



## Dunn County Health Department

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## Health Alert –COVID-19

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**COVID-19 is a public health emergency both nationally and locally.** In approximately December of 2019, a novel virus known as the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2), causing the disease known as coronavirus (COVID-19), was detected. It has spread throughout the world and every state in the United States of America. To date there have been 2,085769 cases of COVID-19, an increase of 21,957 cases over yesterday in the United States of America. State wide, there have been 22,932 cases of COVID-19, an increase of 174 case over yesterday in Wisconsin. In Dunn County, there have been 29 cases of COVID-19. We are grateful that this number has not increased for seven days.

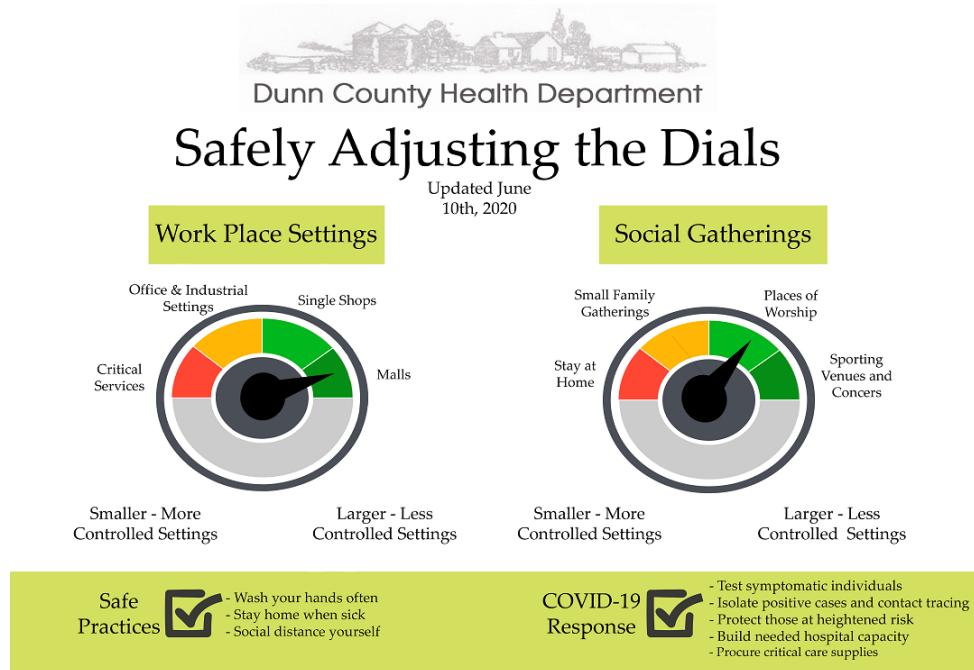
Symptoms have ranged from life-threatening to nothing noticeable (asymptomatic) in Dunn County residents who have tested positive for COVID-19. We have also observed pre-symptomatic spread in some of our local cases. We know it is possible for people to spread a germ that they did not know they had to a person that will experience severe symptoms. We also know that in Dunn County, 45% of our population has one risk factor and 27% of our population have two or more risk factors that increase their risk for severe symptoms.

**Treatment options are limited.** Because the virus is so new, the science is still catching up. One important area of ongoing research is around treatments and vaccines that are proven safe and effective. Some anti-viral medications and supportive treatments are showing promise but are still in initial stages. We cannot currently rely on these treatments to prevent widespread severe illness.

**Preventing spread is essential.** As a result, non-pharmaceutical prevention of germ spread, or viral transmission, is so very important. The Dunn County Health Department is recommending the following ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

1. Dunn County residents are advised to avoid public gatherings in their place of work, play or worship. Groups larger than 25 in an indoor setting and 50 in an outdoor setting, create increased risk of spreading germs. Gatherings over 50 create a significant challenge for effective contact tracing and prevention of secondary cases. All gatherings that bring together people in a single room or space, whether inside or outside, at the same time should:
  - Preserve physical distancing (maintaining 6 feet of distance between people and avoiding all direct physical contact); and,
  - Follow all other public health recommendations issued by Dunn County Public Health Department, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) and the US Centers for Disease Control. This importantly includes practicing good hand hygiene, practicing good respiratory hygiene and staying home when sick.

- Consider creating a contact list with the names and phone numbers of all people that attended the gathering.
2. Dunn County residents are advised to limit all non-essential travel. Additionally, residents should avoid travel where they cannot maintain strict physical distancing. Travel continues to be a risk factor for getting and spreading COVID-19.
3. Dunn County businesses are strongly encouraged to adopt and apply comprehensive safer business practices to limit risks to their clients and staff. Close prolonged contact between staff members and between clients and staff create an increased risk of spreading germs. If two or more cases are associated with a single business, event or group the Health Department is required to conduct a facility investigation. Facility Investigations may be required to be publicly disclosed on the Wisconsin Department of Health Services website. Comprehensive policies that will help prevent a facility investigation include:
- Have policies in place to monitor their staff for symptoms of COVID-19 or exposure to a known case on a regular basis;
  - Have policies that support working from home, when feasible;
  - Have policies encouraging handwashing, wearing masks or cloth face coverings, and physical distancing;
  - Have policies and supplies to ensure adequate disinfection and cleaning;
  - Cooperate with Public Health investigations related to COVID-19 confirmed or suspected cases related to the business operations, including excluding employees based on public health recommendations and assisting public health with identifying and contacting contacts of cases;
  - Review the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation guidelines on safe business practices, available here: <https://wecd.org/reopen-guidelines/>.
4. All people are encouraged to contact their health care provider via phone or online, to discuss if they should be tested for COVID-19 if they are experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19 listed on the Wisconsin DHS's website: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/symptoms.htm>



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