



## *News Release*

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# **Muscatine County Reminds Residents Social Distancing is Important Outdoors, Too**

Muscatine County Public Health thanks all residents that are following social distancing guidelines to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. It's important to follow these guidelines even when outside.

“We encourage residents to spend time outdoors when possible because it's beneficial to our mental health and physical activity is a necessary part of a healthy lifestyle,” said Muscatine County Public Health Director Christy Roby Williams. “Everyone needs to continue following social distancing guidelines when outdoors because close contact, even outside, can spread the virus that causes COVID-19.”

When spending time outdoors, all people should:

- Maintain social distancing by keeping at least 6 feet between yourself and anyone you encounter outdoors.
- Spend time outdoors alone, or only with members of your household. This is not the time for team sports or recreation.
- Avoid popular parks and trails that are frequently crowded.
- Avoid touching surfaces like crosswalk buttons, park benches, etc. Carry hand sanitizer with you so you can clean your hands while outside and be sure to remove your shoes at the door and wash your hands as soon as you return home.

In addition, everyone should follow these recommendations:

- Stay home as much as possible.
- If you must go out for essential errands like getting groceries or prescriptions, go alone if possible and maintain social distancing.
- Practice social distancing by staying 6-feet away from other individuals. Avoid groups of more than 10 people.
- Please wear a cloth face covering when running essential errands to protect others in case you are infected with COVID-19 and have no symptoms or have not yet developed symptoms.

As of today, April 22, 2020 there are 240 cases of COVID-19 in Muscatine County, 88 people have recovered, and we have experienced 6 deaths. “The grief our county is experiencing is heartbreaking. Please continue to keep all individuals impacted by these difficult losses in your positive thoughts for comfort, strength, and peace,” said Roby Williams. The Muscatine County Health Department continues to work closely with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), and other state and local partners to respond to this ongoing pandemic.

For up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit the IDPH webpage at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus> and follow the department on Facebook at @IowaDepartmentOfPublicHealth and on Twitter at @IAPublicHealth.