

## COVID-19 BACKGROUND (current as of May 4, 2020)

### OVERVIEW

COVID-19 is a virus that has not previously infected humans and information about its rate of spread and its effects is still largely unknown, which makes it incredibly important to be highly cautious in dealing with the current situation. On March 11<sup>th</sup>, the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

NOTE: The information herein is current as of 7:00 p.m. on May 4, 2020, but please know that as this is a rapidly evolving situation, there will continue to be updates and changes. This document includes information the governor's office provided on May 1, 2020 in addition to updates occurring since then.

**New information is highlighted.**

### TL;DR

Based on feedback from legislators and staff, we are incorporating this “too long; didn’t read” (TL;DR) section that will give you the quick highlights of new updates and information. For more in-depth background and resources, please click the below links to be taken to the updates herein. Today’s updates include:

- Gov. Evers announced a new UV decontamination site in Sawyer County. Read more [here](#).
- The governor and Secretary-designee Palm issued [Emergency Order #35](#), which suspends some administrative rules allowing healthcare and emergency services workers to maximize the time and resources they can dedicate to patient care, among several important changes. Read more [here](#).
- As of today as part of the governor’s Badger Bounce Back Plan, the state has provided over 60,000 tests to hospitals, clinics, local public health, long term care facilities, and other community partners. Fifty-seven of Wisconsin’s 72 counties have requested and are receiving testing supplies from this program. Gov. Evers also announced additional plans to make Wisconsin one of the top states in testing per capita. Read more [here](#).
- Gov. Evers announced Wisconsin received a donation of 10,000 procedural masks and 1,000 medical outfits from its sister state of Heilongjiang Province in China. Read more [here](#).
- The Wisconsin National Guard is continuing its mobile testing site operations, read below and more [here](#):
  - Gov. Evers announced additional community testing sites in Northwest Wisconsin. See the full list [here](#).
  - The Wisconsin National Guard’s testing site in Buffalo County conducted nearly 200 tests by the end of the first day it was open.
  - On May 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, the teams also began operating in Turtle Lake, Barron County, at the St. Croix Casino Campground; Burlington, Racine County, at a food processing facility; Platteville, Grant County, at a factory.
  - As of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Wisconsin National Guard teams had collected nearly 6,250 specimens statewide.
- As of May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the DWD had received 498,297 unemployment applications and has distributed more than \$380 million in total benefits paid. Read more [here](#).

### STATUS OF COVID-19 IN WISCONSIN

COVID-19 WISCONSIN SUMMARY				
Positive Test Results	Deaths	Hospitalizations	Negative Test Results	Outbreaks

8,236	340	1,621	80,467	187*
*information current as of April 29, 2020. This will be updated on Wednesdays.				

**We ask that you please continue to rely on the DHS data updated each day at 2:00 PM for the most accurate information on the status of COVID-19 in Wisconsin to help avoid misinformation or confusion. All DHS data are laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 that the DHS freezes once a day to verify and ensure the accuracy of reported information. A full breakdown of cases in Wisconsin by date confirmed, positive tests by county, gender, race, ethnicity, age group, healthcare workers, and group housing, and hospitalization status, hospitalizations and intensive care by age group, and laboratory capacity, as well as recoveries, among other data, can be found on the [DHS website](#). Data on hospital capabilities can be found [here](#). Mapped data is also available on the [DHS website](#). Information on Wisconsin’s model can be found [here](#). Data on COVID-19 outbreaks can be found [here](#).**

We are seeing community spread of COVID-19 in Wisconsin. This means that there are people who have tested positive who have no exposures to a known case nor did they travel to a location where there is known community spread. Staying home and using social distancing will help keep you, your family, and our community from increased risk of exposure.

According to the model created by the Department of Health Services (DHS), Wisconsin was projected to have 22,000 infections by April 8, which would have ultimately resulted in somewhere between 440 and 1,500 deaths. These numbers were based on projected significant exponential growth in positive cases; however, since the governor’s “safer at home” order, there has been a decrease in exponential growth in the number of cases. Wisconsin’s rate of doubling of infections was 3.4 days in early March and, over the first two weeks of April, the rate of doubling is approximately 12 days. On April 14<sup>th</sup>, the DHS released a [visual representation](#) of past and current projections.

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the DHS released data on COVID-19 outbreaks and facility-wide public health investigations across the state. **Note that this data will be updated weekly on Wednesdays and is subject to change.**

As of April 29<sup>th</sup>, Wisconsin has 187 outbreaks and facility-wide public health investigations in five public health regions in Wisconsin (Northeastern, Northern, Southeastern, Southern, and Western). Wisconsin has COVID-19 facility-wide investigations and outbreaks in the following settings: 25 group housing facilities, 11 health care facilities, 93 long-term care facilities, 48 workplaces (non-health care), and 10 other settings. Among the 93 public health investigations in long-term care facilities, 20 facilities have single confirmed cases and 25 facilities have less than 5 confirmed cases. The median number of confirmed cases per investigation for long-term care facilities is 3, the average is 6, and the range is 1 to 54 confirmed cases. As individual cases are investigated by public health, there may be corrections to the status and details of cases that result in changes to this information. Facility-wide public health investigations depend on the setting:

A single case of COVID-19 leads to a facility-wide public health investigation in:

- Long-term care facilities: skilled nursing facilities (nursing homes) and assisted living facilities (community-based residential facilities and residential care apartment complexes).

Two or more cases of COVID-19 lead to a facility-wide public health investigation in:

- Group housing facilities: correctional facilities, homeless shelters, dormitories, and group homes.
- Health care facilities: hospitals, clinics, dialysis centers, hospice, and in-home care.

- Workplace (non-healthcare) settings: manufacturing and production facilities, distribution facilities, offices and other indoor workplaces.
- Other settings: adult or child day care centers, restaurants, event spaces, and religious settings.

Gov. Evers, the DHS, and our agencies are taking this issue very seriously and precautions are being taken across Wisconsin. Gov. Evers, our administration, and staff have also been working with partners at the local and federal levels to provide the most accurate, up-to-date information possible.

On January 27<sup>th</sup>, the DHS hosted its first media briefing on then-2019 Novel Coronavirus. The DHS hosts near-daily informational briefings that are streamed live both on [WisconsinEye](#) and via the DHS [YouTube account](#). Shortly following the briefings, the videos [are posted](#) on the DHS YouTube for viewing if folks are unable to watch live. The DHS also hosts frequent Facebook Live videos where folks from our administration take questions from members of the public. Live videos are streamed on the DHS Facebook page.

The briefings typically feature DHS Secretary-designee Palm and Dr. Ryan Westergaard, Chief Medical Officer of the Bureau of Communicable Diseases, among others. The governor has also been joining these briefings when appropriate in addition to others including members of the governor's cabinet, Wisconsin National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Paul Knapp, among others. Members of the press participate in these briefings and ask questions.

The DHS will continue to hold regular informational briefings for members of the media as has been the case for the past several weeks to help ensure the most accurate and up-to-date information is consistently reported out to the public. You are more than welcome—and encouraged—to tune into these briefings to ensure that you are receiving all of the information being made available by our administration. In addition to the FAQ charts below, please feel free to consult the question and answer sections of the DHS briefings during which briefing participants answer questions from members of the press.

In early March, Gov. Evers directed the DHS to provide the public and legislators from across the state an informational briefing and to give an update on the status of COVID-19. The DHS provided members of the Legislature with a first briefing on March 4<sup>th</sup>. On March 13<sup>th</sup>, the governor again directed the DHS to provide regular, updated informational briefings. Thus, in addition to hosting regular media/public media briefings, the DHS and members of our administration have also provided briefings for members of the Legislature. Additionally, several agencies in our administration have likewise participated in regular briefings for members of the Legislature. If you missed those briefings or need additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to Zach Madden, the governor's legislative liaison, or Lisa Olson at the DHS. As of April 24<sup>th</sup>, our administration has hosted 11 legislature-specific briefings.

It is exceedingly important that information being relayed, promoted, or circulated by elected officials and to the people of Wisconsin is accurate. We continue to ask for your assistance in helping us disseminate accurate, up-to-date information so our constituents and members of the public can make informed decisions and keep themselves, family members, and neighbors safe. Please also continue to share any and all public health or COVID-19 related content from the governor's and DHS' Facebook and Twitter accounts to ensure your constituents and members of the public continue to receive accurate and current information about the status of COVID-19 in Wisconsin.

You can continue to find the most current information on COVID-19 on the DHS [website](#), which has guidance that is updated regularly for travel, self-quarantine, and school districts, among other important

information. We have also created a site that houses resources to help direct folks to resources at our state agencies. Please share this website widely as well: [wisconsin.gov/covid19](https://wisconsin.gov/covid19).

## **BADGER BOUNCE BACK PLAN**

While we're still encouraging folks to stay safer at home, we also know that we have to do everything we can to reopen our state as soon as we safely and responsibly can. We also know that businesses need some clarity so they can begin to plan how they can make customers feel safe, how they can make their businesses safe for employees, and how they can implement appropriate social distancing. Reopening our economy is going to take careful preparation and planning to ensure that our businesses, our workers, and we as consumers can be confident in reopening. Thus, on April 20<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers, the DHS, and the WEDC announced the Badger Bounce Back plan, which outlines important criteria for Wisconsin to be able to reopen its economy in phases and includes steps to make sure workers and businesses are prepared to reopen as soon as it is safe to do so.

The Badger Bounce Back plan is, in part, informed in part by President Trump's "[Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](#)" that was issued by the White House on April 16<sup>th</sup>. As of April 20<sup>th</sup>, Wisconsin does not meet the criteria the White House established to start reopening our state; however, the Badger Bounce Back plan takes important steps to get the state of Wisconsin there. The Badger Bounce Back includes gating criteria, informed by "Opening Up America Again," include important criteria:

1. we need to see a downward trajectory of influenza-like illnesses reported within a 14-day period AND a downward trajectory of COVID-19 cases symptoms reported within a 14-day period;
2. we need to see a downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period;
3. we need to be able to treat all patients without crisis care AND have robust testing programs in place for at-risk healthcare workers, with decreasing numbers of infected healthcare workers.

Additionally, as the governor, the DHS, and our administration have reiterated on several occasions, in addition to these criteria, we will need to increase lab capacity and testing, increase contact tracing—including support for isolation and quarantine—so we can track the spread of COVID-19, increase our healthcare capacity, and procure more personal protective equipment.

Through our Badger Bounce Back plan, we are expanding testing criteria and increasing lab capacity. We have expanded testing criteria to ensure that everyone who needs a test should get a test, and we're setting a goal of conducting 85,000 tests per week—about 12,000 tests per day. As we've learned over the past month, there's a lot we can accomplish when we all work together, and it's going to be a whole team effort to boost our testing efforts in Wisconsin, including help from private partners such as Exact Sciences, Epic, Promega, and Marshfield Clinic Health System. More information on the private partnerships is in the "COVID-19 testing" section below.

The Badger Bounce Back plan also includes deploying the Wisconsin National Guard teams to locations across the state to set up testing sites in places with COVID-19 outbreaks and places with community spread. These National Guard teams will set up and administer testing in communities where they are most needed. Their work has already begun with one team at the Milwaukee County House for Corrections. You can find additional details about the Wisconsin National Guard specimen collection announcements in "additional administration responses" section below.

In addition to increasing expanding our testing criteria and increasing our testing capacity, we also need to bolster our contact tracing efforts. Our Badger Bounce Back plan also includes an effort to add 1,000 contact tracers to our contact tracing efforts.

Finally, we are also working to make sure our workers and our businesses are preparing to be open as soon as it is safe to do so. WEDC and Sec.-designee Missy Hughes is going to be working with small, medium, and large-sized businesses on making plans to minimize disease transmission in the workplace, identify worker safety protocols, and help ensure customer safety so that our workers and businesses are ready to bounce back by preparing their workspaces so they can reopen their doors and welcome customers and workers safely.

The Badger Bounce Back plan and phased approaches to reopening our economy is also laid out in an emergency order that can be found [here](#). The governor's press release on the Badger Bounce Back announcement is [here](#). You can find a copy of the Badger Bounce Back plan [here](#), a one-page fact sheet on the Badger Bounce Back [here](#), and our WEDC worker and businesses readiness doc [here](#).

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, as part of the governor's Badger Bounce Back Plan, Gov. Evers also announced additional plans to make Wisconsin one of the top states in testing per capita. As of May 4<sup>th</sup>, the state had provided over 60,000 tests to hospitals, clinics, local public health, long term care facilities, and other community partners. Fifty-seven of Wisconsin's 72 counties have requested and are receiving testing supplies from this program. The Badger Bounce Back plan features four key testing goals:

- Respond to every employer, corrections, and congregate care outbreak
- Test every nursing home resident and staff member
- Establish community testing programs for symptomatic individuals in target communities
- Ensure everyone who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms gets a test

Key actions to achieve these goals include:

- Community Outbreaks
  - Working with the Wisconsin National Guard and local health partners to conduct testing of all workers and families associated with employer outbreaks happening throughout WI.
  - Deploying rapid response teams to address employer and congregate care outbreaks.
- Long Term Care Facilities
  - Providing free testing and diagnostics to all of Wisconsin's 373 nursing homes to test all nursing home residents and staff, with the goal of testing more than 10,000 residents and staff per week during the month of May.
  - Using a combination of public and private partners to call nursing home facilities to coordinate supplies, logistics and test results.
- Drive Thru Community Testing
  - Increasing the number of free drive thru community tests sites throughout the state.
  - Mobilizing 15 additional National Guard units to assist local public health in setting up testing sites and responding to outbreaks, bringing the total number of units to 25.
  - Establishing a website for the public to find the closest community testing site.
  - Providing free tests for state sponsored test sites to those experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, with results going to patients and local public health. No physician visit is required at the National Guard sponsored sites.
- Healthcare systems
  - Providing test supplies available to all WI healthcare systems through <https://covid19supplies.wi.gov/Testing>
  - Supplies and laboratory services are available for testing symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals based on clinical guidelines established by the organization requesting the materials.
  - To date, the state has provided 41,255 tests to healthcare system partners.

## **COVID-19 TESTING**

On March 17<sup>th</sup>, the DHS and Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene moved to tiered COVID-19 testing to manage capacity. The Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH) significantly increased their capacity for COVID-19 testing, the number of testing specimens being received far exceeds their daily capacity. In order to conserve supplies for testing, WSLH and DHS are now prioritizing two tiers of cases for testing:

Tier One (Individuals who):

- are critically ill and receiving ICU level care with unexplained viral pneumonia or respiratory failure
- are hospitalized (non-ICU) with fever or signs and symptoms of lower respiratory tract illness (cough, shortness of breath) and either known exposure to a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient or travel to an area with sustained community transmission

Tier Two (Individuals who):

- are hospitalized (non-ICU) with unexplained fever and signs/symptoms of lower respiratory tract illness
- are health care workers with unexplained fever and signs/symptoms of a lower-respiratory illness, regardless of hospitalization

Test requests that do not meet these criteria will be sent to other labs in the state and country for testing, resulting in longer wait times. Patients without symptoms and patients with mild upper respiratory symptoms who are not health care workers should not be tested in order to ensure that there is capacity to test ill people.

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers wrote FEMA and requested additional testing supplies for both existing testing facilities that are beginning to run low and for the enhanced testing capabilities that we expect beginning the week of March 30<sup>th</sup>. Our administration has repeatedly heard from the healthcare community and from testing suppliers directly that many of these resources are being redirected to the federal government making it difficult for us to purchase these supplies directly.

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced a new public-private partnership among Wisconsin industry leaders to increase Wisconsin's laboratory testing capacity for COVID-19. The new partnership now includes laboratory support from Exact Sciences, Marshfield Clinic Health System, Promega, and UW Health. These organizations, along with the Wisconsin Clinical Lab Network, will now share knowledge, resources, and technology to bolster Wisconsin's testing capacity. The Wisconsin Clinical Lab Network labs have been averaging completion of 1,500-2,000 COVID-19 tests per day. The expanded capacity from the state's new public-private partnership is expected to double that capacity initially and continue to expand as additional platforms and supplies become available. Residents who are seeking a COVID-19 test are still required to receive an order from a doctor. These labs are not testing sites.

As of April 20<sup>th</sup>, working with the Wisconsin Clinical Lab Network, the state has grown the number of labs performing COVID-19 tests from just eight labs one month ago to 36 labs as of today. On April 20<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced we are using our public-private partnerships to bolster increasing testing capacity announced as part of our Badger Bounce Back plan, including:

- 11 National Guard teams serving a rapid response role in hotspots and underserved areas of the state will collect specimens for COVID-19 testing. The weekend of April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, one of those teams began using 1,100 Exact Sciences test supplies to offer testing to all inmates and staff at the Milwaukee House of Correction to help control the outbreak there. Starting on April 20<sup>th</sup>,

two teams of citizen soldiers will also be staffing standup specimen collection sites at Milwaukee Health Services Inc.'s clinics on Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. and Silver Spring Road.

- The state is working with Tribal partners to ensure that their communities receive testing they need. Starting this week, 1,000 tests will be delivered per week to Tribal health clinics.
- **Exact Sciences** is devoting a significant portion of its lab capacity and resources to COVID-19 tests processing. This will enable them to provide the state with approximately 20,000 tests and processing each week, which will be distributed to health care systems throughout the State. This was a major effort by Exact Sciences undertaken in a very short amount of time.
- **Epic** is providing crucial assistance in our effort to distribute Exact Sciences' tests by providing the interoperability necessary to connect healthcare providers with Exact to ensure timely processing of tests and reporting of test results.
- **Promega** is providing major support by sourcing high demand reagents and materials for a number of labs in the state including Exact Sciences' lab. In addition to these materials, they've also shared equipment and provided invaluable problem-solving skills. They are a critical part of the supply chain in supporting expanded testing.
- This week, **Marshfield Clinic Health System** will be working on ramping up to process 10,000 tests per week from providers around the State.
- 2,200 test collection supplies and PPE are headed to Green Bay in response to an outbreak with significant risk potential to the community. Having these tools is essential to the local health department and healthcare system response.
- In partnership with **Exact Sciences** and the **Community Health Centers** in Milwaukee, the state is supporting additional testing capacity. The Health Centers will work first with their patients, and as additional capacity becomes available, will broaden their outreach to support access to testing for others in need. Community Health Centers have networks within the community and with other social service organizations and will work through those channels to support additional testing.
- **Wisconsin Diagnostic Labs** provided much-appreciated support to the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Community Health Clinic drive-thru testing project. They're also expanding their capacity and offering help to clinical partners experiencing challenges with access to lab capacity.
- Through additional procurement efforts by the state, Wisconsin will be receiving over 250,000 additional test collection supplies in the coming weeks.

The state plans to continue public-private partnerships to add more labs and more testing capacity in the days and weeks ahead.

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

As hospitals and clinics work to combat the spread of COVID-19 in Wisconsin, we are taking steps to help increase access to personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers and first responders by working to ensure a steady stream of facemasks, gloves, gowns, and other protective items.

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced that Wisconsin will be receiving technology in the form of a Battelle Critical Care Decontamination System™ (CCDS) to help decontaminate N95 respirator masks, which will help extend the life of these important supplies. The Battelle CCDS™ decontaminates masks by killing viruses and bacteria using hydrogen peroxide gas. Battelle advises masks can be decontaminated up to 20 times without degrading filtration performance. The system will be able to decontaminate tens of thousands of N95 masks on a daily basis.

Through a contract with Battelle, a nonprofit research firm, FEMA has also informed the state that it plans to deploy technology in Wisconsin currently being used in other states to address shortages of critical PPE resources by decontaminating many types of N95 masks. Medical personnel across the state will be able

to send their masks to Madison for processing and, once cleaned and sterilized, they will be sent back to the original user. FEMA expects the Battelle CCDS™ to arrive in Wisconsin in the early part of May, with the system likely to be ready for use later in the month. In anticipation of Battelle beginning operations in the state, healthcare workers and first responders are being asked to begin saving their used N95 masks for possible future decontamination. Details about how providers can access this service will be communicated ahead of the system's launch. Please note:

- The Battelle Decontamination System is not authorized for use with respirators containing cellulose-based materials.
- All compatible N95 respirators must be free of any visual soiling or contamination (e.g., blood, bodily fluids, makeup).
- Compatible N95 respirators that are visually soiled or damaged should not be collected for decontamination and will be disposed of and not returned after decontamination.
- Masks should be marked with the name of the healthcare professional to whom the mask was issued.

More information on the Battelle CCDS™ is available [here](#).

In addition to the Battelle System, UV decontamination sites are already in place in much of Wisconsin, and with capacity to service N95 masks and other types of PPE, such as face shields, gowns, and aprons. These efforts are highlighted by facilities currently operating in Brown, Dane, Kenosha, and Sawyer counties.

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Gov. Evers announced a new UV decontamination site in Sawyer County. The Sawyer County UV decontamination site will be able to be utilized by folks in at least 11 counties as well as at least five tribes: Sawyer, Bayfield, Ashland, Iron, Price, Rusk, Barron, Polk, Burnett, Washburn, and Douglas Counties and Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and the St. Croix Band of Chippewa Indians Tribes. The Northwest region of Wisconsin was an area targeted by the Wisconsin State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) as a location with a pressing need for this service. Currently, the region has only a limited supply of PPE. The new Sawyer County site, which will support a large swath of Northwest Wisconsin, is thanks to an impressive combination of local host willing to take the necessary steps to house this unit, local volunteers, and state support as far as training and resources in order to bring it online. Sawyer County will be conducting final tests of the unit next week, and plan to start using it soon after.

There have been several questions about supplies, and we thought it would be helpful to provide some additional clarification and context about PPE supply streams and our efforts to secure additional PPE for our state. Our administration is working to acquire PPE via: 1. FEMA, 2. Strategic National Stockpile (SNS), 3. procurement, 4. donation, 5. buyback program.

### ***1. FEMA***

While SNS requests also go through FEMA (more on that below), these requests—while still through FEMA—have not been for supplies through the SNS, and have been for first responders and non-medical personnel, e.g. police and fire departments, emergency management, etc.

The governor has made multiple requests of FEMA to secure additional PPE, testing supplies, and ventilators. On March 21<sup>st</sup>, Gov. Evers wrote to FEMA asking for its assistance acquiring PPE for first responders who are at risk of direct exposure to COVID-19 while performing their jobs. FEMA was asked to help Wisconsin obtain PPE including police and fire departments through its procurement process, requesting:

- 50,000 non-surgical masks;
- 10,000 face shields;
- 11,000 coveralls;
- 3,000 N95 face masks; and
- 35,000 pairs of protective gloves

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, the governor sent a letter to FEMA formally requesting additional testing supplies so that state and private labs in Wisconsin are able to test for COVID-19 at capacity and requested that FEMA work to support and enhance expanded production of these supplies through their manufacturers. Gov. Evers also expressed his concern about reports that PPE, testing reagent, and other critical supplies are being redirected from Midwest states to the federal government and expressed that states are best positioned to appropriately deploy these scarce resources.

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers sent a follow-up letter urging the federal government to expedite this request and have been working with the federal delegation to encourage their offices to push for these resources to be released to Wisconsin. Gov. Evers requested an expedited processing of resource requests for additional lab testing supplies and PPE for first responders and health care workers. The governor also expressed appreciation for FEMA's efforts to fulfill requests for PPE from the SNS but that materials received to-date remain insufficient to address need in Wisconsin. Since we are waiting on the FEMA PPE for first responders, we are taking PPE that we procured or were donated and sending them to our first responders. These supplies were deployed starting the week of March 30<sup>th</sup>.

Our office continues to work with Wisconsin's federal delegation on obtaining these additional supplies as requested from FEMA. On March 30<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Sen. Baldwin sent a letter signed by the entire Wisconsin congressional delegation advocating asking for expedited processing of Wisconsin's requests. A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, the governor announced Wisconsin has received a delivery of 230,000 N95 respirator masks from the FEMA. The delivery of masks follows a request the state made to FEMA last month for assistance with purchasing PPE to help supply workers responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The masks will be used to support state operations and be distributed to county and tribal emergency managers, who will allocate them to local direct care providers and first responders based on a review of their current needs. Even with this new support, however, Wisconsin remains in high-need for N95 respirators. To this end, the governor sent a letter to the FEMA on April 30<sup>th</sup> reconfirming our state's need and outstanding requests for PPE.

## 2. SNS

The SNS includes PPE and medical supplies for each individual state. Note that while requests for supplies from the SNS also go through FEMA as above, this process is different. Please also note that SNS supplies we have received thus far are going to healthcare workers. These supply estimates are based on survey results from healthcare stakeholders and hospitals.

In early March, Gov. Evers requested the first phase (~25 percent) of Wisconsin's stockpile. These were distributed to hospitals, long-term care facilities and EMS providers. Wisconsin's first phase of SNS supplies included approximately:

- 52,800 N95 respirators;
- 130,000 face/surgical masks;
- 24,768 face shields;
- 20,286 surgical gowns;

- 96 coveralls; and
- 61,750 pairs of gloves.

The second phase (~25 percent) of SNS supplies were received the weekend of March 28, and starting March 30, will be distributed to our frontline healthcare workers including hospitals, long term care facilities and EMS providers. The second phase of SNS supplies included approximately:

- 51,880 N95 respirators;
- 130,840 face/surgical masks;
- 23,400 face shields;
- 20,226 surgical gowns;
- 96 coveralls; and
- 79,000 pairs of gloves

As of April 1, 2020, Wisconsin has received from the SNS approximately:

- 104,680 N95 respirators;
- 260,840 face/surgical masks;
- 48,186 face shields;
- 40,512 surgical gowns;
- 192 coveralls; and
- 140,750 pairs of gloves

**Please note: these numbers DO NOT include all of the PPE we are working to acquire through other means. These numbers reflect the SNS supplies only.**

Our administration has heard from the federal government that they are preparing to send us the remaining 50 percent of our SNS supplies but we have not yet heard a specific date by which to expect to receive those supplies.

### ***3. Direct Procurement***

We are aggressively pursuing any and every lead to purchase supplies beyond our requests to and from FEMA. In addition to these other options, our administration is separately working to purchase PPE, ventilators, sanitizer, and other emergency supplies through existing procurement processes from established vendors. This process follows existing state processes and procedures for procurement and includes a component of ascertaining the validity of vendors as numerous scams have been identified in the current environment of scarce resources.

Many of our state agencies are pitching in to assist the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) team with purchasing these supplies on our own. Our administration has also have been working closely with other states to combine our purchasing power to make larger bulk purchases, which are usually given preference.

As of April 6<sup>th</sup>, the SEOC Emergency Procurement Team has entered into agreements to purchase approximately\*:

- 2.2 million N95 masks
- 5.0 million medical masks
- 15,500 KN95 masks
- 46,300 boxes of gloves (100 per box)
- 337,000 face shields

- 5,500 gowns
- 5,000 coveralls

\* Most of these items are in process and have not been delivered to the warehouse

The team is also working cooperatively with WEDC in identifying Wisconsin manufacturers that are retooling their operations to produce PPE. See more on procurement as it relates to the buyback program below.

#### **4. Donation**

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced an initiative designed to get more PPE to folks working on the frontline response to COVID-19, allowing people to donate or sell (more on this below) PPE to the state for distribution.

Wisconsinites can go to <https://covid19supplies.wi.gov/Donations> to donate quantities of PPE. The SEOC will then work to distribute the PPE to communities that need it the most. We are currently seeking the following items through our donation program:

- Surgical Gowns (S, L, XL, and XXL)
- Face/Surgical Masks (adult, pediatric)
- Gloves (Nitrile, Vinyl, or Butyl)
- N-95 Particulate Respirators
- Isolation Gowns
- Face Shields
- Tyvek Coveralls
- Thermometers
- Foot Coverings

If organizations or businesses have quantities of fewer than 50 of any of these items, they are encouraged to donate them to local health organizations instead of going through the buyback website. First responders and other non-medical organizations should communicate their PPE needs to their county or tribal emergency management office, which will then forward those requests to the SEOC for fulfillment. Medical facilities, including hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities and clinics, should continue using the established process for requesting supplies from the SNS.

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Gov. Evers announced Wisconsin received a donation of 10,000 procedural masks and 1,000 medical outfits from its sister state of Heilongjiang Province in China. The state of Wisconsin has enjoyed a sister state relationship with Heilongjiang Province, located in northeast China, since 1982. The 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that relationship was celebrated in 2017 with programming coordinated by Heilongjiang Province in collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, the University of Wisconsin System and the U.S. Consulate in Shenyang.

#### **5. Buyback Program**

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced an initiative designed to get more PPE to folks working on the frontline response to COVID-19, allowing people to donate (more on this above) or sell (the “buyback program”) PPE to the state for distribution.

Wisconsinites can go to <https://covid19supplies.wi.gov/Donations> to sell quantities of PPE. Upon receiving offers from individuals who wish to sell PPE supplies, our administration will then go through the standard procurement process to purchase those supplies.

The SEOC will then work to distribute the PPE to communities that need it the most. We are currently seeking the following items through our donation program:

- Surgical Gowns (S, L, XL, and XXL)
- Face/Surgical Masks (adult, pediatric)
- Gloves (Nitrile, Vinyl, or Butyl)
- N-95 Particulate Respirators
- Isolation Gowns
- Face Shields
- Tyvek Coveralls
- Thermometers
- Foot Coverings

If organizations or businesses have quantities of fewer than 50 of any of these items, they are encouraged to donate them to local health organizations instead of going through the buyback website. First responders and other non-medical organizations should communicate their PPE needs to their county or tribal emergency management office, which will then forward those requests to the SEOC for fulfillment. Medical facilities, including hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities and clinics, should continue using the established process for requesting supplies from the SNS.

As of April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the buyback program has worked with 116 donors: 107 of these donations were offering small amounts of PPE, including items like gowns, hand sanitizer, gloves, surgical masks, toilet paper, N95 masks, and thermometer probe covers and were directed to local recipients. Nine of the donors provided N95 masks, surgical masks, gloves, gowns that were accepted at the state warehouse. In addition, the team has been contacted by 339 companies looking to sell PPE and other critical items. Of these, at least nearly 60 have been referred to the Emergency Procurement Team to explore direct procurement.

## ISOLATION CENTERS

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Gov. Evers announced the SEOC is opening two state-run voluntary isolation facilities in Madison and Milwaukee and is providing guidance to local communities throughout Wisconsin. The two sites opened on April 1, 2020 are at Lowell Center in Madison and a Super 8 hotel in Milwaukee. These facilities are for symptomatic individuals suspected to be infected with COVID-19 or who have a confirmed case of COVID-19. **Individuals must be referred by a medical provider or public health official to register at these facilities. Folks should not otherwise be advised to go to these facilities unless they have been referred by a medical provider or public health official.** Individuals register and stay at the isolation facility on a voluntary basis. The expected length of stay will be about 14 days, or 72 hours after symptoms dissipate. At any time, either the individual or the facility may terminate the individual's presence at the site. Those staying at the facility will have wellness checks by phone every four hours during the day and if needed at night.

Additionally, the SEOC also issued guidance for communities seeking to open their own voluntary self-isolation centers. The Isolation Site Operation Manual can be found [here](#). Please feel free to share this resource with your communities, especially if there is an interest in establishing a local isolation site.

## ALTERNATIVE CARE FACILITIES

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced that the Army Corp of Engineers has officially been engaged by his administration and has already begun mobilizing at the Exposition Center at Wisconsin State Fair Park to begin the development of an alternative care facility (ACF). The Army Corp of Engineers has partnered with states throughout the country to build ACFs to support existing, local medical infrastructures in response to the spread of COVID-19. To construct the facility, the Army Corp of Engineers signed a contract with Gilbane, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A number of local subcontractors have also signed-on to assist in constructing the ACF at Wisconsin State Fair Park, including: HGA (Design), Johnson Controls, Staff Electric, J.F. Ahern, and Hetzel Sanfillipo.

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers signed an emergency order relating to the ACF at State Fair Park outlining general operations, admission criteria, and other general provisions. You can find the governor's order [here](#). On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the Wisconsin National Guard announced multiple teams are on site at the recently completed alternate care facility at Wisconsin's State Fair Park to assist. A team of citizen soldiers supported warehouse operations at the alternate care facility as it was setup, while another team of approximately 60 personnel are preparing to take on roles including patient care assistants, supply specialists, and miscellaneous support tasks at the facility. Additional personnel from the Wisconsin National Guard are standing by to support the facility, if needed.

On April 12<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced an application to the FEMA to begin developing a second ACF at Alliant Energy Center in Madison. Once approved, the Army Corp of Engineers will sign contracts with a contractor and a number of subcontractors. Additional details regarding both ACF facility operations, acuity level, and patient capacity will be shared as they become available.

### **ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATION RESPONSES**

*Here's an update on the work done so far, the current status of COVID-19 in Wisconsin, and the steps being taken to keep families and communities safe.*

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, state agency employees received an update on COVID-19 in Wisconsin and its effects on our workforce. On March 12<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers signed [Executive Order #72](#) declaring a public health emergency in Wisconsin and hosted a press conference giving an update to the people of Wisconsin about COVID-19. Executive Order #72 directs the DHS to take all necessary and appropriate measures to prevent and respond to incidents of COVID-19 in Wisconsin, and suspends any administrative rules that the DHS finds would increase the health threat or prevent, hinder, or delay our response to the COVID-19 emergency. It also directs the Adjutant General of the Wisconsin National Guard to assist in our response to the public health emergency. Additionally, the DHS also issued new guidance regarding mass gatherings, travel, and long-term care and assisted living facilities. Please see the [DHS website](#) for these updates.

Effective on March 13<sup>th</sup>, the Wisconsin State Capitol suspended all Capitol tours until further notice. As of March 16<sup>th</sup>, signage has been posted at all entrances of the Capitol advising against entering if persons are exhibiting symptoms or meet other criteria described. Additionally, on March 14<sup>th</sup>, the DOA sent out correspondence to state agency employees announcing telecommuting as an option for employees whose job duties are conducive to working from home. Supervisors will approve telecommuting on case-by-case bases. State agencies are otherwise continuing normal operations at this time. The governor's office, the DOA, and the DHS continue to provide guidance for state employees and protecting the health and wellbeing of individuals who may be at a higher risk. Agencies are also continuing to review their continuity of operations plans to ensure that the business of the people of Wisconsin can continue.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers directed our agencies to immediately implement a five-percent reduction to state operations GPR appropriations in executive branch agencies for fiscal year 2019-20 to help improve

the general fund balance for fiscal year 2019-20. We are continuing to maintain previous steps we took to proactively address possible state revenue loss due to COVID-19, including limiting out-of-state travel, maintaining the hiring freeze with limited exceptions, and suspending the discretionary merit compensation program.

Gov. Evers has directed the DHS to close all Wisconsin K-12 schools—both public and private—as part of the state’s ongoing efforts to respond to and contain the spread of COVID-19 in Wisconsin. The mandated closure was effective at the end of the school day on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Gov. Evers announced on March 17<sup>th</sup> that schools will be closed for the duration of the public health emergency, indefinitely extending the previously announced April 6<sup>th</sup> resumption date. A copy of the DHS’ order can be found [here](#). On April 16<sup>th</sup>, directed the DHS through Emergency Order 28 to close all schools through the remainder of the 2019-20 school year, and schools should shift their learning to online and distance learning. See more on the governor’s second “safer at home” order below. The governor’s office has received several inquiries from educators, parents, education stakeholders, and legislators about the order and its implications. To help provide answers, the governor’s office has prepared a list of frequently asked questions and answers below. You can also find additional information on the Department of Public Instruction’s (DPI) [website](#).

<b>K-12 SCHOOL CLOSURE FAQs (vis-à-vis “safer at home” order II, additional details below)</b>
<p><b>How long will schools be closed?</b></p> <p>The order closes public and private K-12 school buildings for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year, which ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The order does not change a school’s final attendance day for students. All schools must remain closed for in-person instructional and extracurricular activities. Schools may be used for essential government functions and food distribution.</p>
<p><b>What is the rest of my school year going to look like if schools are closed?</b></p> <p>Schools are strongly encouraged to facilitate distance or virtual learning. It is important for schools to continue to keep in touch with students as social connections through school are important to student mental health. The DPI has resources on its <a href="#">COVID-19 website</a> to support schools in this work.</p>
<p><b>I’m a school employee and people are using our outdoor spaces to congregate or play group sports. What should I do?</b></p> <p>Use your discretion on the best path forward given the situation. We encourage all communities and individuals to work together to comply with the Safer at Home order. You can talk to the group to education them on the importance of social distancing and the Safer at Home order. Another option is to request local law enforcement to assist in communicating that message.</p>
<p><b>Will the required instruction hours be modified?</b></p> <p><a href="#">Emergency Order #10</a> suspended requirements in administrative rule related to the waiving of the hours of instruction. As a result, the DPI has an expedited waiver process for the instructional hours requirement and has indicated it will approve all such waiver requests. More information can be <a href="#">found here</a>.</p>
<p><b>How will students who qualify for free or reduced lunch be supported during the closure?</b></p> <p>State and federal leaders continue to work to ensure children are receiving meals during this challenging time. The DPI has created a <a href="#">Child Nutrition Program COVID-19 Information website</a> to help School Food Authorities and Summer Food Service Program sponsors navigate the options for serving children meals in a non-congregate setting during school closures due to COVID-19.</p> <p>The DPI was granted a Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) waiver by USDA. This request is to waive the congregate feeding requirement for SFSP meals during unanticipated school closures at school and non-school sites during a public health emergency, such as COVID-19. The waiver is for all SFSP sponsors in good standing in the state.</p>
<p><b>What supports are available for students with an IEP?</b></p> <p>The DPI has created a website with <a href="#">special education updates and resources</a>. School districts are encouraged to provide learning opportunities so students can make educational progress despite the significant disruption of school closures, including providing students with disabilities access to these opportunities to the greatest extent possible. Districts are also encouraged to provide the services specified in the student’s individualized education program (IEP) to the extent possible based on the individual needs of the student during this public health emergency. If some services cannot be provided, the local educational agency (LEA) must consider, whether and to what extent, compensatory services are required once the school reopens.</p>
<p><b>Will school playgrounds be open?</b></p>

No. Playgrounds are closed.
<p><b>What are the implications for state testing/assessments?</b></p> <p>The DPI received approval to implement waivers for requirements in section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, related to federal assessment and accountability requirements. Additionally, recently signed legislation, Wisconsin 2019 Act 185, specifies that assessments that are usually required to be administered annually are not required in the 2019-2020 school year.</p>
<p><b>What are the implications for childcare/extended day programs?</b></p> <p>Child care settings are essential businesses and operations. Secretary-designee Andrea Palm's <a href="#">Emergency Order #6</a> remains in effect, with the following amendments:</p> <p>Child care settings must prioritize care for families as follows:</p> <p>Tier 1: Employees, contractors, and other support staff working in health care  Tier 2: Employees, contractors, and staff in vital areas outlined in the order</p> <p>Child care settings include all licensed and certified child care providers who may provide care for any age or ages of children up to 13 years of age, unless specially licensed for children with disabilities up to 19 years of age.</p> <p>Please see the Department of Children and Families <a href="#">FAQ on this topic</a> for additional information.</p>
<p><b>Are all athletics and club sports canceled?</b></p> <p>All K-12 school buildings are closed to extracurricular activities. No team or contact sports are permitted.</p>
<p><b>Will student graduations be affected?</b></p> <p>The DPI has an <a href="#">FAQ</a> about graduation requirements, grading, and class promotion. Course grades and class promotions are determined by school board policies and not by state requirements. Districts have latitude in determining what grades to award, if any, for coursework, and what coursework is required for credit attainment.</p>
<p><b>What conversations should parents have with their children at home?</b></p> <p>The DPI recommends the following resource: <a href="#">Talking to Children about COVID-19 (Coronavirus) - A Parent Resource</a>. More resources can be found on the <a href="#">DPI's website</a>.</p>
<p><b>Does the order prohibit school staff from reporting to work?</b></p> <p>No. The order only applies to pupil instruction and extracurricular activities, not to other functions. School leaders will make determinations on a case-by-case basis regarding access for other purposes, such as virtual learning, cleaning, food service, payroll and clerical functions. If school facilities are used for other purposes, districts should follow guidance from public health officials to ensure that appropriate health and safety measures are in place.</p>
<p><b>Will hourly staff be paid?</b></p> <p>Gov. Evers recognizes that the closure presents challenges to students, families, educators, staff and districts, including financial impact. Gov. Evers encourage districts and all employers to take whatever steps they can to minimize the economic impact to workers due to public health closures. The federal CARES Act requires schools to continue to pay employees and contractors "to the greatest extent practicable" to be eligible to receive funds.</p>

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, the DPI announced it will apply for a waiver from federal requirements to administer statewide assessments to all students to make annual accountability determinations, to identify schools for support and improvement, and to provide data on federal report cards for assessment and accountability information. The announcement comes as the U.S. Department of Education announced flexibility will be provided to all states regarding the assessment and accountability requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, also known as the Every Student Succeeds Act. On March 27<sup>th</sup>, the DPI was [granted the waiver](#). Our office is continuing to work with the DPI around suspension of state testing and accountability requirements.

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the DHS announced that it is providing more than \$140 million in food benefits to families whose kids would otherwise receive free or reduced price meals through the National School Lunch program during the school year. To ensure those same students continue to have access to nutritious meals while staying safer at home, the DHS is covering days for March, April, May, and part of June that school would usually be in session. These funds were appropriated under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and provided to states by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service. The program is referred to as Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer or P-EBT because the

benefits will be put on cards for families to use to [purchase food at grocery stores or farmer's markets, as available](#).

DHS is reaching out to families eligible for the program through direct messaging and mailed letters to let them know how to access their funds. For families that are already part of benefit programs with the state, the funds will be placed on their QUEST cards or a dedicated P-EBT card. Families not currently participating in state benefit programs that are eligible will need to apply separately. DHS is partnering with the Department of Public Instruction to spread the word to those families.

The P-EBT benefits are separate from the emergency FoodShare allotments announced earlier this month. Also provided to assist families during the COVID-19 pandemic, the emergency allotments allow current FoodShare members in Wisconsin to receive the maximum monthly benefit amount for a household their size. While P-EBT benefits are only for families with school-age children who were previously receiving free or reduced price school lunches, emergency allotments are available to all FoodShare households not receiving the monthly maximum amount. Learn more about [FoodShare and temporary P-EBT food benefits](#).

On March 16<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers directed the DHS to issue an order banning mass gatherings—both public and private—of 50 people or more effective at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>. A new order was issued on March 17<sup>th</sup> banning mass gatherings—both public and private—of 10 people or more effective at 5:00 p.m. on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Critical infrastructure and services such as grocery stores, food pantries, childcare centers, pharmacies, and hospitals, among other venues, are currently exempt from this order. “Mass gathering” is any planned or spontaneous, public or private event or convening that will bring together or is likely to bring together 10 or more people in a single room or single confined or enclosed space at the same time.

*(Note that previous versions of this document included FAQs on mass gatherings. Those FAQs were removed as that guidance is no longer applicable under the “safer at home” order issued on March 24<sup>th</sup>.)*

We took some steps prohibiting mass gatherings, but time has been and continues to be of the essence in responding to COVID-19 so we can prevent and manage the further spread of COVID-19 to ensure our healthcare workers and system are not overwhelmed by an influx of COVID-19 cases. As we've worked to respond to and prevent the spread of COVID-19, we've have been careful to listen to public health experts and to be mindful of the effects our proactive steps could and will have on our frontline workers and the most vulnerable in our communities. Previously, the governor had said he didn't think we'd need to get to a “safer at home” order—a “safer at home” order wasn't something the governor thought we'd need to do, and it's not something the governor wanted to do. However, the governor has also said all along that we would listen to the science and public health experts to make the best decision possible for the people of our state.

The governor spoke with public health experts and with business leaders and local elected officials around the state, and overwhelmingly the response has been that we need an all-hands-on-deck approach to stopping the spread of COVID-19 in Wisconsin. In fact, business leaders have suggested that it is imperative to slow the growth of the disease and that the state cease all non-essential business statewide. The bottom line is that COVID-19 has been and continues to be a rapidly evolving situation—sometimes it changes by the hour. That means sometimes our response must change as we have new information. In this case, new information was predictive modeling that demonstrated the implications of failing to take increased measures to prevent further spread of COVID-19 (to learn more about this, please review [the March 23<sup>rd</sup> DHS briefing](#)).

Thus, based on the advice from public health experts, the governor made the decision to direct Secretary Palm to issue a “safer at home” order. On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, Gov. Evers announced a “safer at home” order would be issued on Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. The governor announced the order in advance of its issuance in an effort to be as transparent as possible for families, businesses, and local governments, among others, across our state. The governor’s goal—and our administration’s goal—is to keep people safe. To this end, having people across our state have as much information and as much notice as possible about an announcement like this is crucial. It was important to us that the people of our state knew that this order would be coming in advance so that individuals were not blindsided by the new order.

On March 24<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers and Secretary-designee Palm issued the “safer at home” order prohibiting all nonessential travel with some exceptions. The order also contains detailed information regarding the exemptions provided to certain businesses. The order was effective on Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 a.m. until April 24<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. unless a superseding order is issued. You can find the order [here](#).

*(Note that previous versions of this document included explanatory background on the first “safer at home” order. That information has since been omitted as that order was superseded by the governor’s second “safer at home” order issued on April 16<sup>th</sup>.)*

According to the model created by DHS, Wisconsin was projected to have between 440 and 1,500 deaths from COVID-19 by April 8th. These numbers were based on projected significant exponential growth in positive cases; however, since the “safer at home” order, there has been a decrease in exponential growth in the number of cases and by April 8th, Wisconsin only had 99 deaths.

Without effective treatments or a vaccine, the only way to slow the spread of COVID-19 is through non-pharmaceutical interventions. The “safer at home” order has been our main intervention in Wisconsin, and we are beginning to see the results. We will continue to work with local health departments to develop capacity to implement effective containment strategies across the state. Relaxing the order before those measures are in place would be expected to result in a surge of cases.

Consequently, on April 16<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers directed Secretary-designee Palm to issue a new “safer at home” order (“safer at home” order II). “Safer at home” order II supersedes the previous “safer at home” order issued on March 24<sup>th</sup> (“safer at home” order I), extends “safer at home” to help continue the progress we have made limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Wisconsin, closes private and public schools for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year, and allows certain activities to start up again that were not permitted under “safer at home” order I.

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced a new “turn the dial” order that expands allowable operations for nonessential businesses. Under Emergency Order #34, coupled with the governor’s “safer at home” order II, every business can do things like deliveries, mailings, curbside pick-up, and, effective at 8:00 a.m. on April 29<sup>th</sup>, curbside drop-off as well. The “turn the dial” order also prescribes how to perform these operations safely, so these operations should be able to be performed by one staff person in a confined space, services must be paid for online or by phone, and customers can’t be inside the business or facility. The order today allows businesses like dog groomers, small engine repair shops, upholstery businesses, and others to safely open. It also allows outdoor recreational rentals, such as boats, golf carts, kayaks, ATVs, and other similar recreational vehicles. Additionally, automatic or self-service car washes will be able to operate.

If you or your constituent have questions regarding Emergency Order #34, please review the frequently asked questions document available [here](#). All essential and nonessential businesses must continue to follow social distancing and safety practices required under “safer at home” order II, which is

available [here](#). A document summarizing these safe business practices by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) is available [here](#). Businesses can visit [WEDC.org](http://WEDC.org) for additional resources on taking the necessary steps to keep workers, businesses, and customers safe.

As was the case under “safer at home” order I, under “safer at home” order II and the “turn the dial” order, Wisconsin residents are still able to:

- Perform tasks essential to maintain health and safety, such as obtaining medicine or seeing a doctor;
- Get necessary services or supplies for themselves or their family or household members, such as getting food and supplies, pet food and supplies necessary for staying at home;
- Care for a family member in another household; and
- Care for older adults, minors, dependents, people with disabilities or other vulnerable persons.

Businesses allowed to operate under the “safer at home” order II include, but are not limited to:

- Health care operations, including home health workers;
- Critical infrastructure;
- Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise vulnerable individuals;
- Fresh and non-perishable food retailers, including convenience stores, grocery stores, farmers’ markets, and food banks;
- Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food and goods directly to residences;
- Pharmacies, health care supply stores and health care facilities;
- Child care facilities, with some limitations;
- Gas stations and auto repair facilities;
- Banks;
- Laundry businesses, dry cleaners and services necessary for maintaining the safety, sanitation and essential operation of a residence, including garbage collection;
- Hardware stores, plumbers, and electricians;
- Educational institutions, for the purposes of facilitating distance learning;
- Golf courses;
- Roles required for any business to maintain minimum basic operations, which includes security, and payroll, as well as deliveries, mailings, and curbside pick-up and drop off; and
- Law and safety, and essential government functions will continue under the recommended action.

<b>CHANGES FROM THE FIRST “SAFER AT HOME” ORDER/“TURN THE DIAL” ORDER I</b>
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Most of the order remains the same, and it is structured in the same way. The changes are designed to ensure safety and compliance, while also allowing certain activities to start up again. The changes in this order include:
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<b><i>Businesses and activities that may increase services and operations:</i></b>
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Public libraries: Libraries may provide curbside pick-up of books and other library materials.</li><li>2. Golf courses: Golf courses may open, with restrictions including scheduling and paying for tee times online or by phone only. Clubhouses and pro shops must remain closed.</li><li>3. Non-essential businesses: Non-essential businesses can do more things as Minimum Basic Operations, including deliveries, mailings, curbside pick-up, and curbside drop-off and outdoor recreational rentals. Automatic and self-serve car washes may operate. Non-essential businesses must notify workers of whether they are necessary for the Minimum Basic Operations.</li><li>4. Arts and craft stores: Arts and craft stores may offer expanded curbside pick-up of materials necessary to make face masks or other personal protective equipment (PPE).</li><li>5. Aesthetic or optional exterior work: Aesthetic or optional exterior lawn care or construction is allowed, so long as it can be done by one person.</li></ol> |
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<b><i>Safe business practices:</i></b>
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1. Safe business practices for Essential Businesses and Operations: Essential Businesses and Operations must increase cleaning and disinfection practices, ensure that only necessary works are present, and adopt policies to prevent workers exposed to COVID-19 or symptomatic workers from coming to work.
2. Safe business practices for retailers that are Essential Businesses and Operations: Retail stores that remain open to the public as Essential Businesses and Operations must limit the number of people in the store at one time, must provide proper spacing for people waiting to enter, and large stores must offer at least two hours per week of dedicated shopping time for vulnerable populations.
3. Supply chain: Essential Businesses and Operations that are essential because they supply, manufacture, or distribute goods and services to other Essential Businesses and Operations can only continue operations that are necessary to those businesses they supply. All other operations must continue as Minimum Basic Operations.

**Other changes:**

1. Schools: Public and private K-12 schools will remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.
2. Local parks and open space: Local health officials may close public parks and open spaces if it becomes too difficult ensure social distancing or the areas are being mistreated.
3. Travel: People are strongly encouraged to stay close to home, not travel to second homes or cabins, and not travel out of state if it is not necessary.
4. Tribal Nations: Tribal Nations are sovereign over their territory and can impose their own restrictions. Non-tribal members should be respectful of and avoid non-essential travel to Tribal territory. Local government must coordinate, collaborate, and share information with Tribal Nations.
5. Duration: The changes in this order go into effect on April 24. The order will remain in effect until 8:00 a.m. on May 26, 2020.

**We understand that many of you and your constituents might have questions about the “safer at home” order, what changes are included, and what those changes mean. Please review—and encourage your constituents to review—FAQs for the second “safer at home” order as it will likely answer many of those questions. The updated FAQs are below, but you can find it as a standalone document [here](#). This document can be downloaded and is also searchable for your convenience. To avoid confusion, our office will update the FAQs available on our [wisconsin.gov/COVID19](http://wisconsin.gov/COVID19) microsite as soon as “safer at home” order II goes into effect. The “safer at home” order I FAQs will remain on our website until April 24<sup>th</sup>.**

If you or your constituents have questions about which businesses are considered “essential” or want to inquire about changing their status under this order, please continue to direct them to [WEDC.org/essentialbusiness](http://WEDC.org/essentialbusiness).

**It is exceedingly important that information being relayed, promoted, or circulated by elected officials and to the people of Wisconsin is accurate. Thus, we want to be explicitly clear: Individuals do not need special permission to leave their homes. Similarly, if a business is an Essential Business or Operation as defined in this order, it does not need documentation or certification to continue its work that is done in compliance with this order. Workers providing essential care or services in our communities will be allowed to continue to travel to and from work. That includes folks like healthcare professionals, grocers, family caregivers, among other people whose work is critical for folks across our state.**

**SAFER AT HOME/TURN THE DIAL ORDER FAQs**

**Where does the “safer at home” order apply?**

The “safer at home” order applies to the entire state. All Wisconsinites must stay at home as much as possible and non-essential businesses and operations must cease, with limited exceptions for minimum basic operations and working from home. All public and private gatherings of any number of people that are not part of a single household or living unit are prohibited, except for the limited exceptions contained in the orders.

**What are social distancing requirements?**

Under the order, social distancing requirements include:

1. Maintaining social distancing of six feet between people;
2. Washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer;

3. Covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands);
4. Regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces;
5. Not shaking hands; and
6. Following all other public health recommendations issues by DHS and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

**Is this order mandatory?**

Yes. All Wisconsinites need to do their part to keep their family, friends, neighbors and communities safe.

Individuals may leave their homes for the following reasons:

1. To perform essential governmental functions, to work at essential businesses and operations, to do minimum basic operations for non-essential businesses, and essential travel, all of which is defined in the order;
2. To obtain services at or to work for health care and public health operations, certain human services operations, or essential infrastructure;
3. To perform tasks that are essential to health and safety such as obtaining medical supplies or medication, seeking emergency services, or visiting a health care professional;
4. To obtain necessary services or supplies such as food, gasoline, pet supplies, and other household consumer products;
5. To engage in outdoor activity, as long as they maintain social distancing; and
6. To care for a family members, friend, or pet in another household, and to transport family members, friends, or pets as allowed under the order.

**Will I be required to carry documentation to leave my home?**

No. Individuals do not need special permission to leave their homes, but they must comply with this order as to when it is permissible to leave home. Similarly, if a business is an essential business or operation as outlined in this order, it does not need documentation or certification to continue work that is done in compliance with this order.

**Does the order specify places that must close?**

Yes. All non-essential businesses and operations must close. K-12 schools and public libraries are closed, with some exceptions including virtual learning, on-line services, and curb-side pick-up. Additionally, all amusement parks, carnivals, water parks, licensed public or private swimming pools, splash pads, aquariums, zoos, museums, arcades, fairs, children’s play centers, playgrounds, funplexes, theme parks, bowling alleys, movie and other theaters, concert and music halls, country clubs, social clubs, and gyms and fitness centers. The order applies to the above places and those like them whether they are indoors or outdoors.

**Can I go outside for walks, outdoor exercise, or to play?**

Yes. You may engage in outdoor activities that meet social distancing requirements. You may travel to public and state parks for walks, hikes, and bike rides. No team or contact sports are permitted. Playgrounds are closed.

**Can I proceed with a wedding or funeral as planned?**

Weddings and funerals can proceed as long as any gathering includes fewer than 10 people in a room or confined space at a time and individuals adhere to social distancing requirements as much as possible. If you need to travel to attend a wedding or funeral, you should check before you leave that your means of travel is still available. If travel is to another state, you should read any orders in place in that state before you leave.

**Can I obtain care or boarding for my pet?**

Non-essential veterinary care should be avoided, but you may leave your home to obtain necessary veterinary care and supplies for your pet. Grooming services must close. Pet boarding and daycare is an essential business and operation that may remain open.

**Am I able to proceed with plans to move out of my house?**

Yes. Moving and relocation services are essential businesses and operations.

**Are golf courses open?**

Yes (on the date the order goes into effect). Golf courses may open, but there are restrictions. Golf carts are prohibited; all reservations and payments must be made online or by phone ahead of time; social distancing must be observed at all times; clubhouses and pro shops must remain closed; and tee times must be spaced to avoid multiple foursomes from clustering at any point on the course. Driving ranges and miniature golf remain closed.

*Travel*

**Can I travel?**

All forms of travel are prohibited unless explicitly excepted. Individuals utilizing mass transit must maintain social distancing of at least six feet as much as possible. Permitted essential travel includes:

1. Any travel related to essential activities, essential governmental functions, essential businesses and operations, or non-essential businesses’ minimum basic operations.
2. Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or vulnerable persons.
3. Travel to or from educational institutions for purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, or any other services.

4. Travel to return to a place of residence from outside the jurisdiction.
5. Travel required by law enforcement or court order, including to transport children pursuant to a custody agreement.
6. Travel required for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside Wisconsin.

**Can I travel to my second home or cabin?**

Individuals are strongly encouraged to remain at their primary residence or home. Travel to second homes within Wisconsin and outside of Wisconsin and to Tribal territory is discouraged.

**Can I travel to another state to work?**

Yes. You may travel to another state for activities that are permitted in that state. Please contact the state directly to ensure that your travel complies with their rules and orders.

*Schools, Libraries, and Local Government*

**How long will schools be closed?**

The order closes public and private K-12 school buildings for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. All schools must remain closed for instructional and extracurricular activities. Schools may also be used for essential government functions and food distribution.

**What is the rest of my school year going to look like if schools are closed?**

Schools are strongly encouraged to facilitate distance or virtual learning. It is important for schools to continue to keep in touch with students as social connections through school are important to student mental health. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has resources on its COVID-19 web page (<https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/2019-novel-coronavirus>) to support schools in this work.

**I'm a school employee and people are using our outdoor spaces to congregate or play group sports. What should I do?**

Use your discretion on the best path forward given the situation. We encourage all communities and individuals to work together to comply with the "safer at home" order. You can talk to the group to educate them on the importance of social distancing and the "safer at home" order. Another option is to request local law enforcement to assist in communicating that message.

**Will public libraries remain open?**

Libraries must close for all in-person services. However, libraries may provide curb-side pick-up of books or other materials that patrons order on-line or by phone. Libraries may also continue online services and programming. Libraries may be used for essential government functions and food distribution.

**Can local government bodies continue to conduct business?**

All state, tribal, and local essential governmental functions can continue. This means that government bodies should continue all functions needed to ensure the continuing operation of the government body and provide and support the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Each government body is responsible for determining what functions, if any are necessary and identify employees and contractors necessary to perform those functions.

Government bodies should continue to follow the [Wisconsin Department of Justice's Office of Open Government guidance](#) regarding holding government meetings, and should consult directly with that office regarding specific open meetings questions.

**My local government also issued an order like this. Which one do I follow?**

You must follow the statewide order issued by DHS Secretary-designee Andrea Palm. If a local order conflicts with the statewide order, you must follow the statewide order. However, local governments may issue orders to close public parks and open spaces in their jurisdiction under certain circumstances.

**How will this order be enforced?**

This order is enforceable by any local law enforcement official, including county sheriffs. Violation or obstruction of this order is punishable by imprisonment, fines, or both. Wis. Stat. § 252.25.

*Businesses and Employees*

**Does my business or employees need documentation to continue working?**

No. If a business is an essential business or operation as outlined in the "safer at home" order and the extension order, it does not need documentation or certification to continue work that is done in compliance with this order.

If a business is non-essential, it must determine which of its employees are necessary to carry out Minimum Basic Operations and it must inform its workers of that designation. However, no formal documentation is required for non-essential businesses or their employees.

**What if I still have to go to work?**

All essential businesses and operations are encouraged to remain open but must have employees work from home if it is possible for them to complete their job duties remotely. If you are a worker at one of these businesses, you must implement social distancing requirements as much as possible. Your business is required to follow all [DHS guidelines](#) on how to keep the workplace safe and the specific requirements in the order.

If you are an employee at a non-essential business, your employer must communicate to you whether you are one of its employees who is necessary to carry out its Minimum Basic Operations.

**My employer is making me come to work, but we are not an essential business.**

Non-essential businesses may continue Minimum Basic Operations. Your employer must inform you if you are necessary to perform a Minimum Basic Operation.

If businesses or operations are continuing to work beyond what is permitted in the “safer at home” order, you can contact local law enforcement to report a violation of the order.

**What if my business or operation is not essential?**

Your business must close. Individuals are encouraged to work from home where possible.

You are permitted to do the Minimum Basic Operations to maintain the value of your business’s inventory, preserve the condition of the business’s physical plant and equipment, ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or for related functions, including where these functions are outsourced to other entities. Minimum Basic Operations may include:

1. Taking steps to facilitate employees working remotely;
2. Fulfilling deliveries or mailing parcels so long as all the operations are performed by one person in a confined space, including a car or truck, and no signature is required;
3. Providing curb-side pick-up of goods and curb-side drop-off of goods and animals so long as the operations are performed by one staff person in a confined space, including a car or truck, no signature is required, pick-ups and drop-offs are scheduled to maintain social distancing between customers, and payment happens on-line or by phone.
4. Outdoor recreational rentals of boats, kayaks, canoes, paddle boats, golf carts, snowmobiles, ATVs, and other similar outdoor equipment, so long as the operation is performed by one staff person in a confined space, pick-up and drop-off are scheduled to maintain social distancing, payment happens on-line or by phone, and equipment is cleaned between each use.
5. Automatic or self-service car washes can operate so long as high-touch areas are cleaned frequently.

Minimum Basic Operations does not include serving customers in person (other than the deliveries, curb-side pick-up, curb-side drop-off, and recreational rentals). Services or activities requiring more than one person may only continue via phone or virtually.

For more information on essential and non-essential businesses, check the information page on the [Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation \(WEDC\) website](#).

**What is considered an essential business?**

Please read the Stay at Home order carefully to determine what is considered an essential business or operation. Even if a business or operation is essential, there are still important restrictions on how the business can operate. For example, all entities that remain open as essential businesses or operations must implement social distancing as much as possible and use technology to avoid meeting in person, including virtual meetings, teleconference, and remote work (i.e., work from home). The order contains specific restrictions on each kind of essential business and operation.

Essential businesses and operations include the following, which are clarified in detail in the Order:

1. Any business or worker identified in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) [memo](#), and any subsequent version of this memo;
2. Stores that sell groceries and medicine, including bakeries, provided they: (i) close all seating intended for consuming food; (ii) cease any self-service operations of salad bars, beverage stations, and buffets; (iii) except for grocery stores, prohibit customers from self-dispensing all unpackaged food; and (iv) abide by social distancing requirements;
3. Food and beverage production, transport, and agriculture;
4. Restaurants and bars, for take-out and delivery service of food;
5. Organizations that provide charitable and social services, including food banks and shelters;
6. Religious entities as long as any gathering includes fewer than 10 people in a room or confined space at a time and individuals adhere to social distancing requirements as much as possible;
7. Weddings and funerals as long as any gathering includes fewer than 10 people in a room or confined space at a time and individuals adhere to social distancing requirements as much as possible;
8. News media;
9. Gas stations and businesses needed for transportation;
10. Financial institutions and services;
11. Hardware and supplies stores;
12. Critical trades;

13. Mail, post, shipping, logistics, delivery, and pick-up services;
14. Laundry services;
15. Supplies to work from home;
16. Supplies for essential businesses and operations and essential governmental functions;
17. Transportation to and from activities permitted in the order;
18. Home-based care;
19. Professional services;
20. Manufacture, distribution, and supply chain for critical products and industries;
21. Critical labor union functions;
22. Hotels and motels;
23. Higher educational institutions for purposes of facilitating distance learning, performing critical research, or other essential functions.

In addition to essential businesses and operations, healthcare and public health operations, human services operations, essential infrastructure, essential governmental functions will continue to operate.

**My retail store is essential under the order. What restrictions apply to my store?**

All retail stores that remain open as essential businesses and operations must install markings for where customers line up to enable the customers to stay six feet apart and use alternatives to lines, such as drive-up loading and scheduled curbside pick-ups.

Stores with less than 50,000 square feet of customer floor space must limit the number of people in the store, including employees, to 25% of their total occupancy limits.

Stores with more than 50,000 square feet of customer floor space must limit the number of customers (excluding employees) to 4 people per 1,000 square feet. These stores must also offer at least two hours per week of shopping time for vulnerable populations.

**My business supplies an essential business. Can I stay open?**

Yes, but only for the operations that are necessary for the essential business you are supplying or supporting. You may not continue other parts of your business that are not necessary to service essential businesses or operations.

**Can I continue my landscaping, lawncare, or exterior construction business?**

Construction is an essential business or operation. Landscapers are also considered essential businesses or operations, so long as the service is necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, businesses, or buildings.

Optional or aesthetic lawncare services and optional or aesthetic exterior residential construction can continue as a Minimum Basic Operation so long as the operation is performed by one person in a room or confined space, including a car or truck, and only one person is on site at a time. No signature may be required for the service.

**Are greenhouses and retail landscaping businesses allowed to operate?**

Greenhouses, retail landscaping businesses and their suppliers are considered essential businesses or operations, so long as the service is necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, businesses, and buildings.

If a greenhouse, retail landscaping business, or supplier is not necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, businesses, and buildings, they may still continue Minimum Basic Operations, including fulfilling nonessential curbside pick-up, deliveries, mailing parcels, and receiving parcels if it can be done by one person in a room or confined space, including a car or truck. Services cannot require a signature by the customer.

**Will restaurants and bars remain open?**

Restaurants may remain open for food take-out or delivery only and no seating may be provided. Carryout sales of alcohol beverages and food are allowed if permitted by state law and municipal ordinance. Customers may enter these establishments only for the purpose of ordering, picking up, and paying for food or beverage. Food and drink may not be consumed on the premises, neither indoors nor outdoors. Delivery of alcohol to retail customers is prohibited.

Any self-service operations of salad bars, beverage stations, and buffets must cease. Customers are prohibited from self-dispensing any unpackaged food or beverage.

Social distancing requirements must be implemented as much as possible.

**Will hotels and motels remain open?**

Hotels and motels are essential businesses and operations and can remain open if they follow the guidelines imposed on stores that sell groceries and medicine, restaurants, and bars. Guests are prohibited from congregating in lobbies or other

common areas and social distancing requirements must be implemented. Hotel and motel swimming pools, hot tubs, and exercise facilities must close.

However, everyone is strongly encouraged to stay close to home and not to travel.

The order does not prohibit individuals from residing at a hotel, motel, short term rental, or campground as their primary home or residence.

**Does this order apply to child care settings?**

Child care settings are essential businesses and operations. Secretary-designee Andrea Palm’s [Emergency Order #6](#) remains in effect, with the following amendments:

Child care settings must prioritize care for families as follows:

Tier 1: Employees, contractors, and other support staff working in health care

Tier 2: Employees, contractors, and staff in vital areas outlined in the order

Child care settings include all licensed and certified child care providers who may provide care for any age or ages of children up to 13 years of age, unless specially licensed for children with disabilities up to 19 years of age.

Please see the Department of Children and Families [FAQ on this topic](#) for additional information.

**Are personal care businesses allowed to remain open?**

No. All hair salons, barber shops, nail salons, day spas, electrolysis providers, waxing salons, eyebrow-care establishments, tattoo parlors, body art establishments and tanning facilities must close.

**SAFER AT HOME/TURN THE DIAL ORDER FAQs FOR BUSINESSES**

**ALL BUSINESSES MUST DO THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Avoid meeting in person whenever possible, and switch to virtual meetings, teleconference, and remote work (i.e. work from home);
2. Comply with all [Department of Health Services guidelines for businesses](#);
3. Follow Social Distancing Requirements between all individuals on the premise to the maximum extent possible.

All businesses are encouraged to follow [WEDC’s best practices for a COVID-19 response plan](#).

**ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES AND OPERATIONS MUST ALSO:**

1. Restrict the number of workers present on premises to no more than is strictly necessary to perform the essential operation.
2. Increase standards of facility cleaning and disinfection and adopt protocols to clean and disinfect in the event of a positive COVID-19 case in the workplace.
3. Adopt policies to prevent workers from entering the premises if they display respiratory symptoms (e.g., a cough) or have had contact with a person with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.

**ESSENTIAL RETAIL STORES MUST ALSO:**

1. Consider establishing scheduled curbside pick-up.
2. Stores with less than 50,000 square feet: limit number of people in the store to 25% of the total occupancy limit.
3. Stores with more than 50,00 square feet: limit customers to 4 people per 1,000 square feet and offer at least 2 hours per week of shopping time for vulnerable populations.
4. Establish lines to regulate entry into the store, including markings to keep customers six feet apart while waiting.

Business Type	Essential Business	Non-essential Business
Airbnb and VRBO	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>X</b></p> <p><b>Requirements:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Comply with requirements of Sections 13.b (selling groceries and medicine), 13.d (restaurant operations), and 13.e (bar operation);</li> <li>2. Close swimming pools, hot tubs, and exercise facilities; and</li> <li>3. Prohibit guests from congregating in lobbies or other common areas, including providing adequate space to adhere to Social Distancing Requirements while queuing for front desk services.</li> </ol>	

Architecture	<b>X</b>	
<p>Auctions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Livestock market barns (Equity Co-op livestock)</li> <li>• Herd dispersal</li> <li>• Estate auctions of farms with livestock</li> </ul> <p>Estate auctions, but only if an auction is necessary to preserve the value of property or inventory.</p>	<p><b>X</b></p> <p><b>Industry-specific Requirements:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Must occur virtually or online to the greatest extent possible</li> <li>2. In-person auctions must be limited to bidders only;</li> <li>3. Pick-up of goods after the auction must be staggered</li> </ol>	
<p>Auctions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural equipment</li> <li>• Animal auctions for competition (e.g. show pigs)</li> <li>• Consignment sales</li> <li>• Antiques &amp; collectibles</li> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Autos &amp; motorcycles</li> <li>• Boats &amp; personal watercraft</li> <li>• Coins &amp; currency</li> <li>• Collector cars &amp; vintage equipment</li> <li>• Government surplus property &amp; seizures</li> <li>• Heavy equipment &amp; construction machinery</li> <li>• Household goods</li> <li>• Industrial &amp; manufacturing equipment</li> <li>• Intellectual property</li> <li>• Jewelry</li> <li>• Off-road &amp; recreational vehicles</li> <li>• Restaurant equipment</li> <li>• Tools</li> <li>• Trucks, trailers, and transportation related equipment</li> </ul>		<p><b>X</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. May continue as virtual auctions or online auctions.</li> <li>2. All preparations, meetings, inventory review, and consumer preview of goods must occur virtually.</li> <li>3. After a virtual or online auction, the auctioneer or auction company may deliver, mail, or provide curbside pick-up of goods if it can be done by one person in a room or confined space, including a car or truck.</li> <li>4. Delivery, curbside pick-up, or parcel services cannot require a signature by the recipient.</li> </ol>
Bars	<p><b>X</b></p> <p><b>Industry-specific Requirements:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carryout sales of alcohol beverages are allowed if permitted by state law and municipal ordinance;</li> <li>2. Delivery of alcoholic beverages to retail customers is prohibited;</li> <li>3. Wineries holding direct wine shippers' permits may make deliveries of wine in accordance with their permit;</li> </ol>	

	<p>4. Customers may enter only to order, pick up, and paying for food or beverage or both;</p> <p>5. No seating may be provided;</p> <p>6. Food and drink may not be consumed on premises, either indoors or outdoors;</p> <p>7. Self-service operations of salad bars, beverage stations, and buffets are prohibited; and</p> <p>8. Customers are prohibited from self-dispensing any unpackaged food or beverage.</p>	
Bicycle stores and repair shops	<b>X</b>	
Campgrounds	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>X</b></p> <p><b>Requirements:</b></p> <p>1. Comply with requirements of Sections 13.b (selling groceries and medicine), 13.d (restaurant operations), and 13.e (bar operation);</p> <p>2. Close swimming pools, hot tubs, and exercise facilities; and</p> <p>3. Prohibit guests from congregating in lobbies or other common areas, including providing adequate space to adhere to Social Distancing Requirements while queuing for front desk services.</p>	
Car auctions		<b>X</b> Auctions may be held virtually
Cannabidiol (CBD) shops		<b>X</b>
Car washes		<b>X</b> Automatic or self-service car washes may remain open, with frequent cleaning of high-touch areas.
Churches and religious entities	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>X</b></p> <p>Any gathering must include fewer than 10 people in a room or confined space at a time. Please also see the <a href="#">options available</a> for religious gatherings and services under the governor’s “safer at home” order.</p>	
Cleaning services - residential		<b>X</b>
Cleaning services - business	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>X</b></p> <p>Permitted for essential businesses if it is necessary to maintaining safety, sanitation, and essential operations.</p>	
Construction supplies	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>X</b></p> <p>Aesthetic or optional construction projects should be avoided.</p> <p>Exterior aesthetic or optional construction may continue with one worker on site.</p>	
Copier sales and maintenance	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>X</b></p> <p>Only if they are selling to or servicing an essential business or operation.</p>	
Craft stores		<b>X</b> May use additional staff as necessary to provide curb-side pick-up for materials necessary for making personal protective equipment.
Drivers education classes	<b>X</b>	
Farmers markets	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>X</b></p> <p>1. Close all seating intended for consuming food;</p>	

	2. Food samples are prohibited; 3. Self-dispensing unpackaged food areas (including fresh produce) may stay open. Areas that require customers use tongs or scoops are encouraged, but not required to close. Vendors must sanitize the tongs and scoops frequently.	
Fishing, chartered excursions		<b>X</b>
Food banks	<b>X</b> <b>Requirements:</b> 1. Close all seating intended for consuming food; 2. Close self-service operations such as salad bars, beverage stations and buffets; and 3. Cease any customers self-dispensing unpackaged food (except for grocery stores).	
Food trucks	<b>X</b> <b>Requirements:</b> 1. Take-out or delivery service only; 2. No seating may be provided; 3. Food and drink may not be consumed on the premises, either indoors or outdoors; 4. Self-service operations of salad bars, beverage stations, and buffets are prohibited; 5. Customers are prohibited from self-dispensing any unpackaged food or beverage; 6. Carryout sales of alcohol beverages are allowed if permitted by state law and municipal ordinance; and 7. Delivery of alcoholic beverages to retail customers is prohibited.	
Fulfillment centers	<b>X</b>	
Furniture stores		<b>X</b>
Garage sale, rummage sales, yard sales		<b>X</b>
Gas stations	<b>X</b>	
Golf courses and driving ranges	<b>X</b> <b>Industry-specific Requirements:</b> 1. Golf carts must be cleaned after each use; 2. Social distancing is required; 3. Only online or phone tee time reservations and payments; 4. Clubhouses and pro shops are closed; 5. Tee times scheduled to ensure social distancing throughout the course; 6. Requirements for staff and maintenance; 7. Driving ranges and miniature golf are closed.	
Greenhouses	<b>X</b> Essential if it is necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, businesses, and buildings. May offer curbside pickup for all customers.	
Grocery stores	<b>X</b> <b>Industry-specific Requirements:</b> 1. Close all seating intended for consuming food; 2. Close self-service operations such as salad bars, beverage stations and buffets (water filling stations can continue to remain open);	

	3. Self-dispensing unpackaged food areas (including fresh produce) may stay open. Areas that require customers use tongs or scoops (bulk bins, bakery displays) are encouraged, but not required to close. Stores must sanitize the tongs and scoops frequently.	
Gun and ammunition stores, shooting ranges	X	
Gyms, fitness centers, personal trainers		X
Home improvement stores	X	
Internet technology (IT) and telecommunications services	X	
Landscaping	X Essential if it is necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, businesses, and buildings.	
Liquor stores	X	
Miniature gold		X
Office supply stores	X	
Pet boarding and doggy day care	X	
Pet grooming (including in-home, mobile, and part of a larger store)		X
Photographers		X May photograph outdoors with social distancing.  May photograph at weddings, funerals, religious gatherings as part of the person-count of fewer than 10 people.
Pool cleaning services	X Optional or aesthetic pool maintenance should be avoided.	
Printing	X Essential if the printer service is necessary for an essential business or operation.	
Real estate staging	X	
Rest stops	X	
Restaurants	X <b>Industry-specific Requirements:</b> 1. Take-out or delivery service only; 2. Customers may enter only to order, pick up, and paying for food or beverage or both; 3. No seating may be provided; 4. Food and drink may not be consumed on the premises, either indoors or outdoors; 5. Self-service operations of salad bars, beverage stations, and buffets are prohibited; 6. Customers are prohibited from self-dispensing any unpackaged food or beverage; 7. Carryout sales of alcohol beverages are allowed if permitted by state law and municipal ordinance; 8. Delivery of alcoholic beverages to retail customers is prohibited; and	

	9. Wineries holding direct wine shippers' permits may make deliveries of wine in accordance with their permit.	
Salons and spas		X
Sawmills	X Essential if the sawmill is necessary for an essential business or operation.	
Shelters	X	
Shoe stores		X
Solid waste and recycling collection and removal	X	
Sporting goods stores		X
Substance abuse programs - Alcoholics anonymous, narcotics anonymous	X	
Timber and logging	X	
Tombstone makers	X	
Trucking schools	X	
Vaping, smoking, and cigar shops		X
Veterinary care	X Non-essential veterinary care should be delayed.	

After announcing the “safer at home” order, we have received some inquiries about Mendota Mental Health Institute and Winnebago Mental Health Institute. Both are open, functioning, and continuing their intake process.

Additionally, on April 14<sup>th</sup>, our office became aware of a memo issued by the Board on Aging and Long Term Care prohibiting “window visits” at long-term care facilities. We recognize that there was much concern about this memo when it was issued. Please note that neither the governor nor our office approved the “window visits” advice prior to its issuance, and the memo that was issued does not reflect the governor’s position on this issue. The Board is an independent entity but it does not have the authority to issue orders inconsistent with the governor’s “safer at home” order. The Board has since reissued the memo after the inconsistency was brought to their attention retracting its ban, so “window visits” continue to be permitted under the governor’s “safer at home” order.

In addition to the “safer at home” order, the governor announced on March 23<sup>rd</sup> that he has assembled task forces in the SEOC to focus on six key areas, including:

- Specimen Collection and Laboratory Capacity
- Personal Protective Equipment and Essential Supplies
- Isolation Facilities
- Surge Capacity
- Healthcare Worker Childcare
- Contact Tracing and Surveillance

These task forces will help to ensure our healthcare workers have the resources they need to serve folks across our state. We are continuing to add additional task forces and will provide updates on the SEOC task forces as we have them.

Making sure that folks have access to the healthcare resources, care, and treatment they need is critically important in working to manage the spread of COVID-19 in Wisconsin. In an effort to address anticipated shortages of healthcare workers in responding to COVID-19 and in preparation for potential surges in the

pandemic, Gov. Evers and Secretary-designee Palm issued an order to help bolster the healthcare workforce during the public health emergency. Among other important steps, the order: simplifies the healthcare license renewal process; encourages recently retired professionals with expired licenses to re-enter practice; provides an avenue for licensed out-of-state practitioners to practice in Wisconsin without first requiring an in-state credential; and eliminates time limits for temporary licenses.

The order also includes provisions designed to enable nursing students close to graduation to be a part of the state's COVID-19 response by adjusting some clinical education requirements. It suspends practice restrictions for advanced practice nurses, enabling them to more efficiently and effectively respond during the COVID-19 crisis. Additionally, the order provides flexibility to physician assistants in order to meet the current unpredictable changes in emergency needs and eliminates some late renewal fees for individuals whose licenses have lapsed and provides the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) with flexibility to eliminate other fees when needed. This is designed to simplify the licensing process for retirees or others who left their professions in good standing for other reasons by easing or eliminating certain credentialing renewal requirements, such as the need to earn specified numbers of continuing education units, so that returning providers can focus on direct patient care and not activities that take them away from the front lines or the bedside. This order is effectively immediately and will remain in effect through the duration of the public health emergency. You can find a copy of the order [here](#).

In addition to the governor's order, on April 10<sup>th</sup>, the governor announced that we are seeking volunteers to support Wisconsin's healthcare system during the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of patients in Wisconsin who need to be treated for COVID-19 is expected to surge in the coming weeks. Building a network of available volunteers now will greatly reduce the hardships on hospitals and clinics that would not normally have the capacity to care for the increase in patients. Active and retired healthcare professionals and those who wish to help in non-clinical support positions are encouraged to sign up to volunteer through the [Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry \(WEAVR\)](#). Volunteers will be assigned to locations across Wisconsin to support ongoing efforts related to the COVID-19 national emergency. Those who are willing to travel should note that when they sign up. All volunteers should also be aware that they will be required to complete a background check.

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, Gov. Evers and Secretary-designee Palm announced the new Resilient Wisconsin initiative to provide tools and resources to Wisconsinites dealing with stress and mental health challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Resilient Wisconsin provides guidance to Wisconsinites looking for tools and resources to stay mentally healthy during this unprecedented crisis. Practicing self-care, staying connected, and reducing stress when possible are the foundation of these tools. Specific action-steps for each of these strategies can be found on the [Resilient Wisconsin website](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Gov. Evers and Secretary-designee Palm issued two emergency rules suspending some administrative rules for the DHS to help maximize our state's health care workforce while ensuring patients continue to get the care they need during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first order adjusts training and license renewal deadlines, as well as paramedic-level ambulance staffing levels for emergency medical services. It suspends staff orientations at home health agencies and hospices, adjusts nurse aide training hours, relaxes criteria for resident care staff at community-based residential facilities and adult family homes, and ensures nursing homes cannot discharge patients who are unable to pay. The second order allows health care provider licenses that would have expired during the public health emergency to remain valid until 30 days after the emergency is over. It also gives providers who are licensed in other states but assisting here additional time to apply for a Wisconsin license, and gives facilities where those providers are working additional time to notify the state.

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, the governor and Secretary-designee Palm issued [Emergency Order #35](#) allows DHS to make sure that no Medicaid member loses eligibility for coverage during the COVID-19 emergency, a requirement for receiving additional federal funding under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Those dollars let Wisconsin address increased enrollment and higher usage of Medicaid services as a result of the pandemic and its impact on the economy. The order allows nurses to bill Medicaid for overtime and suspends the prior authorization requirement for some drugs, as well as limits on the number of refills and days-supply that can be provided. It also waives payments from parents for the Birth to 3 Program that provides early intervention services for children with developmental delays and disabilities.

The order allows for telehealth and other electronic communications within mental health and substance use disorder treatment programs, and suspends the requirement that emergency mental health services, community support programs, and community substance abuse services must happen in a face-to-face setting. The order also allows for electronic supervision of occupational therapists, when close supervision is required.

The DHS has been working on expanding options relating to telehealth prior to the COVID-19 outbreak began. On March 18<sup>th</sup>, the DHS notified Medicaid providers of two changes that should increase the use of telehealth. First, Medicaid members can now participate in telehealth visits from any location, including their homes. Second, Medicaid members can now have visits with their doctors over the telephone, not just using face-to-face technology. These changes are permanent and will be available to people who access Medicaid services even after the current emergency ends. The DHS Division of Quality Assurance (DQA) made it possible so that healthcare providers no longer need a separate certification to provide services through telehealth. This supports our state's efforts to protect healthcare workers and make sure that services can be delivered to those who need them, while expanding options for safe, effective visits between patients and providers.

The DHS announced new guidance on telehealth on March 30<sup>th</sup>. The new guidance provides that Medicaid will temporarily cover all currently covered services to be provided via telehealth using real-time technology as long as the service can be delivered with functional equivalence to the face-to-face service. This includes audio-only phone communication if necessary. This applies to all service areas and all enrolled professional and paraprofessional providers allowable within current ForwardHealth coverage policy. Further, paraprofessionals subject to supervision requirements are allowed to hold supervision via telehealth. The DHS' guidance can be found [here](#). On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the DHS also issued a release encouraging patients and providers to use telehealth options for healthcare visits during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

To this end, on March 31<sup>st</sup>, Insurance Commissioner Afable also asked insurers to medical malpractice insurers aimed at expanding access to telemedicine during the COVID-19 pandemic and at ensuring retired and out-of-state health care workers can get the medical malpractice coverage in order to support the state's response to COVID-19. Doctors are required to have medical malpractice insurance to provide care in Wisconsin.

In addition to ensuring folks have access to healthcare and supporting healthcare workers, the governor has been working on making sure folks have access to insurance coverage as we continue to respond to COVID-19. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers and Insurance Commissioner Mark Afable asked health plan issuers to help Wisconsinites access testing and treatment for COVID-19 and to ensure that healthcare is as accessible as possible as we continue to respond to this pandemic.

Gov. Evers and Commissioner Afable requested that health plan issuers waive cost-sharing for COVID-19-related laboratory testing and radiology services, prepare for increased demand for telehealth services,

review readiness and responsiveness plans to new COVID-19 cases, and that health plan issuers cover the immunization for COVID-19—in the event that an immunization becomes available—at no cost-sharing for covered members. They also asked that health plan issuers be flexible on prescription drug supply limitations and early refill limitations so folks can get their medication as quickly as possible and without worrying about increased exposure or risk.

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, our administration issued guidance to Wisconsin workers who have lost their employer-based health insurance. When an individual loses their health insurance, a 60-day special enrollment period is created. During that 60-day window, Wisconsinites can work with an enrollment assister or an agent to enroll in a new insurance plan through [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov), which may be more affordable than using a health insurance extension from their employer under the federal COBRA provision. Some individuals may also be eligible for free coverage through BadgerCare. We are urging residents to call 2-1-1 or visit [CoveringWI.org](https://www.coveringwi.org) for assistance. An FAQ for consumers is also available [here](#). An FAQ document for businesses is available [here](#).

In addition to helping ensure folks have access to healthcare, on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, the governor directed Commissioner Afable to support restaurants and workers across Wisconsin who are offering delivery and pickup services. Insurers must cover delivery services for restaurants on personal auto insurance policies and must offer coverage for hired drivers and non-owned automobiles as a rider on a restaurant's general liability insurance if it is requested, both at no extra cost to the policyholders. Restaurants interested in this coverage should contact their insurance agent or insurance company directly.

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Commissioner Afable announced that insurance agent licensing exams can now be taken online using a platform called ProProctor™ from Prometric. The online platform allows individuals to take the agent licensing exam from home during the State's Safer at Home order. OCI issued a bulletin today that details how candidates can access and complete their exams via ProProctor. ProProctor is a secure, user-friendly platform that provides 24-7 access and allows candidates to take their exams in a location of their choosing. Each proposed test location is also individually vetted and approved by ProProctor as part of the testing process. Candidates can learn more about the remote testing process and sign up for an exam at [www.prometric.com/wisconsin/insurance](https://www.prometric.com/wisconsin/insurance).

Additionally, with the COVID-19 public health emergency requiring non-essential businesses to close, many employees working for small employers may be furloughed or work fewer than 30 hours per week. On March 26<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers directed Commissioner Afable to call on insurers to give small employers the option to keep employees who are furloughed or working fewer than 30 hours per week on employer-sponsored health insurance. The 30-hour workweek provision under Wisconsin's small employer law is a minimum standard. Insurers and employer policyholders can agree to offer coverage to employees working fewer than 30 hours if the offer is made to all employees of the employer and is not made in an unfairly discriminatory manner. The bulletin is effective for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency. The Office of the Commissioner of Insurance is also urging insurers to work with small employers to provide the option of continuing dental, vision, and prescription drug benefits when those are offered as separate policies.

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, our administration issued guidance for essential businesses during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The guidance includes information about business interruption insurance from the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) and business loans and grants from the WEDC. An FAQs document regarding business interruption insurance is available [here](#). OCI also encourages anyone who believes they have been improperly denied coverage to visit [http://ociaccess.oci.wi.gov/complaints/public/](https://ociaccess.oci.wi.gov/complaints/public/) for more information about their complaint process.

Gov. Evers continues to work to make sure that families have access to basic necessities during the COVID-19 pandemic. On April 10<sup>th</sup>, the DHS announced that more than 215,000 FoodShare households will be receiving additional benefits. Under the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act, Wisconsin is able to provide FoodShare recipients with the maximum monthly benefit amount, based on the number of people in their household, for two months. As a result, for March and April, FoodShare households not currently receiving the maximum monthly benefit amount for their family size will receive additional benefits bringing them up to that level. The additional March benefits will be available on QUEST cards on April 12, and the additional April benefits will be available on QUEST cards on April 26. If the COVID-19 emergency extends beyond April, DHS will work with its federal partners on any future opportunities to provide additional emergency allotments. Households will receive a letter notifying them of the additional benefits. Information on maximum monthly benefits and the full announcement can be found [here](#).

Ensuring the people of Wisconsin have continued utility access and housing is critically important to make sure folks have access to basic necessities as the state continues plans to prevent further spread of COVID-19 through promoting “safer at home,” social distancing, mandating school closures, etc. Thus, following the governor’s public health emergency declaration, the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) [directed](#) water, electric, and natural gas utilities to cease disconnecting residential service for nonpayment and also directed utilities reconnect services to dwellings that had been disconnected until the state public health emergency is lifted.

Additionally, on April 14<sup>th</sup>, the PSC and the Department of Public Instruction announced a new web tool that can assist users in finding free-to-use public broadband locations in the area. The web tool is the result of a collaboration to collect and map Wi-Fi location data between the State Broadband Office at the PSC and the Division for Libraries and Technology at DPI. These "Emergency Internet" locations are for when a user's own internet is too slow or not available. While many of the identified location buildings are closed to the public, their Wi-Fi connections remain accessible. Users should stay in their vehicles while accessing the Wi-Fi and only use it long enough to access critical services. The PSC and the DPI continue to survey internet service providers, public school districts, and libraries to obtain Wi-Fi location information and will update the web tool regularly with new information. Currently, there are almost 450 Wi-Fi locations identified statewide. The information is accessible on mobile devices so people can quickly find and visit local Wi-Fi hotspots. People looking for emergency broadband locations can use the web tool [here](#).

Following his “safer at home” announcement, on March 27<sup>th</sup>, the governor announced he had directed DHS Secretary-designee Palm to order the suspension of evictions and foreclosures. The order prohibits landlords from evicting tenants for any reason unless failure to proceed with the eviction will result in an imminent threat of serious physical harm to another person and mortgagees from commencing civil action to foreclose on real estate for 60 days. However, the governor is urging those who remain able to meet their financial obligations to continue to do so. The order does not in any way relieve a person’s obligation to pay their rent or mortgage. You can find a copy of the order [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) announced it approved an emergency rule prohibiting late fees or penalties for missed or late rent payments during COVID-19. The emergency rule ([Wis. Admin. Code Ch. ATCP 134](#)) prevents landlords from charging late fees or penalties for missed or late rent payments during the public health emergency and for 90 days afterward. DATCP will hold a public hearing and comment period on this emergency rule via teleconference. The rule can be viewed [here](#).

Additionally, the governor is also working to ensure that our veterans have access to necessary resources as we respond to COVID-19. On April 9<sup>th</sup>, the governor [suspended](#) several provisions of the Assistance to Needy Veterans Grant (ANVG) program, which provides subsistence payments and other health care grants to low income veterans who experience a loss of income. The ANVG program provides financial assistance to veterans who have exhausted other sources of aid. The grants may be used for specified health care and subsistence needs up to maximum grant limits. Current rules contain some requirements that would prevent, hinder, or delay payments to veterans who have experienced a loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A temporary suspension of these provisions will allow WDVA to help provide more low-income veterans access to emergency financial aid and take the necessary action to assist and protect the health and welfare of Wisconsin's veterans and their families. To apply for the Assistance for Needy Veterans Grant online, visit [www.MyWisVets.com](http://www.MyWisVets.com). Veterans may also apply by contacting their County Veterans Service Office or Tribal Veterans Service office. Veterans may scan and email a completed paper form to the [VetsBenefitsGrants@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:VetsBenefitsGrants@dva.wisconsin.gov). Questions regarding the application process can be sent to [VetsBenefitsGrants@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:VetsBenefitsGrants@dva.wisconsin.gov).

The governor is also working to ensure that healthcare workers, first responders, and other folks on the frontlines of the COVID-19 response have access to the necessary childcare resources so they can continue their important work. On March 15<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Children and Families issued guidance for childcare, head start, and pre-K program providers. They also announced rule waivers for childcare providers and Wisconsin Shares eligibility. Consistent with Gov. Evers' orders on mass gathering, on March 18<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) issued new guidance for childcare, Head Start, and 3K/4K programs.

We need to be able to rely on healthcare workers and first responders to keep our families, our neighbors, and our communities safe. Thus, we are currently not closing childcare centers because we need those centers to stay open for our healthcare workers, first responders, among other essential workers to help minimize disruption to those essential services. At this time, childcare centers may not operate with more than 10 staff present at a time and may not operate with more than 50 children present at a time. Voluntary closure beyond the scope of this order is allowed and left to the decision of individual providers. Find DCF's guidance [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Gov. Evers issued an [order](#) suspending several administrative rules for the DCF to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 while still providing critical services. The order gives the flexibility needed to provide the safest possible care for children in out-of-home care by allowing local agencies to make decisions about when and if services are needed for an individual child. Numerous agency rules require local agencies to take certain actions during a set window of time. Due to the heightened risk of exposure caused by additional face-to-face interactions, this flexibility allows local agencies to make decisions based on the best interest of the child. The order also waives an in-person training deadline for new employees in W-2 agencies. Extending the deadline will ensure new W-2 staff can stay on the job, helping Wisconsinites in need of services. On April 13<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced an emergency order that will suspend administrative rules providing DCF with flexibility on several requirements for child care providers operating group, family, and in-home settings, as well as a number of requirements for the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program. A copy of the governor's order can be found [here](#).

In addition to its efforts working to ensure childcare continues to remain accessible for families, healthcare workers, and first responders across our state, the DCF is also working to keep kids safe as there are fewer interactions with professionals who are trained to observe and mandated to report suspected child abuse. It is critical now, more than ever, for families, friends, and neighbors to be aware of the signs of child abuse and neglect and to know how to report those signs to their local child welfare agencies. The DCF is encouraging folks to watch for families who may be struggling and offer support in

any way that is possible and safe. The department has [resources to help the public understand the signs of possible abuse and neglect](#) and recognize situations that may need to be reported. They also produced a [one-page flyer](#) to help the public understand the signs of abuse and neglect and know how to report suspected incidents. If you suspect abuse or neglect, it is critical that you contact your county's child protective services (CPS) agency immediately. Local CPS agency contact information can be found [online](#) or by calling the United Way's resource line by dialing 2-1-1.

On April 28<sup>th</sup> the DCF submitted [an official request](#) to use \$51 million to support early care and education community using funds available through the CARES Act. The department received authority to propose a grant program totaling \$51 million for childcare providers under Wisconsin's COVID-19 response legislation (2019 Wisconsin Act 185). As a first step in that process, the proposed grant program must be submitted to JFC for review under Wisconsin §16.54 (2) (a) 2. When the proposed program is approved, the department can begin taking applications and distributing funds. The grant proposal submitted by the department breaks the total \$51 million allocation into three smaller funds, with each addressing a critical challenge identified by child care providers and legislative leaders. The proposed programs include a grant to support those providing care for essential workforce families, a grant to provide hazard pay for early care educators working during the public health emergency, and a grant to support programs which closed operations during the public health emergency. Each proposed grant has separate criteria to qualify, with total dollar amounts aligned to supporting the situational needs of child care providers.

We are also working to promote public information about how to best use PPE. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the Department of Safety and Professional Services release training modules for police, wastewater works, and other public sector employees who do not routinely use PPE in their work. The unprecedented COVID-19 crisis is driving more first-responders and other employees maintaining critical infrastructure to use personal protective equipment at work on a regular basis. Their counterparts in health care can attest that proper usage of PPE is critical for it to confer benefit and keep wearers safe from infection. Yet not everyone looking to PPE for safety knows how to use it correctly. And if someone uses PPE incorrectly, they put themselves at greater risk of catching COVID-19, and they have wasted a valuable resource. The three modules include a [general education course on N95 respirator use](#) along with one [tailored to law enforcement](#) and [another for water treatment workers](#). Please distribute this information as widely as possible so we can ensure that folks are using PPE effectively and ensuring theirs and others' safety.

Additionally, preventing the spread of COVID-19 in our correctional facilities is a top priority, especially as it relates to limiting potential exposure at correctional facilities and putting other inmates at risk. Thus, on March 13<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Corrections (DOC) announced it is taking extra precautions by temporarily suspending visits at all DOC institutions in an effort to protect correctional workers and staff and the individuals who are in the DOC's care. A copy of DOC's announcement can be found [here](#). The DOC also announced they are temporarily waiving \$7 co-pay for individuals experiencing fever, cough, or shortness of breath to receive medical treatment.

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers ordered DOC to implement a moratorium on admissions to the state prisons and DOC juvenile facilities to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These restrictions go into effect on Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> and will be re-evaluated as updated information becomes available. Certain essential transfers will continue. This order does not affect the ability of courts to sentence individuals to prison but means that they will be held in a county jail facility in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to our large facilities. Additionally, all transfers from state contracted county jail beds have been suspended until further notice to ensure everyone's safety.

The DOC takes the responsibility to protect staff and persons in their care seriously and continues to work with state and federal partners on best practices. The DOC will continue to review the necessity of the order and will work with county partners to discuss any potential modification that may be necessary. The Department of Corrections has established a public support line for questions related to COVID-19. The call center can be reached by members of the public Monday through Friday from 7:45am–4:30pm at (608) 240-5700.

Grocery store inventories have been especially affected by COVID-19 as people seek to keep a two-week supply of food and necessities. Consequently, on March 14<sup>th</sup>, the governor directed the Department of Transportation (DOT) to issue COVID-19 Relief Effort Supply Permits for transporting inventory to grocery retailers affected by COVID-19. The permits allow for additional supplies to be efficiently transported over Wisconsin interstates and most highways and local roadways by increasing weight limits and waiving truck driver hours of service limitations. More information can be found on DOT's website [here](#). The governor [previously extended](#) this order for the duration of the public health emergency. On April 10<sup>th</sup>, the governor directed the DOT to issue new emergency oversize and overweight permits that incorporate permits issued under the previous order. Under the [governor's order](#), agricultural products, medical supplies, warehouse goods, and all freight supplying any of the federally-defined 16 critical infrastructure sectors fall under the new permits, which authorize gross vehicle weights up to 90,000 pounds. More information can be found on the DOT website [here](#).

Gov. Evers has also directed the DOT to ensure continuation of essential services while addressing the issue of COVID-19 in Wisconsin. To continue to meet legal requirements, while protecting the public and staff, the DOT announced that driver licenses and CDLs that expire during this public health emergency will be automatically extended 60 days. Late fees will be waived. The driver record, visible to law enforcement, will show the extension and that the driver license is valid. Additionally, after a one-day closing period that occurred on Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, to allow staff to deep clean service centers, service centers will reopen on Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, but in-person visits will be restricted to appointments only for the purposes of new drivers licenses or issuing identification cards. To make an appointment, customers can use the Driver License Guide ([wisconsindmv.gov/DLGuide](http://wisconsindmv.gov/DLGuide)). They can also use this guide to begin the paperwork and submit it electronically. Customers with questions may call Driver Services at (608) 264-7447.

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the DOT announced that the Mid-America Association of State Transportation Officers (MAASTO) are coordinating transportation strategies. MAASTO's mission is to foster the development, operation, and maintenance of an integrated and balanced transportation system that adequately serves the transportation needs of its member states: Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, and Ohio. During COVID-19, MAASTO member states are collaborating on permit overweight freight shipments, easing regulations on Commercial Driver License holders, limiting public exposure at motor vehicle service centers, and issuing guidance to contractors. You can view the full announcement [here](#).

In addition to declaring a public health emergency, Executive Order #72 also declares that Wisconsin is experiencing a period of "abnormal economic disruption" because of COVID-19. We are continuing to work to ensure that consumers are protected during this period of economic disruption. This declaration authorizes the DATCP to enforce Wisconsin's [price gouging statute](#) until the emergency has ended. In addition to price gouging, the DATCP remains the agency charged with investigating scams and other fraudulent trade practices in Wisconsin.

On March 25<sup>th</sup>, the DATCP issued cease and desist letters to 16 companies suspected of unlawfully raising prices. Among companies who received a cease and desist letter includes a company suspected of price gouging on N95 masks.

After seeing a recent spike in scam activity relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, the DATCP, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Better Business Bureau hosted a webinar to help increase awareness among consumers about some of these scams. The webinar addressed issues including fake stimulus checks, fraudulent health products, face mask cons, fake charities, phony websites, phone & text scams, phishing emails and more. You can find the DATCP's webinar [here](#), and we would encourage you to share this with your constituents to help protect them from COVID-19-related scams.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Financial Institutions and the DATCP worked together to promote student loan changes pursuant to the CARES Act and to raise awareness about related scams due to the changes. Under the CARES Act, borrowers with federally held student loans will automatically receive a six-month forbearance retroactive to March 13 for eligible loans. No payments will be due and no interest will accrue during this forbearance period, which lasts until September 30. All auto-debit payments will be automatically suspended, but borrowers may want to cancel their autopay via their servicer's website to ensure money is not deducted before the suspension is implemented. If it is, then borrowers can request a refund.

Due to the automatic forbearance, borrowers need to be aware that their repayment terms may be extended, so the final payment date might be six months later than originally planned. The benefits authorized by the CARES Act also do not apply to private (non-federal) student loans owned by banks, credit unions, schools, or other private entities. In addition, some federal student loans under the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program are owned by commercial lenders, including PLUS loans and Stafford loans, and some Perkins Loans are held by the institution or school attended. The FFEL lender or school may choose to suspend interest and payments on a voluntary basis, but they are not required to do so by law. Borrowers should contact their lender or servicer to find out if these options are available to them.

Borrowers must watch out for offers to forgive student loan debt in its entirety or change repayment plans for a fee, as well as requests for other personal information in order to suspend payments in response to COVID-19. For a list of loan servicers, visit the Federal Student Aid website or call the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) at 1-800-433-3243. For up-to-date information regarding federal student loans, visit the Federal Student Aid's "[Coronavirus and Forbearance Information for Students, Borrowers, and Parents](#)" at [StudentAid.gov](#) or call the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) at 1-800-433-3243. To report an issue with a student loan servicer, submit a complaint to the [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau \(CFPB\)](#).

Additionally, the DFI also issued emergency guidance on character and fitness requirements for all payday and licensed lenders in Wisconsin. The DFI cautioned payday and licensed lenders that increasing interest rates, fees or borrowing costs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic could result in license suspension or revocation. Find DFI's release and guidance [here](#). On April 13<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers directed the DFI to issue emergency guidance on prohibited debt collection practices for debt collectors in Wisconsin. You can read the DFI's emergency guidance [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers directed the DFI to issue guidance on adjustment service companies. The DFI also urged caution to Wisconsinites seeking hire a company to help them tackle their debts. In light of the financial distress caused by the [COVID-19](#) pandemic, DFI encouraged Wisconsinites to work with licensed adjustment service companies that have agreed to comply with Wisconsin law requiring low fees,

honest advertising, and character and fitness. To learn more, read DFI's [Guidance on Unlicensed Adjustment Service Companies](#) and view a list of [licensed adjustment service companies](#) in Wisconsin.

Our agencies have continued working to ensure Wisconsin's consumers are protected as we have seen increased attempts at scammers taking advantage of this crisis. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Commissioner Afaible issued guidance and information on avoiding insurance fraud. Please assist us in reminding folks that if they are unsure about the insurance company or agent, they should stop before signing any paperwork or issuing payment and confirm that the company or agent offering the insurance product is legitimate and licensed to sell insurance in our state. Consumers can look up agents and companies by visiting [this website](#) from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners.

If you receive any constituent contacts related to suspected scams, fraud, false marketing claims, price gouging or other consumer complaints related to COVID-19, please refer those contacts to the DATCP's Consumer Protection Hotline at [DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov) or (800) 422-7128, or have them file an [online complaint](#).

Additionally, March 31<sup>st</sup>, the DFI issued guidance on how to avoid fraudulent investment schemes, especially in light of federal relief payments available to eligible individuals. In particular, DFI warned investors to be on the lookout for investments specifically tied to the threat of COVID-19. Bad actors can be expected to develop schemes that falsely purport to raise capital for companies manufacturing surgical masks and gowns, producing ventilators and other medical equipment, distributing small-molecule drugs and other preventative pharmaceuticals, or manufacturing vaccines and miracle cures. The schemes often appear legitimate because they draw upon current news, medical reports and social and political developments.

Scammers also will seek to take advantage of concerns with the volatility in the securities markets to promote "safe" investments with "guaranteed returns" including investments tied to gold, silver and other commodities; oil and gas; and real estate. Investors also can expect to see "get rich quick" schemes that tout quickly earned guaranteed returns that can be used to pay for rent, utilities or other expenses. These schemes also target retirees and senior citizens, falsely claiming they can quickly and safely recoup any losses to their retirement portfolios.

Investors should also contact DFI with questions about any investment opportunity or the person offering it for sale before investing in the product. For more information, visit [www.wdfi.org](http://www.wdfi.org), or call DFI's Division of Securities at (608) 266-2139.

Although the governor issued previous mass gatherings orders and his "safer at home" order, the governor has consistently encouraged folks to continue to get outside, take walks, and be physically active while shrinking social circles and practicing social distancing. To this end, on March 24<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) also announced that fees would be waived for all Wisconsin State Parks and Trails that continue to remain open to the public. While the fees are waived, we are still encouraging people to maintain physical distance and not to congregate around restrooms or other facilities.

As has been indicated since fee waivers were announced, the DNR was monitoring on-the-ground circumstances each day to determine whether park closures would become necessary. Given significant increased visitors to state parks across the state, on April 9<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers directed the DNR to close 40 state parks, forests, and rest areas. You can find a list of the closed parks [here](#). Over the weekend of April 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, state parks, forests, and rest areas saw historic increases in the volume of visitors. Several state parks had record attendance during the weekend of April 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>:

- Governor Dodge had 11,330 visitors between April 3<sup>rd</sup> and April 6<sup>th</sup> compared to 2,100 for the same dates last year.
- High Cliff had an estimated 16,457 visitors.
  - By comparison, that's nine times more visitors than those same dates last year during which High Cliff had 1,789 visitors.
- Lapham Peak had an estimated 11,168 visitors.
- Kohler-Andrae had an estimated 8,469 visitors.
- Devil's Lake had an estimated 7,647 visitors.
  - Wardens reported continued issues of people passing each other on the trails and sidewalks within 6 feet of each other, especially as trails in many places are 2.5' wide rendering it impossible to maintain social distance.
- Richard Bong had an estimated 3,884 visitors.
- Potawatomi State Park had an estimated 2,065 visitors.
  - By comparison, that's more than three times the number of visitors last year at 598, and in 2018 at 668 visitors.
- Mirror Lake had an estimated 2,870 visitors.
- Harrington Beach had an estimated 3,639 visitors for the weekend and has had more than 5,600 estimated visitors so far for the month of April.
  - By comparison, the average monthly visitor count at Harrington for the past 12 years is 9,695 for the entire month of April.

We recognize that many were hoping that Wisconsin's state parks, forests, and recreational areas would continue to remain open during the public health emergency and the governor's "safer at home" order; however, the governor's top priority has been and continues to be keeping people safe. Given the volume of visitors, maintaining social distancing and separation became untenable, and therefore a concern for peoples' health and safety.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers directed the DNR to reopen 34 state parks and forests that had previously been closed due to unprecedented visitors on April 10<sup>th</sup>. The parks will reopen on May 1, 2020 under special conditions to help minimize overcrowding, allow for social distancing requirements, and ensure visitor health and safety. Beginning May 1<sup>st</sup>, there will be admission requirement and hours of operation changes, include (find the full list of requirements and information [here](#)):

- An annual park sticker and/or trail pass will be required to visit state parks and trails.
- Annual passes will not be available for purchase at individual properties.
- Annual stickers will be available for purchase with credit card by phone 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. seven days a week by calling toll free: 1-888-305-0398.
- State parks and forests will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, a change from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.
- Northern Forests, Flowages, Lower Wisconsin Riverway, and Wild Rivers will be open 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. seven days a week (for a full listing of specific properties, see the list [here](#)).
- Restrooms at all state properties will be closed as well as towers, shelters, playgrounds, nature centers, among other facilities.
- Hunting and fishing will be allowed on all open properties in accordance with legal season structure and hours. Access to some areas may be limited to walk-in or water access only.
- At times, many properties will likely reach their pre-determined safety capacity. When this happens, visitors may be denied entry to the park until existing visitors leave. Visitors are encouraged to explore other DNR recreation areas or visit during non-peak hours before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m.
- Camping, group camps and shelters will remain closed until May 26.

A map of open properties can be found, downloaded, and printed [here](#). Capital Springs and Cross Plains were among the 40 state parks and forests that were previously closed. Those state parks were reopened prior to the DNR's announcement on April 28<sup>th</sup> as they are managed cooperatively with multiple partners and municipalities. Gibraltar Rock, Pewit's Nest, Parfrey's Glen, and Dells of the Wisconsin River were also among the 40 state parks and forests previously closed and will remain closed as there continue to be concerns about allowing social distancing practices and ensuring safety for visitors.

The DNR continues to receive the most up-to-date information and will adjust operations as conditions change. We will also continue to monitor on-the-ground circumstances each day to determine if more park closures or an entire state park system closure becomes necessary. Before visiting other properties, please check with [individual parks](#) regarding changes to park operations.

In an effort to help ensure emergency responders and firefighters can continue to assist in responding to COVID-19, on March 26<sup>th</sup>, the DNR announced they are taking proactive measures to prevent wildfires this spring. The DNR is suspending burning permits and all burning of debris in barrels, burning of debris piles on the ground, grass, or wooded areas is prohibited at this time. On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the DNR also announced it is prioritizing responding to imminent threats or complaints relating to public health, safety, and the environment. The regulated community can go [here](#) for information on environmental compliance and to request case-by-case assistance due to compliance issues relating to COVID-19.

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, Gov. Tony Evers today announced the suspension of certain administrative rules pertaining to certification renewal deadlines, examinations and continuing education requirements for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources-certified waterworks, septage servicing, water system, and wastewater treatment plant operators. Emergency Order #30 is available [here](#). The order recognizes that waterworks, septage servicing, water system and wastewater treatment plant operations are part of Wisconsin's essential infrastructure as defined in the Safer at Home Order, and ensures that Wisconsin residents and businesses will continue to be provided with clean drinking water, and have their wastewater treated and septage systems services by experienced operators. The order is effective immediately will remain in effect for the duration of the public health emergency as declared in Executive Order #72.

We continue to be concerned the effect of the COVID-19 public health emergency on our farmers and the dairy industry amid concerns about milk disposal. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the DATCP sent [a letter](#) urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture to step in and assist during this crisis. The letter requests that USDA purchase surplus commodities for redistribution to food banks, nutrition assistance programs, and other sources in an effort to divert Wisconsin's nutritious commodities to Americans who need them. Additionally, DATCP asks USDA to re-open the enrollment of the Dairy Margin Coverage program.

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, the DATCP announced a partnership with Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin and Hunger Task Force to help provide relief to underfed and unemployed by connecting milk to emergency food organizations throughout the state. With the substantial support of the local individual donor community during the COVID-19 pandemic, Hunger Task Force will commit up to \$1 million to the newly created Wisconsin Dairy Recovery Program. Wisconsin dairy farmers will be paid to supply milk to farmer-owned dairy cooperative Kemps, who will kick off the beginning phase by processing thousands of gallons of milk at its Cedarburg, Wisconsin, facility. Hunger Task Force will distribute milk to Free & Local partner food banks and food pantries through the Hunger Relief Federation of Wisconsin, a statewide association that supports food distribution in local communities. Funds committed to the recovery will be used to purchase, process, and distribute milk and dairy products.

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the DATCP announced it is partnering with the Wisconsin Pork Association (WPA) called “Passion for Pork” to connect Wisconsin pork producers to local meat processors, consumers and the growing number of people experiencing food insecurity during COVID-19. WPA and DATCP are connecting Wisconsin pork producers with smaller, local meat processors who are extending their hours of operation to process and package the pork to help meet the growing demand for food bank and food pantry resources. Wisconsin food banks are getting the pork into the hands of those in need.

The program kicked off earlier this week with the delivery of 60 hogs for harvest to People’s Meat Market, a local meat processor and program member in Stevens Point. The whole hog carcass is then broken down into smaller portions for further processing and packaging at Windsor-based Neesvig’s Meats, another program member. Along with shipping the processed pork to food banks and food pantries, the local meat processors also sell the pork at their retail stores. Additionally, Neesvig’s hopes to offer pick up of various products at several different sites including their processing plant in Windsor in the next few weeks. The hogs for “Passion for Pork” are being supplied by Wisconsin pig farmers, however, there are significant costs associated with the processing, storage, and delivery of the pork to food banks and pantries. WPA is currently accepting donations from the public to support the continued operation of this program. Donations to the Passion for Pork can be mailed to: Passion for Pork, c/o Peoples State Bank, P.O. Box 218, Bloomington, WI 53804.

Following [new guidance](#) issued by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the Small Business Administration (SBA), the DATCP and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) are notifying the state’s farmers about the opportunity to apply for the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The PPP provides small businesses with loans to pay up to eight weeks of payroll costs, including benefits. The funding can also be used to pay interest on mortgages, rent, and utilities. Loans will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Agricultural producers are eligible and can get started on the application now. An [overview of the PPP program](#), [information for prospective borrowers](#), and the [application for borrowers can be found online](#). For questions on the Paycheck Protection Program, applicants should contact the Lender Relations Specialist in their local SBA Field Office. The local SBA Field Office can be found [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the DATCP, in partnership with the DHS, issued guidance for testing animals for COVID-19. Currently, routine testing of animals is not recommended, and any tests done on animals will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Human-to-animal transmission events are believed to be rare, and there is no specific treatment for animals diagnosed with a COVID-19 infection, so testing will not alter clinical management. Decisions to test animals for COVID-19 will be made using a One Health approach. The Centers for Disease Control Prevention (CDC) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released guidance for [evaluation of SARS-CoV-2 testing in animals](#). Wisconsin animal and public health officials will use the criteria outlined by our federal partners as one component of the decision making process. Other considerations include local and state resources needed for sample collection; if there is a cluster of animal illnesses; if the animal was exposed to a cluster of human illnesses; and if other diagnostic testing has already been performed. The DATCP’s guidance can be found [here](#).

The DFI is continuing to work with financial institutions in responding and adapting to COVID-19. The DFI previously announced emergency guidance on remote online notarization to allow people across Wisconsin to access notarization services while ensuring the integrity of the notarization process. The DFI’s emergency guidance can be found [here](#). At the direction of Gov. Evers, on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the DFI issued emergency guidance on annual meeting requirements for businesses formed under statutes administered by DFI in Wisconsin. This emergency guidance applies to entities formed under Chapters 178 to 188, 214, 215, and 220 to 223 of the Wisconsin Statutes. To learn more, read DFI’s [Emergency Guidance on Virtual Annual Meetings](#).

Gov. Evers, our staff, and our administration worked to secure U.S. SBA Disaster Assistance. This was a top priority for the WEDC and WEM and they actively worked to collect all the needed information from regional economic development directors across the state in order to make the SBA declaration request.

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, the WEDC announced a \$5-million grant program, Small Business 20/20, which will provide grants of up to \$20,000 to targeted businesses with 20 employees or less to cover rent and meet payroll expenses, including paid leave. The grants will be deployed by partnering with state's 23 community development financial institutions (CDFIs). Because the CDFIs have pre-existing relationships with many of these small businesses, CDFIs will be able to provide the grants quickly and directly to their clients. Find more information on Small Business 20/20 [here](#).

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced that the SBA approved Wisconsin's request for small businesses affected by COVID-19 to access low-interest federal disaster loans. Under the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, businesses and non-profits may qualify for up to \$2 million in loans to cover losses resulting from the pandemic. The interest rate on the loans is 3.75% for for-profit businesses and 2.75% for nonprofits. Participants may be able to extend payments for up to 30 years.

Businesses and non-profits can begin their loan applications at [www.sba.gov/disaster](http://www.sba.gov/disaster). The [Wisconsin Small Business Development \(SBDC\) Network](#) and its partners are helping small businesses apply for federal disaster loans to mitigate the substantial economic injury as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Wisconsin SBDC, a resource partner of the SBA, has created a web page to help business owners understand the qualifications and application process. That web page is available [here](#).

On March 21<sup>st</sup>, Gov. Evers and the Department of Revenue (DOR) announced they are extending income tax payment and return due dates to July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. See more details on the extension [here](#). The DOR has also released some frequently asked questions about tax filing deadlines. That document can be found [here](#). On March 28<sup>th</sup>, the DOR announced measures to help small businesses with sales tax payments due on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Small businesses can immediately request an extension to file sales and use tax returns due March 31, 2020 until April 30, 2020, and returns due April 30, 2020 until June 1, 2020. Requests can be sent to [DORregistration@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DORregistration@wisconsin.gov). You can find the DOR's full release with additional details [here](#). On April 13<sup>th</sup>, the DOR announced filing and payment deadline dates will conform with recently released IRS Notice 2020-23, which makes it easier for taxpayers to comply, moving deadlines for filings and payments due between April 1, 2020 and July 15, 2020 to July 15, 2020. The new guidance includes extensions for filing returns, return payments, estimated payments of income/franchise and pass-through withholding tax; waiver of underpayment interest; federal economic impact payments.

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the governor signed Emergency Order #33 suspending rules to allow for social distancing during business transactions. Administrative Rules Wis. Admin. Section TAX 7.01(5)(f), 8.21(2)(g), and 9.47(1)(e) which require signatures for the receipt of fermented malt beverages, intoxicating liquor, and cigarettes, respectively, were suspended for the duration of the health emergency. This suspension allows for distributors to conduct daily business, while still maintaining social distancing and other recommended public health guidelines. Current administrative rules require retailers to sign for deliveries of alcohol beverages, cigarettes and tobacco products. It is difficult to obtain signatures and maintain social distancing. Allowing flexibility for other types of delivery acknowledgements, like emails, are a better way to engage in business without putting critical employees at risk. Additionally, Administrative Rules Wis. Admin. §§ TAX 61.08(11)(c), 61.04(1)(d) also temporarily suspends minimum sales requirements for lottery retailers to allow them to focus on the safety of customers and staff. The suspension waives the requirement that retailers must sell \$1,200 worth of lottery products quarterly in order to remain a licensed Wisconsin Lottery retailer.

Additionally, the Department of Tourism (Tourism) has been working to support industry partners who have been significantly affected during the COVID-19 pandemic. On April 15<sup>th</sup>, the governor announced he suspended provisions of the Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) grant program, providing greater flexibility for how grants can be administered to help restart Wisconsin's tourism economy. JEM grants provide partnership funding to help nonprofit Wisconsin organizations promote tourism in their area, including 501(c)(6) organizations like Convention and Visitor Bureaus and Chambers of Commerce that were not earmarked for relief and may not qualify for certain loan programs included in the federal CARES Act. To apply for Joint Effort Marketing Grants, visit <http://industry.travelwisconsin.com/grants/joint-effort-marketing-jem-grant-program>.

Although travel restrictions have delayed marketing plans for the upcoming season, Tourism has been highlighting the work of local businesses and business owners, families, and communities here in Wisconsin that are essential in the tourism industry across our state finding important ways to help during this difficult time. In March, Tourism announced its #HowWiHelp initiative to underscore the work of folks across our state. You can find a landing page of #HowWiHelp [here](#).

Additionally, on March 18<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers issued an emergency order waiving work search and modifying availability requirements for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits for workers affected by COVID-19. Gov. Evers' order waives the requirement that (UI) claimants conduct at least four weekly search actions during the COVID-19 emergency while ensuring that claimants are considered available for work (and therefore eligible for benefits) if they are eligible for but out of work due to COVID-19.

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) has experienced unprecedented numbers of UI claims filed in recent weeks. From March 15<sup>th</sup> when DWD began to see the effects of Governor Evers' declared public health emergency, to March 30<sup>th</sup>, 222,271 initial claims for benefits were filed. During the same period last year, we had 12,982. For context, the 115,679 new applications filed last week was more than twice the amount than any week during the Great Recession. You can find the latest daily claim filing numbers [here](#). As of April 29<sup>th</sup>, the UI division had received 479,596 applications and distributed more than \$290 million in state unemployment benefits since March 15<sup>th</sup>. On May 4<sup>th</sup>, the DWD announced new information on unemployment data. As of May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the DWD had received 498,297 unemployment applications and has distributed more than \$380 million in total benefits paid.

Even with these system improvements, the historic number of first-time filers are overwhelming DWD's Help Center. The current staff are working overtime and the DWD is working to bring on additional staff to address the load. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UI call center consisted of 57 employees. The UI Division has since reassigned another 35 its employees to the call center and has reached out to former employees to see if any are interested in helping. On March 30<sup>th</sup>, the DWD trained another 40 staff from the Division of Employment and Training to answer phones, help with general inquiries, and take initial and weekly claims from people unable to use the internet. The DWD has also identified 90 additional staff from within DWD and other state agencies to answer calls, respond to claimant emails, and process paperwork and system rejection, and the Department of Personnel Management (DPM), the DOC, the DOT, and the DATCP have transitioned 16 of their employees to the UI call center. The DWD is hoping to hire an additional 267 people. The DWD also put out a recruitment to hire 36 claim specialists and have already received over 500 applications.

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the DWD announced the DOA approved its request for 25 additional positions to help process the unprecedented number of claims for UI. The DWD is working quickly to hire, train, and onboard these employees as quickly as possible.

We ask that you please urge your constituents to first attempt to file online if at all possible [here](#) so that the phone lines are open for people who have been specifically instructed to call DWD or for those people who do not have access to a computer or internet. Applying online remains the most efficient method of application. Over 99% of the people who have applied during that time frame have been able to successfully start, complete, and file their claim for unemployment benefits.

In April, the governor signed 2019 Act 185, which temporarily suspended the one-week waiting period for UI benefits. The legislation suspends the state's one-week waiting period to allow claimants to receive UI benefits beginning with their first week of eligibility through February 7, 2021. The DWD announced on April 21<sup>st</sup> that it would be paying retroactive UI benefits to 154,332 individuals that week. Waiting week payments will be disbursed over a three-day period, beginning on April 21<sup>st</sup>. All claimants who established an initial claim during or after the week of March 15 will now receive payment for the waiting week served. For more information please see <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/fpuc/>.

2019 Act 185 also makes several changes to current requirements in Wisconsin's Work-Share Program, one of which reduces the number of positions a work-share plan must cover. Under the new law, work-share plans must cover at least two positions that are filled on the effective date of the work-share program, rather than the greater of 20 positions or 10% of employees in a work unit under the previous requirements. Employers may also now reduce hours by up to 60 percent of the normal hours per week of the employees, rather than the current 50 percent. On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the DWD announced it is encouraging employers to avoid layoffs by participating in Wisconsin's updated Work-Share Program to avoid worker layoffs. By participating in the Work-Share Program, employers will be able to retain their trained staff during the times of reduced business activity, allowing them to be ready as soon as the business reopens. In March, Sec. Frostman reminded employers that a Work-Share plan could help mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on their workforce. Wisconsin now has 63 active work share plans with 3,384 participants. Under the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Wisconsin will receive 100 percent of the costs incurred for paying these benefits through December 31, 2020.

The DWD announced it as started disbursing Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) payments on April 29<sup>th</sup>. FPUC is a temporary emergency increase of \$600 per week in unemployment benefits. FPUC provides additional payment to individuals who are collecting benefits from ANY of the following programs:

- Regular Unemployment Insurance (UI), including:
  - Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE)
  - Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members (UCX)
  - Partial Unemployment Compensation
- [Pandemic Unemployment Assistance \(PUA\)](#)
- [Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation \(PEUC\)](#)
- [Work-Share \(STC\)](#)
- [Trade Readjustment Allowances \(TRA\)](#)

Claimants do not need to take any action to receive the additional \$600-per-week benefit; the payment will be automatically added to their benefit payments. This means that if a person has a pending unemployment application or are currently receiving unemployment benefits, no action needs to be taken, so long as their circumstances have not changed, the individual remains eligible for benefits under one of the programs above, and they can continue to file a weekly claim. An individual will receive the \$600 benefit in the same way they receive regular unemployment benefit.

For individuals who established a claim before April 4, 2020, the benefit will be retroactively provided from the week ending April 4, 2020, UI week 14/20. Note that the \$600 FPUC benefit will not affect

income eligibility, as it is not considered earned income. The \$600 is not based on weekly benefit rate. If an individual is eligible for some type of UI benefit as listed above, then they are eligible for the full \$600 in addition to the unemployment benefits they are due. This is a temporary benefit and the last payable week in Wisconsin will conclude the week ending July 25, 2020. For more information, please visit <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/fpuc/>.

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, the DWD experienced a technological malfunction that disbursed double FPUC direct deposit payments processed to 39,181 claimants late Wednesday night. DWD learned of the error from a claimant who reported the overpayment around 11:15 a.m. Thursday and took action to reverse all direct deposits by 1 p.m. Only deposits made to US Bank accounts were processed before DWD recovered the payments because those who do not bank at US Bank were scheduled to receive their direct deposit Friday.

DWD confirmed a programming error Thursday afternoon and worked with US Bank to redistribute retroactive FPUC benefits Thursday night so all claimants received benefits Friday morning. This includes US Bank customers and customers of other financial institutions. US Bank also agreed to waive any overdraft charges on affected members' accounts. The DWD continues to evaluate the system to identify and address any outstanding issues.

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, the DWD announced that it is helping connect unemployed job seekers with essential business employers and those offering essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although those displaced from employment due to COVID-19 are not required to look for work to receive unemployment benefits, some may be interested in earning additional income and possibly extending their unemployment benefits. Unemployment benefits may still be paid to individuals working part-time; while wages earned may reduce the weekly benefit, it can extend the amount of time one receives benefits.

DWD has created a webpage to connect job seekers to the in-demand jobs posted on [JobCenterofWisconsin.com](http://JobCenterofWisconsin.com). These jobs include healthcare occupations like registered nurses and pharmacists, but also transportation and material moving occupations, such as laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, and light truck or delivery service drivers who help transport supplies, food, and other products that still need to be delivered to grocery stores, restaurants, and hospitals. Visit [wisconsinjobcenter.org/lookforjobs/in-demand.htm](http://wisconsinjobcenter.org/lookforjobs/in-demand.htm) to connect to in-demand jobs in Wisconsin.

Employers looking to connect with job seekers can post positions for free on [JobCenterofWisconsin.com](http://JobCenterofWisconsin.com), Wisconsin's free online job search tool. Both employers and job seekers can connect on the site without charge. Employers who need assistance posting jobs on [JobCenterofWisconsin.com](http://JobCenterofWisconsin.com) can email [JobCenterofWisconsin@dwd.wi.gov](mailto:JobCenterofWisconsin@dwd.wi.gov) or call (888) 258-9966 to connect with a Business Services Representative.

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the DWD announced that many of its resources relating to COVID-19 are now available in Spanish and Hmong in addition to English. Updated resource materials include areas such as the Unemployment Insurance Division, information on job center updates, assistance with [jobcenterofwisconsin.com](http://jobcenterofwisconsin.com), apprenticeship information, layoff notice requirements, sick leave, and FMLA, among others. Those resources can be found on DWD's [website](#). On April 13<sup>th</sup>, the DWD announced its website is now updated with [more information](#) on the Federal CARES Act, including additional information for regular claimants, PUA claimants and those seeking extended unemployment benefits.

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, the DWD called for employers of migrant and seasonal workers to adhere to directives issued by the DHS to ensure the safety of workers and security of the state's food supply chain. COVID-

19 can spread easily in settings with many people living in close proximity to each other. As such, farm owners and managers who provide housing and transportation for migrant workers should implement plans to prevent exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19, care for individuals with COVID-19, and prevent the spread of the disease. The order includes requirements for migrant farm employers and camp operators like disinfecting high-touch common areas daily, make reasonable efforts to separate beds in dormitory or barracks-style housing by at least six feet, among other important requirements. A copy of the order can be found [here](#).

On March 19<sup>th</sup>, the Wisconsin National Guard announced that it has mobilized approximately 300 troops to help provide further state support, if needed. The Wisconsin National Guard's action was pursuant to Gov. Evers' [executive order](#) declaring a state of emergency, at which time he authorized the Adjutant General to activate the Wisconsin National Guard as necessary to help assist the state's response to the public health emergency. See the Wisconsin National Guard's announcement [here](#).

There have been continued concerns about the Wisconsin National Guard and military enforcement relating to COVID-19. We hope that you will continue to assist us in dispelling this misinformation. The Wisconsin National Guard has published some [clarifying information](#) about its role in helping our state respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the Wisconsin National Guard announced it assumed two new missions this week as part of the state's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A still to-be-determined number of Citizen Soldiers and Airmen from the Wisconsin National Guard will serve as polling site workers at polling locations across Wisconsin. Meanwhile, administrative and medic personnel are helping to staff three separate voluntary self-isolation facilities in Milwaukee and Madison.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services is managing two of the self-isolation facilities, while a third is being run by the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County. There are 12 troops assigned at each of the two state-run self-isolation facilities working in shifts to augment staff there, while nearly 30 Wisconsin National Guard personnel are helping staff a Milwaukee-run facility. Those teams are providing administrative support and medical monitoring at each site for individuals who would otherwise be unable to effectively self-isolate.

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, the Wisconsin National Guard announced 25 troops are supporting a Milwaukee County isolation facility for Milwaukee's homeless population. The City of Milwaukee Health Department and the Milwaukee County Housing Division designated Clare Hall on the Saint Francis de Sales Seminary grounds in St. Francis as an isolation facility for referrals from area homeless shelters and healthcare facilities that have individuals with housing instability. The initiative is part of the Milwaukee County Unified Emergency Operations Center. The Wisconsin National Guard is staffing the facility with a team of ten medics and fifteen other Citizen Soldiers to provide administrative and operational support. Each team will be rotating staff to provide 24/7 coverage.

The Wisconsin National Guard also received a request for assistance from the Wisconsin Elections Commission to provide personnel to staff polling sites at locations around the state for the upcoming April 7 election. The Wisconsin National Guard continues to work with state elections officials to determine how many Citizen Soldiers and Airmen will be needed to staff the polls and where they will be needed. The Guard members will serve in civilian clothes and not be in uniform at the polls, and they will be there to augment existing volunteers, poll workers and local elections officials, who will continue administering their own polling locations.

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the Wisconsin National Guard announced that more than 2,400 Citizen Soldiers and Airmen were mobilized to state active duty Sunday and to serve as poll workers in Wisconsin's election. The troops gathered on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020, to complete Wisconsin Elections Commission-approved training for poll workers and other polling station roles, received assignments from county or municipal clerks, and assisted with polling place setup. Guard members reside in all 72 Wisconsin counties and served in the county in which they reside wearing civilian clothes and serving in the roles of traditional poll workers. The Guard members served at polls in 71 of Wisconsin's 72 counties to support the Wisconsin Elections Commission and clerks due to the shortage of poll workers.

The DHS requested Wisconsin National Guard support to establish additional specimen collection and COVID-19 mobile testing site capacities around the state. The Guard's specimen collection teams will serve in a support role to Wisconsin DHS and local health departments, who provide guidance on who will be eligible for testing and will determine in which communities specimen collection sites will be established. The DHS will work with the local health department and local communities to ensure testing plans and procedures are communicated to local residents. Personnel from the Wisconsin National Guard will staff the mobile testing sites and conduct the specimen collections.

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, the Wisconsin National Guard announced it dispatched a team to a senior living facility in Sheboygan to establish a mobile testing site and perform COVID-19 specimen collection. Approximately 30 Citizen Soldiers and Airmen, who were among the approximately 350 mobilized when the governor declared a public health emergency, tested Sunny Ridge Nursing and Rehabilitation Center facility staff and residents in support of the DHS and the Sheboygan County Division of Public Health. The group consisted of Soldiers and Airmen from the Wisconsin Army National Guard's Whitewater-based 457th Chemical Company, the Waukesha-based 135th Medical Company, and the Wisconsin Air National Guard's 115th Fighter Wing in Madison. The Guard team collected more than 150 specimens from staff and residents.

The Wisconsin National Guard established drive-thru specimen collection for facility staff before moving inside to collect samples from residents in support of the Sheboygan County Division of Public Health.

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, the Wisconsin National Guard announced a team of nearly 30 Wisconsin National Guard troops was sent Saturday to the Milwaukee County House of Corrections in Franklin to establish a mobile COVID-19 testing site to collect specimens from staff and inmates there. Milwaukee County requested the Wisconsin National Guard's assistance after the facility reported multiple cases, and the Wisconsin National Guard will collect specimens from approximately 950 staff and inmates. The specimens will be sent to a state lab for analysis. Additionally, two teams are operating at local health clinics that began the week of April 20. An additional team began testing at a food processing facility in Milwaukee on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

On April 20<sup>th</sup>, the National Guard announced that approximately 225 additional Citizen Soldiers and Airmen mobilized to establish specimen collection teams in support of Wisconsin's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Previously, the Guard had three specimen collection teams already established that began training as part of the initial complement of Wisconsin National Guard troops mobilized in the wake of the public health emergency Gov. Tony Evers declared March 12 amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Those three teams have already been active in establishing mobile testing sites upon request.

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, one team tested more than 270 staff and residents at the Orchard Manor senior living facility in Lancaster, Grant County. From April 24-27, a Guard specimen collection team tested more than 1,000 staff and inmates at the Dane County Jail in Madison, Wisconsin. The Guard also completed two separate specimen collection missions April 25 at a senior living facility in Lancaster, Wisconsin, and a

seasonal staff dormitory in Lake Delton, Wisconsin. Additionally, another team established a collection site at the Kenosha County Detention Center April 28.

As of April 29<sup>th</sup>, there are 11 specimen collection teams comprised of more than 300 citizen soldiers and airmen, establishing mobile testing sites at locations ranging from correctional facilities and health clinics, to private businesses, and community-based testing sites.

A community-based mobile testing site began operations on April 29<sup>th</sup> in Sauk County. One team is in Buffalo County in Alma for community-based testing beginning May 1<sup>st</sup>. Drive-thru testing is available at Buffalo County Highway Shop, S1672 WI-37, Alma, WI 54610 from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Any Wisconsin resident experiencing COVID-19 symptoms is welcome at this site. You can get additional information [here](#). Nearly 200 people took advantage of the community-based testing site by the end of the day on May 1<sup>st</sup>. In Brown County two teams are on site: one team is on site at a food processing facility that began April 28, and a second team that began operations at the Resch Center April 30 for focused-community testing for select businesses and their families.

On May 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, the teams also began operating in Turtle Lake, Barron County, at the St. Croix Casino Campground; Burlington, Racine County, at a food processing facility; Platteville, Grant County, at a factory.

As of April 20<sup>th</sup>, since Gov. Evers signed Executive Order 72 activating the Wisconsin National Guard, more than 1,000 guardsmembers have been deployed to assist in the COVID-19 response. As of April 30<sup>th</sup>, the Wisconsin National Guard teams have collected more than 5,000 specimens statewide. As of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Wisconsin National Guard teams had collected nearly 6,250 specimens statewide.

The governor and our office have also been working with U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin to help secure federal funding to support our efforts in responding to COVID-19 in Wisconsin. On March 11<sup>th</sup>, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced that Wisconsin would be receiving more than \$10.2 million to support our response and prevention efforts for COVID-19. Gov. Evers and our administration are working quickly to determine how to best allocate these resources toward prevention and response across our state.

Gov. Evers also regularly participates in discussions with Vice President Mike Pence and senior administration officials to receive updates on the White House Coronavirus Task Force and to share how Wisconsin and other states are responding to COVID-19. Addressing public health issues like COVID-19 requires collaboration and communication to ensure efforts are efficient and effective. Members of Gov. Evers' administration have been in regular contact with other elected officials and partners at the local, state, and federal levels, and are continuing to work together on preventing and responding to COVID-19. On March 14<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers sent a letter to U.S. Sens. Ron Johnson and Tammy Baldwin requesting their support for the bipartisan legislation moving through Congress that will provide free coronavirus testing, paid emergency leave, bolsters food security programs, and enhances unemployment insurance, among other important initiatives to help support our state's efforts to respond to COVID-19.

The CARES Act was ultimately signed by President Trump on March 27<sup>th</sup>. As you know, the federal CARES Act included funding for state, local, and tribal governments, including the Coronavirus Relief Fund. These funds will be critical to funding the state's efforts to mitigate and contain the coronavirus. We are still waiting for federal guidance from Treasury, which is needed to know what expenses may be eligible for this new funding. In an update from Treasury as of April 22<sup>nd</sup>, we were told that they are still working on guidance at this time. We received guidance from Treasury late on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. We are continuing to review this new guidance for federal funding via the CARES Act.

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, the governor sent [a letter](#) to FEMA requesting that the president issue a major disaster declaration for the entire state of Wisconsin, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The request covers all 72 counties and the state's federally recognized tribes. Having determined that Wisconsin met all of the criteria required to receive a major disaster declaration, Gov. Evers in his letter requested that the federal government provide the following programs to support the state's response: Public Assistance, Direct Assistance, Hazard Mitigation (statewide), and certain Individual Assistance programs; Crisis Counseling, Community Disaster Loans and the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Program. On April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020, we received notification that President Trump has approved our major disaster declaration; however, a few areas relating to individual assistance remain under review. We will continue to provide updates as we have them.

As you are likely aware, 38 Wisconsinites were aboard the Grand Princess cruise ship, which was quarantined due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Gov. Evers, the Wisconsin National Guard, and the DHS, in collaboration with partners at the federal level, have been working with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the White House to get the necessary information we need to bring these Wisconsinites home as quickly and safely as possible. Through direct outreach by the DHS and calls into the governor's office, we have also learned from passengers and family members concerning reports about conditions and that some passengers have needed medical accommodations. Our team worked with the HHS to improve conditions and get those accommodations and medications to the passengers as soon as possible.

Initially, the HHS communicated to the governor's office that HHS would transport passengers to Wisconsin at which time the Wisconsin National Guard would transport passengers to their homes for self-isolation. Given the initial lack of details from HHS, on March 13<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers directed the Wisconsin National Guard to instead develop its own plans to go to all five sites to bring these Wisconsinites home. Nearly 30 Soldiers and Airmen from the Wisconsin National Guard were mobilized to state active duty after the governor declared a public health emergency, and they were standing by to transport the passengers upon landing at the National Guard's Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center in Camp Douglas, Wisconsin.

On March 16<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Evers announced 29 Wisconsin residents who were aboard the Grand Princess cruise ship were safely transported back to Wisconsin around 4:18 am Monday morning. Two other passengers chose to remain in quarantine in Texas under the custody of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), citing personal reasons. Upon return, Adjutant General Paul Knapp welcomed the 29 Wisconsinites home on behalf of Gov. Evers. Passengers received a welcome-home packet which included a letter from the governor, information about their 14 days of quarantine, and how to contact their local health department or the DHS with any questions. The governor's office has also provided direct contact information for our constituent services director to assist in providing support and assistance to help ensure passengers' transition and return to Wisconsin is as seamless and safe as possible. Upon landing at the National Guard's Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center in Camp Douglas, Wisconsin, Guard members transported passengers home in state vans.

As of the morning of March 16<sup>th</sup>, none of the returning 29 Wisconsin citizens have tested positive for COVID-19 and all are asymptomatic, but the residents will follow Center for Disease Control and Wisconsin Department of Health Services protocols and continue to self-quarantine for the requisite 14-day period. The Soldiers and Airmen involved will self-monitor for 14 days upon the conclusion of their mission.

On March 21<sup>st</sup>, Gov. Evers announced another four Wisconsin residents who were aboard the Grand Princess cruise ship were safely transported back to Wisconsin. Wisconsin National Guard personnel were waiting to transport them back to their homes for self-quarantine. Passengers received a welcome-home packet which included a letter from the governor, information about their 14 days of quarantine, and how to contact their local health department or the DHS with any questions. The governor's office has also provided direct contact information for our constituent services director to assist in providing support and assistance to help ensure passengers' transition and return to Wisconsin is as seamless and safe as possible.

Of the original 38 passengers who are Wisconsin residents (aside from the above mentioned two who chose to remain in Texas) three passengers remain in California and will return back to Wisconsin at a later date: two of the passengers remain in U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), custody in California, and one passenger chose to remain in California citing personal reasons.

### **COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AND PREVENTION**

The DHS is encouraging people to limit their interactions to the same people, not different small groups. Shrinking the circle of interactions will help prevent the spread of COVID-19. However, as the governor has specifically mentioned on several occasions, we are still encouraging people to go outside to take a walk, walk the dogs, go for a bike ride, etc.—this is good for everyone's physical and mental health. Beyond this, we are encouraging folks not to take any other unnecessary trips, and to limit travel to essential needs like going to the doctor, grabbing groceries, or getting medication. If it's essential for folks to travel or if they do go outside, we are still asking people to stay 6 feet away from others and shared spaces such as park shelters and visitor centers.

The DHS has also updated their website to include FAQs on preventing exposure to COVID-19 including questions regarding grocery sanitation, mask use, personal hygiene, etc. You can find the most updated guidance [here](#).

Please continue to share information with members of the public on how to prevent illness or avoid exposure to this virus. In the case of COVID-19, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) currently advises that common symptoms include flu-like symptoms (fever (100° F or higher), cough or sore throat, headache or body aches, and in some cases diarrhea and vomiting) or symptoms of respiratory illness (fever (100° F or higher), cough, and shortness of breath).

People with confirmed infections have a range of symptoms, from little to no symptoms to people being severely sick and dying. Symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Body or muscle aches
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

Not everyone with COVID-19 has all of these symptoms. For many, symptoms are mild, with no fever. It is important to know that you can still spread (transmit) the virus to others even if you have mild or no symptoms.

COVID-19 is spread through respiratory droplets that are released when a sick (infected) person coughs, sneezes, or breathes. These droplets can remain in the air and on surfaces for an extended period of time. When people breathe in (inhale) the droplets, or touch surfaces that have been contaminated and then touch their mouth, face, or eyes, the virus can make them sick.

The CDC believes that symptoms of COVID-19 appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after contact with someone who has COVID-19.

Know **emergency warning signs** for COVID-19 and get **medical attention immediately**. Emergency warning signs include\*:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse (wake) a person
- Bluish lips or face

\*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your doctor or medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. You can protect yourself and others by taking preventative measures including:

**Avoid close contact with others and practice social distancing**

- Stay at home as much as possible. Cancel events and avoid groups, gatherings, play dates, and nonessential appointments.
- Avoid gatherings of 10 or more people.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from other people, when possible.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.

**Practice good hand hygiene**

- Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, and mouth when in public.

**If you start to feel sick**

- If you become sick, stay home. Visit our [if you think you are sick webpage](#) for more information.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily (for example, tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles). See [CDC's recommendations for household cleaning and disinfection webpage](#).