



COUNTY OF DUTCHESS
DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 21, 2020
To: Dutchess County School Superintendents
From: Anil K. Vaidian, MD, MPH, Commissioner
Subject: Guidance on Graduation Ceremonies

Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order 202.10, which stated “all non-essential gatherings of individuals of any size for any reasons (e.g. worship services, parties, celebrations, or other social events) are canceled or postponed.” Under the governor’s executive order (EO), the state makes all determinations. Local governments, including counties, are prohibited from any actions that conflict with the EO. Determinations on when schools will open, or when events will be permitted will be made by the Governor. Since large in-person gatherings are not permitted, mass gathering locations such as Dutchess Stadium will not be available for graduation activities.

Schools would be permitted to host drive-thru graduation parades/caravans consistent with the allowable Memorial Day activities per the State. Consistent with the State’s opening of drive-ins, in-car graduation activities in drive-ins, and in parking lots, and open space are permitted, so long as social distancing and cleaning/disinfecting measures are in place. All attendees must stay inside of or on (motorcycles) their vehicles for the duration of the event. A limited number of presenters (less than 10) can facilitate the ceremonies from outside of their vehicles while maintaining social distance. Any and all activities must adhere to proper social distancing and face covering protocols.

Since any graduation activities will impact traffic, and a traffic plan may be needed, schools must contact Dutchess County Emergency Response in order to ensure that proper contact and consultation has occurred with local law enforcement. This interaction will help to minimize the impact on the community.

In summary—

Allowable activities include:

- Drive-In Vehicle-Based Ceremony
- Parking Lot Vehicle-Based Ceremony
- Vehicle Based Parade/Caravan
- Handing diploma's through car windows

In all cases:

- Single or small presenter groups (under 10) maintaining social distance
- All attendees must remain in or on (motorcycle) their vehicles throughout the duration of the event
- Social Distancing and face covering protocols must be adhered to
- Contact the Dutchess County Department of Emergency Response for coordination on traffic planning and local law enforcement