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Winnebago County COVID-19 Recommendations

Updated 10/13/20

There is significant uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 in Winnebago County and the Fox Valley area. Many schools are unable to be open, hospitals are at or beyond capacity and many businesses are closing due to infected staff.

The Winnebago County Health Department issues the following recommendations to serve as guidelines to control the transmission of the virus throughout our communities, effective immediately.

General Guidance for Everyone

- Stay home if you are sick and seek appropriate medical care.
- Wear a mask or face covering anytime you are indoors or near others in public. Have persons in your household wear a mask if their activities outside the home put them at risk.
- Limit trips to public places and encourage family members to do the same to help prevent spreading illness at home.
- Avoid indoor environments outside your home or workplace. Especially avoid crowded indoor spaces, small indoor spaces, or spaces with limited ventilation.
- Do not host or attend group gatherings with persons outside your home if you cannot maintain masking and distancing.
- Get tested for COVID-19 if you are experiencing any [symptoms](#) or have been in close contact with someone who tested positive. Stay home while you are waiting for test results.
- [Follow this guidance](#) if you have been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19.
- Practice physical distancing and protective measures, including the following:
 - Maintain physical distancing of six (6) feet or more between people not residing in your household;
 - Minimize time spent with anyone outside your immediate household;
 - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol;
 - Cover coughs and sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands) and then handwash or sanitize;
 - Regularly disinfect high-touch surfaces and objects;
 - Avoid handshaking and hugging;
 - Avoid touching your face;
 - Use a mask or cloth face covering in public, at gatherings, workplaces, and where it is difficult to maintain physical distancing;
 - Limit travel to reduce the potential for virus transmission;
 - Monitor yourself for symptoms of COVID-19; if you develop symptoms, stay home and call your healthcare provider;
 - Follow all other public health recommendations issued by the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Winnebago County Health Department, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

- Utilize curbside pickup as much as possible. Avoid eating at restaurants and entering bars that do not limit capacity and do not allow for proper social distancing.
- Only enter establishments that are practicing the customer and worker protections listed within the following guidelines and, if required, are following [Wisconsin Emergency Order #3](#) that limits public gatherings.

Businesses, Non-Profits, and other Entities

- Reduce occupancy to 25% of posted occupancy or less if physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Post occupancy in a conspicuous place visible from the outside.
- Modify physical spaces to ensure adequate physical distancing for customers and staff.
- Provide and require face coverings and personal protective equipment (PPE) for all staff that provide customer service or are in a room with others.
- Provide signage that encourages good hand hygiene.
- Screen employees for illness and have sick employees stay home.
- Promote telecommuting or work-from-home when possible, rotate or cohort staffing.
- Restaurants and bars should consider only allowing outdoor seating and offer curbside pickup or delivery.
- Consult with your local Chamber of Commerce and the Winnebago County Health Department to gather additional information to safely resume business activities.
- Promptly contact the Winnebago County Health Department in the event of COVID-19 illness in employees.
- Implement strategies and practices based on the following sources:
 - Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: <https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/>
 - State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services: <https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/>
- Follow the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Reopening Guidelines for industry-specific sectors found here: <https://wedc.org/reopen-guidelines/>
- Follow the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's guidelines and recommendations for food supply, delivery, and recreational facilities: https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/News_Media/Covid19FoodSupplyDelivery.aspx
- Follow the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's guidance: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>
- Increase standards of facility cleaning and disinfection of all areas. View CDC's guidance here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>

Gatherings

- Avoid gatherings of 10 or more people or any gathering for which you cannot maintain physical distancing of at least six (6) feet between people not residing in a single living unit or household.
- Avoid situations where you are unable to exercise appropriate physical distancing with non-household members.
- Cancel or postpone events or gatherings of more than 10 people.
- Wear a face covering when gathering with people who do not live in your household, especially when physical distancing of six (6) feet cannot be maintained and in enclosed spaces.
- Additional guidance for events and gatherings from WCHD can be found [here](#).

Travel Guidance – assume COVID-19 is present in your community and in any you visit

- Stay home as much as possible, especially if your trip is not essential.
- Traveling outside your local community is highly discouraged because you may have less control of your surroundings or situations that put you at risk.
- Do not travel if you are sick or travel with someone who is sick.
- If you must travel, consider the following precautions:
 - Avoid close contact with others; keep at least six (6) feet of physical distance from others at all times.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, especially after you have been in a public place, after blowing your nose, coughing, and sneezing.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Wear a mask or cloth face covering in public.
 - Travel alone when possible or only with household members.
 - If possible, travel in a vehicle to have more control of who you may come into contact with.
 - Consult with your employer in advance about your travel plans and plan for how you will limit exposure to others during your travels.
 - Do not attend gatherings.
 - Limit your time indoors in environments such as restaurants, bars, gyms, event venues, and other establishments that do not have strategies in place to reduce risk of respiratory exposure from others.
- [Self-quarantine or self-monitor](#) for symptoms of COVID-19 if you travel outside of your local community or otherwise have been unable to follow all travel guidance.
- Follow additional guidance and precautions for travel from:
 - [Winnebago County Health Department](#)
 - [WI Department of Health Services](#)
 - [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#)

Face Coverings

Per [CDC guidance](#), all people 2 years of age and older should wear a face covering that covers their nose and mouth when:

- Inside public enclosed spaces, including businesses, healthcare settings, workplaces, waiting in line, and on public transportation
- Outdoors if physical distancing of six (6) feet cannot be maintained where people who do not live in the same household are present
- Gathering with individuals who do not live in the same household, especially when physical distancing of six (6) feet cannot be maintained

Individuals may occasionally need to remove a face covering:

- While they are eating or drinking
- When communicating with an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing and communication cannot be achieved through other means
- While obtaining a service that requires the temporary removal of the face covering
- When necessary to confirm the individual's identity
- When federal or state law prohibits wearing a face covering

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on:

- Babies or children younger than 2 years old
- Anyone who has trouble breathing
- Anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.
- Anyone who has a physical, mental, or developmental condition that prevents them from wearing a face covering.

Please visit the [CDC's webpage](#) for more information on face coverings

[View WCHD's full face covering advisory](#)

[State of Wisconsin Emergency Order #1 Requiring Face Coverings](#)

The Winnebago County Health Department recognizes this situation will continue to evolve and may require future recommendations or orders to protect the public's health and safety. In making these decisions, the Winnebago County Health Department will be guided by the following principles:

- Protecting public health and safety are our primary responsibility.
- Continuation and resumption of business and personal activity is essential to the well-being of our community.
- Scientific data and local information must guide our public health decision-making.
- Any recommendations issued will strive to avoid inequity amongst the individuals, businesses, and communities impacted.
- Gathering perspectives from local stakeholders is valuable.
- We trust that residents and businesses will follow recommendations and guidance from Public Health authorities to protect each other.

Please see the Winnebago County Health Department website at <https://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/health> for the most up-to-date guidance and resources.

Thank you for your commitment to keeping our communities safe. Your efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19 are greatly appreciated by those who live, work, and play in Winnebago County.