

## **Benchmark's Cardinal Rules for COVID Risks**

These rules are just some of the ways that you may be able to limit your risk of COVID exposure, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid.

- Limit close contact (maintain physical distancing of six feet or more);
- Keep gatherings as small as possible, and use technology to engage with others remotely;
- Wear facemasks or cloth face covering at all times (including in cars, homes, restaurants, etc.);
- Limit contact with commonly touched surfaces or shared items;
- Keep safe around food and drinks. Avoid communal serving utensils, passing of food, potluck or buffet style food service, and instead opt for individually prepared plates by a single server;
- Perform hand hygiene often (e.g., wash hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer);
- Avoid large gatherings, crowded areas, and high-risk activities such as singing;
- For those attending a gathering, avoid contact with individuals outside of their household for 14 days prior to the gathering;
- Ask anyone who has signs or symptoms of COVID-19, or has been exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19, to not attend the gathering;
- If possible, conduct gatherings outdoors.
- Indoor gatherings should have good ventilation, open windows and doors if possible;
- Verbally greet others instead of shaking hands or giving hugs.
- Think ahead about how you will manage to prevent physical interactions with loved ones of different ages such as young children; and
- Check local conditions and state requirements for precautions and restrictions, including positivity rates and quarantine requirements, before crossing state lines.