.g. neighborhood or town-based house decorating.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare candy scavenger hunts at homes with your household members.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a Halloween movie night with the people in your household.</li> </ul>
<b>Events to avoid</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large parties that exceed 25 people indoors or 150 people outdoors               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosting an indoor party that exceeds 25 people indoors or 150 people outdoors can result in a fine of \$500</li> <li>Attending a party that exceed attendance rules can result in a fine of \$250</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large Halloween-themed parades where physical distancing cannot be maintained.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indoor haunted houses where people may be crowded together and screaming</li> <li>Hayrides or tractor rides with people who are not in your household</li> <li>Traditional trick-or-treating where treats are handed to children who go door to door (See Trick or Treating tips below)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trunk-or-treat events where cars gather in a large parking lot and allow children to move from car to car to collect candy.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Restaurants</b> that choose to host Halloween-themed events should strictly adhere to capacity and physical distancing guidance as outlined in <a href="#">Sector Rules</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Other guidance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Colleges and universities</b> should consider alternatives to on-campus costume parties or trick-or-treating between dorms, as these activities will be challenging to maintain physical distancing. Guidance for safe Halloween activities should be shared widely with on- and off-campus students.</li> </ul>

<b>TRICK-OR-TREATING</b>	
<b>Recommendations for Halloween 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traditional trick-or-treating is a high risk activity. Instead, the CDC and CT DPH recommends participating in one-way trick-or-treating where goodie bags or a large bowl of candy are placed outside of your home for families to grab and go while continuing to social distance.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If you are preparing goodie bags, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 second before and after preparing the bags.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For people who choose to hand out candy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Before you answer the door, make sure your face covering is in place over your nose and mouth, wash or sanitize your hands before answering door.</li> <li>○ Remain six feet from the Trick-or-Treater.</li> <li>○ Place the candy inside the child’s bag for them instead of having them take it from the bowl themselves.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homes providing candy may set up hand sanitizer stations outside or parents/guardians can pack a travel bottle of their own.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/guardians should limit the number of homes their children visit.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is not recommended to trick-or-treat with people outside of your household.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain six feet away from people outside your household at all times.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All trick-or-treating participants should wear a mask or face covering while outside at all times.</li> <li>• A costume mask (such as for Halloween) is not a substitute for a cloth or surgical mask. 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 does not leave gaps around the face.</li> <li>• Do not wear a costume mask over a protective cloth or surgical mask because it can be dangerous if the costume mask makes it hard to breathe. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Do not wear a costume rubber mask over another face covering of any kind.</li> </ul>

We hope you have an enjoyable and safe Halloween!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Melissa M. Mack in black ink.

Melissa M. Mack  
First Selectwoman

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of John Spencer in black ink.

John Spencer  
Director, Emergency Management

cc: Board of Selectmen