



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Mike Rindo

Public Information Officer, Eau Claire COVID-19 response

rindomj@uwec.edu, (715) 201-0339

Eau Claire County Issues Updated Local Health Order to Prevent Spread of COVID-19

Eau Claire, WI – May 18, 2020 3:00 PM - On Wednesday, May 13th, the Wisconsin Supreme Court overturned the state's Safer at Home order. Though Safer at Home is no longer in place, the COVID-19 disease is still present in the Eau Claire community and poses a serious threat to public health. As a result, the Eau Claire City-County Health Department issued the COVID-19 Prevention and Control Order under the authority provided in Wis. Stat. § 252.03 on May 14, 2020.

Today, an updated order was issued that addresses specific guidance for one-on-one personal services. This update comes after public health experts reviewed evidence and best practices for how to protect the public and workers who provide personal services, and are in close proximity for a duration of time.

“We know that employees, employers, and our community members don't want to unknowingly spread COVID-19 in close-contact situations,” said Lieske Giese, Eau Claire City-County Health Department Director. “We really view all of our businesses and community members as partners in this effort to slow the spread of disease in Eau Claire County.”

The intent of the order is to provide a framework in which businesses can be open and community members can resume some normal activities, while protecting our community from the spread of this virus. The details of the order are based on data and best practices. Many of our individuals who tested positive are believed to have gotten sick due to travel outside of our community, mass gatherings, and lack of physical distancing in the work place or other settings. These situations are instances in which it is easy for disease to spread and as a result, much of the order requires a continuation of physical separation of six feet or more, and keeping the number of people gathered in a confined area small.

Some details of the order include:

- Individuals are strongly encouraged to stay at home or their place of residence, minimize travel outside of the county, and keep their number of connections small
- Restrictions for both public spaces and public buildings, such as physical distancing and limitations on the number of people present at one time

- Mass gatherings of more than 10 people are not permitted, but religious gatherings and other 1st Amendment-protected activities are exempt
- Elderly and vulnerable people are encouraged to take additional precautions
- Under this order, all businesses, facilities, playgrounds, campgrounds and other amenities may open and operate unless they are unable to meet and maintain the safety and protection measures outlined in the order
- Use of the WEDC guidance for business reopening by businesses that can meet the requirements of the order
- All people are strongly encouraged to continue maintaining physical distancing, good hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, cleaning high-touch surfaces, not shaking hands, and follow other WI DHS and CDC recommendations

This order goes into effect immediately and will be in effect until 11:59 PM on May 28, 2020. As we continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and evaluate what is needed for the protection of our community members, subsequent orders may be issued that provide additional direction for protecting community health based on public health data and other indicators within our community. The health and safety of all community members remains our highest priority.

The Eau Claire City-County Health Department COVID-19 Prevention and Control Order may be viewed here: <https://www.eauclairewi.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=32539>

We encourage businesses to review these resources for safe reopening:

WEDC Reopening Guidelines: <https://wedc.org/reopen-guidelines/>

Health Department safety checklists: <https://coronavirus-and-covid-19-information-hub-eccounty.hub.arcgis.com/pages/businesses>

Please visit the covid19eauclaire.org website for more information. FAQs will be posted to the website as they are available. Questions from the public may be directed to the COVID-19 Call Center: 715-831-7425.

###