

The logo for Johnson County, Kansas, Health & Environment. It features the text "JOHNSON COUNTY" in a serif font with a sun icon over the "O", "KANSAS" in a smaller font below it, and "Health & Environment" in a bold sans-serif font at the bottom.

JOHNSON COUNTY
KANSAS
Health & Environment

We know there has been confusion in our county and state regarding the legality of more than 10 people gathering together for the purpose of religion. The confusion escalated this week when Governor Kelly announced her Executive Order to include religious activity in the state's prohibition of gatherings of more than 10 people, which was then rescinded by the Kansas Legislature's Legislative Coordinating Council. We have received clarification from the State, however, that Johnson County's ban on gatherings of more than 10 people is still in effect.

For many religions, this week, the upcoming weekend, and next week have major significance. In typical years there would be gatherings of people to worship, to share meals and to spend time together. As we know, this is not a typical year. We implore you to focus not on what you are **allowed** to do, but instead on what is the **right thing to do**.

Avoiding gatherings of more than 10 people and following the CDC guidelines on social distancing are the right things to do. This is a crucial time to keep taking the challenging but important steps to protect the health and safety of your neighbors and our community...especially our vulnerable friends and loved ones who are most susceptible to contracting COVID-19 and suffering the most from it. In particular, older adults (those over 60), those who have problems with their immune systems or who have multiple chronic diseases should stay at home.

We understand the sacrifice of not gathering with friends, family and congregations...especially this week and weekend. Please do the right thing and follow these steps to make your weekend safe and healthy.

- Do not join nor create gatherings of people that are more than 10 people.
- Even in smaller groups, practice social distancing and good hygiene (wash hands often, sit or stand more than 6 feet apart from others)
- Use technology that allows for participation in worship and spending time with others on-line from the safety of your home.

Help us to 'flatten the curve' this weekend. Stay strong, stay safe, and stay home.

Dr. Joseph LeMaster, Johnson County Public Health Officer

Dr. Sanmi Areola, Director, Johnson County Department of Health and Environment