



DOOR COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH COVID-19 QUESTION AND ANSWER

May 6, 2020

QUESTION #1

Why can't more information be disclosed on positive cases, such as location?

Privacy laws prevent the disclosure of protected health information. Individually identifiable information (e.g., name, address, phone number, or email) of individuals infected with or exposed to COVID-19 may not be disclosed to the public or media.

As a result, Door County must be careful when communicating the status of specific COVID-19 cases with the public or media. We may disclose aggregate information about the number of individuals infected with or exposed to COVID-19, but must be careful about revealing information about how the patient was exposed to COVID-19 or general information about where the individual lives, as this may allow the public or media to identify the individual through publicly available sources.

Some health departments have elected to map out individual cases or provide zip codes, age ranges, and more. We are not able to give out that level of demographic information. Doing so, because Door County's population and number of cases is small, would run the very real risk of allowing the public or media to identify the individual.

We are able to disclose that the positive cases in Door County are not concentrated in any one locality. Rather, they are scattered throughout the county.

We appreciate that everyone wants as much information as possible. Please understand that we must use our professional judgment to determine how much information may be disclosed under the applicable privacy laws.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) may choose to provide [data](#) in ways that differ from what we provide at the county level.

We need to all continue to follow Governor Evers' Safer at Home guidelines to stop the spread of COVID

QUESTION #2

Should I be wearing a mask to protect myself?

New guidelines as of April 6, 2020 from the [Center of Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and [WI Department of Health Services](#) (DHS) include the recommendation that there may be a benefit to reducing asymptomatic transmission and reinforcing physical distancing from the use of face covers.

It is now recommended that everyone wear a cloth face cover at all times when in public while still maintaining physical distancing.

Wearing a cloth face cover may be beneficial as it may help to protect others from germs you may be spreading without knowing it. It does not protect you from others who are not wearing a face masks and does NOT reduce the need for physical distancing and handwashing.

Face covers should be cloth and not surgical or N95 to reserve those critical supplies for medical personnel. A cloth face cover is material that covers the nose and mouth while being secured to the head with ties, straps or simply wrapped around the lower face. These coverings can be made by a variety of materials.

To wear a mask, keep these things in mind:

- Before putting on a mask, clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Make sure your mask covers your mouth and nose with no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Do not touch your mask while wearing it; if you do, clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp.
- Always wear your cloth reusable mask with the same side facing outwards.

Keep in mind that a mask does not provide full protection. Therefore, remember to continue to do the following:

- Clean your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Continue staying at least 6 feet away from other people.
- Continue following the recommendations for social distancing: avoid crowds, stay at home as much as possible, and just leave for essential tasks (e.g. work, grocery shopping, going to the doctor, getting medications).

How should I clean my cloth face covering?

- It's a good idea to wash your cloth face covering frequently, ideally after each use, or at least daily.
- Have a bag or bin to keep cloth face coverings in until they can be laundered with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle.
- If you must re-wear your cloth face covering before washing, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on and avoid touching your face.

Additional Information about Cloth Face Covers can be found here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/protect.html>

QUESTION #3

How do I know if I have COVID 19 or just a cold or allergies?

Patients with COVID-19 can experience mild to severe respiratory illness.

If you are experiencing MILD or MODERATE symptoms, such as fever, runny nose or cough, do NOT go to the Emergency Room. Call your primary health care provider prior to going to a clinic.

Your primary care provider will evaluate if testing is necessary, and direct you to a facility that can conduct sampling. This will ensure that healthcare professionals can prepare in advance should you need to receive testing or treatment. Seeking the most appropriate level of care will help protect the community and minimize exposure to other patients and staff.

If you have symptoms and feel you need testing call the Door County Medical Center COVID-19 Screening Hotline at 920-746-3700.

[COVID-19 Symptom Checker](#)

QUESTION #4

What does Governor Evers' Emergency Order #12 Safer at Home provide regarding essential businesses and operations?

Essential businesses and operations are defined in Section 13 of Emergency Order #12 Safer at Home. Essential businesses and operations may continue. Non-essential business and operations must cease. All essential businesses and operations are, to the greatest extent possible, to:

- a. meet social distancing requirements between all individuals on the premises; and
- b. use technology to avoid meeting in person, including virtual meetings, teleconference, and remote work (i.e., work from home)

Just because an entity has been designated as “essential” does not mean it is required to stay open. The employer is the one who decides whether an employee is required to come in and under what conditions.

Governor Evers’ Emergency Order #12 Safer at Home provides general parameters and definitions for how to apply the Order as to essential, non-essential, and prohibited activities. The Order provides guidance for determination that that some specific businesses are “essential”, but only gives examples of whether others may be considered “essential”. It is the lack of clarity regarding the “other” businesses and manufacturing entities that raises questions and requires the exercise of discretion.

See: Emergency Order #12 Safer at Home <https://evers.wi.gov/Documents/COVID19/EMO12-SaferAtHome.pdf>
WEDC Designated Businesses: <https://wedc.org/essentialbusiness/>
CISA List: <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>

QUESTION #5

How do I know if my business is considered an “essential business” under the Governors order?

A list of essential/non-essential businesses including the restrictions associated for the business can be found here:

- The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation provides the following resource:
<https://wedc.org/essentialbusiness/>
- Governor Evers Safer at Home FAQ’s https://evers.wi.gov/Documents/COVID19/English_SaferatHomeFAQ.pdf

QUESTION #6

What is Door County’s role?

To investigate complaints (which generally should take the form of a written document containing specific allegations) that a business or operation is not essential, yet open. Every complaint should be taken seriously, but not all of them will require an investigation.

Where warranted, Door County will investigate and make a discretionary determination whether the business and its operations are essential or non-essential. If non-essential, an order to cease operations may be issued. This involves a coordinated effort between public health and law enforcement.

- There is the potential for monetary penalties and possible imprisonment for continued violation of Governor Evers’ Emergency Order #12 Safer at Home.

QUESTION #7

What if there is a business that is still open, but may not be “essential”?

Law enforcement continues to receive calls with questions about essential vs. non-essential businesses. These inquiries are evaluated on a case by case basis by Door County Law Enforcement officials in collaboration with the Department of Public Health. Guidance can also be sought from the WDEC when needed.

If a business is determined unessential and in violation of the order, and that business fails to come into compliance, law enforcement will enforce the governor’s order, which may include a fine and/or jail time.

All nonessential businesses and operations must close and cease all activities at facilities located within Wisconsin. All closures previously ordered remain in effect. Nonessential businesses include, but are not limited to:

Salons and spas
Public and private amusement parks
Water parks
Zoos and aquariums
Museums
Play centers and playgrounds
Movie and other theaters
Gyms
Other similar facilities

Nonessential businesses may maintain basic operations, such as managing inventory, preserving the physical plant and equipment, processing payroll and employee benefits, etc.

Businesses, including home-based businesses, may continue operations consisting exclusively of employees or contractors that are working from home. This does NOT include serving customers or clients in person.

For a list of Safer at Home FAQs, click the link below.

https://evers.wi.gov/Documents/COVID19/English_SaferatHomeFAQ.pdf

QUESTION #8

Can people from out of state travel to Wisconsin?

Yes. If it is considered “essential travel,” a person can travel to Wisconsin from out of state. 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.

QUESTION #9

May Tourists Still Visit Door County?

This is strongly discouraged. Door County urges all visitors to stay away during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Please keep in mind that any non-essential travel outside your current community risks the spread of COVID-19 to other areas.

QUESTION #10

What about Second and Seasonal Homeowners?

Our first choice is that second and seasonal homeowners don’t come here during the COVID-19 outbreak. This is for their safety and wellbeing as well as the safety of others.

If you choose to travel to a second or seasonal home in Door County you are to immediately self-quarantine, i.e., stay home and monitor your symptoms (such as fever, cough, shortness of breath) for 14 days. This means you must arrive

with enough supplies (groceries, personal care items, cleaning supplies, prescriptions and other essentials) to quarantine for two weeks. It is important that you avoid contact with others to avoid spreading the infection to others.

QUESTION #11

Can law enforcement prevent people from traveling into Door County (i.e., set up a checkpoint or “close the border” to non-residents)?

No. The Safer at Home order does not give law enforcement the right to prevent people from traveling into Wisconsin or Door County.

Law enforcement cannot pull over a vehicle simply because it has out of state license plates. As is the case with any traffic stop, law enforcement must have reasonable suspicion to pull over a vehicle. Without evidence of some other law violation, an out of state license plate alone is not enough to pull over a vehicle.

The Safer at Home Order specifically allows travel to return to a place of residence from outside the jurisdiction. As written, the order does not prohibit travel to a secondary place of residence, for example a summer home or second residence outside of an individual’s primary place of residence.

Governor Evers’ Emergency Order #12 “Safer at Home” prohibits “nonessential travel,” but a complete ban on travel would conflict with Order #12’s exemptions for “essential travel,” such as travel for business, to care for family members, or other exempted activities.

QUESTION #12

What are the Best Practices for Everyone?

All travel that does not qualify as an essential activity should be canceled or postponed in compliance with the “Safer at Home” order.

Because COVID-19 transmission is now widespread throughout Wisconsin, even people who have not traveled outside of their community should minimize their contact with others by [staying home](#) when possible, practicing [social distancing](#), and being alert for [symptoms of COVID-19](#). This will help us all to remain safe and healthy.

Please visit and review Governor Evers’ Safer at Home FAQ’s at:

https://evers.wi.gov/Documents/COVID19/English_SaferatHomeFAQ.pdf.

Question #13

Are religious services and places of worship considered to be essential services or count towards essential travel?

Businesses defined in the Governor’s Order as essential businesses and operations do not include faith-based organizations or places of worship. The intent of the order is to limit gatherings of people and person-to-person contact in an effort to protect the health and safety of all Wisconsinites by slowing the spread of COVID-19. It is not a statement against the essential nature of faith and fellowship. Taking time at home to be mindful, meditate, and pray are great ways to practice spiritual beliefs individually or as a family. You can also safely view or listen to almost any form of religious services through television, radio, online video recordings, live streams, or podcasts. Speak to your religious or spiritual leaders to learn about other ways you can practice from your home.

Question #14

Can our congregation gather in the church's parking lot if we stay in our cars?

Wisconsin's Safer at Home order does not allow for gatherings of more than 10 people in a confined space at a time. Governor Evers April 9 Press Release does allow for religious services to be conducted via:

- Parking lots with congregants staying in cars, avoiding person-to-person contact;
- Streaming online; and
- Having small gatherings (fewer than 10 people in each room) with multiple services.

While an individual is safe in their car with the windows rolled up, it is extremely difficult to manage these types of gatherings. Areas such as parking lots also have limited access to restrooms, and participants may be tempted to get out of their cars to stretch and enjoy the weather, creating potential for the virus to spread through interaction. If you participate in any gatherings such as this, please be mindful to follow the Safer at Home guidelines including physical distancing of 6 feet and wearing of cloth face coverings.

Question #15

As a business owner, will I be notified by Public Health if one of my employees tests positive for COVID-19?

The health and safety of our community is our number one priority in Public Health. If there is a concern at your business that needs your attention, we will call to discuss it. For example, if an employee of yours tests positive and was at work during their infectious period, we will discuss with them who would have been in close contact with them at work. This is done through an extensive interview process. If they are unable to identify everyone or do not have the contact numbers, we will call their employer for help with contact information. If an employee tests positive, but was not at work during their infectious period, Public Health will not call their employer because there is no concern for exposure within the workplace. You may have employees calling to say that they were in close contact with a confirmed case and they are being asked to stay home for 14 days from the last time they were in close contact with that person. In this situation where your employee is just a contact and has no symptoms, you would not be notified by Public Health because there is no concern for exposure at your workplace.

Question #16

What is serologic COVID-19 antibody testing? If I get it, can I go back to work?

As this disease is evolving, new tests are being developed. Unfortunately, they are not yet proven to be reliable and the results cannot be used on their own to diagnose or prove that someone is not infected with COVID-19. People develop antibodies when their body's immune system responds to an infection. These antibodies can be detected in blood. A positive COVID-19 antibody test may be able to detect if someone has previously been or is currently infected with the virus. What it cannot tell us is if the person is unable to transmit the virus any longer or if the person is immune to the virus. A negative result does not indicate that a person has never had it because it may be too early in the infection for their body to have made antibodies yet. Until the validity of these test can be proven, they should not be used for diagnosis or to allow people to return to work, and do not negate the need for local Public Health investigation and intervention.

For more information, please visit: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIDHS/bulletins/2897e5f>