

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 15, 2020

Contact: Cheri Nickell, Washburn County Health Officer

**WASHBURN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT COVID-19 ADVISORY #3
SAFE PRACTICES**

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. §252.03 (1) & (2), the Washburn County Public Health Officer has issued an advisory addressing safety practices due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and continued spread of the COVID-19 virus in Wisconsin and across the Nation:

1. The invalidation of the State's "Safer at Home" Order on May 13, 2020 allows businesses to resume operations, effective immediately.
2. Washburn County has a large population of older adults and other high-risk individuals. These populations are at the highest risk of COVID-19; it is our priority to keep people in Washburn County healthy and safe.
3. On March 17, 2020, the Washburn County Board of Supervisors issued a countywide COVID-19 Emergency Declaration.
4. Due to continued community transmission of COVID-19 throughout the State and across the Nation, the Health Department recognizes that prevention of COVID-19 in Washburn County is a shared responsibility between individuals, businesses, and community agents.
5. The Health Department recommends the following for **INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES**:
 - i. Practice physical distancing and protective measures, including the following:
 - a. maintaining physical distancing of six (6) feet between people not residing in a single living unit or household;
 - b. washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer;
 - c. covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands);
 - d. regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces;
 - e. not shaking hands;
 - f. use of a mask or cloth face covering when physical distancing is impractical;
 - g. limiting travel to reduce the potential for virus transmission; and
 - h. following all other public health recommendations issued by the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Washburn County Health Department, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- ii. Contact businesses you plan to visit **prior** to your visit to determine what safety measure they have in place, especially if you consider yourself high-risk for COVID-19 infection or are concerned about your health and safety.
 - iii. Stay home if you are sick and seek appropriate medical care
6. The Health Department recommends the following for **BUSINESSES, NON-PROFITS, AND OTHER ENTITIES:**
- i. Implement the strategies and practices provided in the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Reopening guidelines at <https://wedc.org/reopen-guidelines/>, the Centers for Disease Control at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> , and the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services available at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>
 - ii. Consult with the Washburn County Economic Development Corporation, your local Chamber of Commerce, and the Washburn County Health Department to gather additional information to safely resume business activities.
 - iii. Failure to implement safety measures may put your business at risk of staff shortage due to required quarantine and isolation measures if a positive COVID-19 case is linked to a business via employee or customer
7. The Health Department recommends the following for **MASS GATHERINGS:**
- i. Individuals: avoid situations where you are unable to exercise appropriate physical distancing with non-household members.
 - ii. Businesses, Non-Profits, and other Entities: reduce capacity and modify physical spaces to ensure adequate physical distancing for customers and staff.
 - iii. Due to the scope of this advisory, the term “mass gatherings” is not specifically defined. Questions about mass gatherings should be directed to the Health Department.
8. This is an ever-changing and very serious health situation and Washburn County needs to be diligent in its response.
9. This advisory provides recommendations and does not provide for enforcement via civil or criminal penalty. However, if failure to follow the safe practices outlined in this advisory results in a concerning increase in COVID cases, the Health Department is prepared to release an order, which would be enforceable.

For up-to-date information regarding COVID-19, follow the resources below:

Washburn County’s COVID-19 page: <https://www.co.washburn.wi.us/news/public-health/Coronavirus-Outbreak>

Washburn County Health. Dept. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WashburnCoHealthDept/>

Resources for residents, businesses, and families: <https://www.co.washburn.wi.us/news/emergency-management/COVID-19>

Questions and concerns can be directed to the Washburn County Health Department at 715-635-4400 or via email to health@co.washburn.wi.us

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