

# DHEC issues Thanksgiving travel, safety tips

THE JOURNAL STAFF

SENECA — The state health department is encouraging small gatherings for Thanksgiving celebrations and the use of video technology for larger celebrations.

The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) is urging South Carolinians to limit activities in the two weeks leading up to any holiday gatherings to reduce any risk of spreading COVID-19.

"Thanksgiving is an important time for family and friends to celebrate and reconnect, especially during such a difficult year," DHEC chief medical officer Dr. Michael J. Kacka said. "While we take time to reflect on all that we have to be thankful for, including our family, friends and loved ones, let's remember that

the actions we take today could determine our ability to come together to celebrate holidays and family gatherings in the future."

Kacka and public health officials are encouraging social distancing and mask wearing to be followed at events. If weather permits, outdoor celebrations are also encouraged.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), lower risk activities for Thanksgiving include having a small dinner with only people who

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**Dr. Michael J. Kacka**  
DHEC chief medical officer

live in your household, preparing family recipes for family and neighbors and delivering them in a non-contact manner, shopping online instead of in person and watching parades, sporting events and movies from home.

For those who do travel, the CDC recommends limiting the length of any trip and the number of

stops on the trip. Various states have different guidelines and recommendations that require visitors to plan ahead, DHEC said.

"If you do go out into the community, DHEC calls for routine testing before and

after holiday events.

As with any disease, you can be well today and ill tomorrow," the agency said in a release. "DHEC urges South Carolinians to be positive you're negative by routinely getting tested if you're out in the community and to get tested before and after holiday traveling or events."