



Public Health
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**Butler County
General Health District**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Butler County General Health District and Miami University Urge Community to Comply with Health Standards This Labor Day Weekend

BUTLER COUNTY, OHIO – As the Labor Day weekend approaches, the Butler County General Health District (BCGHD) and Miami University are urging members of the community to be responsible and avoid parties and large gatherings.

As of September 2, at 9 AM, there are 704 confirmed COVID-19 cases connected to on and off-campus Miami University students, with many tests still pending. Miami University is currently in an online-only instructional mode; most of these cases can be traced back to off-campus gatherings that defied standards for both size of gathering, maintenance of social distancing, and mask wearing. The rise in cases between August 24 and September 2 highlights the ease with which the virus is passed from person-to-person.

Surveillance is the cornerstone of effective public health. Surveillance efforts include contact tracing, testing (symptomatic and as well as non-symptomatic people), education on quarantine and isolation, and data tracking systems, among others. To be successful, a robust public health system during a pandemic involves multiple partners working together. “BCGHD, Miami University and TriHealth have been working together to increase surveillance systems in response to students returning,” says Jennifer Bailer Health Commissioner for BCGHD.

In May, Ohio saw an increase in cases following the Memorial Day holiday weekend. With that in mind, the University and Public Health officials offer a caution to students: Stay put! Students that have been ordered to quarantine or isolation, should stay at their current residence and not leave Oxford until they are released.

“Our ability to begin move-in the week of September 14 and our in-person and hybrid classes on September 21 depends on our ability to stop the increasing spread of the virus,” said Miami University President Gregory Crawford. “This means we must comply with all of the all of the Healthy Miami

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standards by wearing face masks, maintaining physical distancing, and avoiding large gatherings of 10 people or more. This weekend, we urge our students to be in full compliance with these standards and implore them not to be tempted to attend parties or other large gatherings.”

The best way to stop this disease from spreading throughout the community is to stay put at your current residence. What happens in one weekend could determine the path COVID-19 amongst others, for months.

“The spread of this disease is driven by behavior. How we behave this weekend will determine how fast this virus spreads,” states Bailer.

If you want to get together, do it responsibly. Keep gatherings outside, small, and encourage all to wear masks and stay socially distant. The safest behavior of all to wait until next year.

“Not all infected people show symptoms. Any of us could be spreaders of the disease without knowing it. Each of us has a role to play in slowing the spread and making things better,” concluded Bailer.

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