Marathon County Health Department advises residents to follow guidance to stop the spread of COVID-19

WAUSAU, WI – Marathon County continues to experience a significant increase in COVID-19 cases. The Marathon County Health Department’s COVID-19 response teams are critically over capacity and are looking to the community to follow the recommended guidance to stop the spread.

While the Health Department will attempt to follow-up with individuals who test positive, review isolation recommendations, and determine close contacts, the response may be delayed. You do not need to hear from the Health Department in order to begin isolation if you have a positive test or begin quarantine if you know that you are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19.

We need individuals, businesses, and organizations to use the following guidance to help slow the spread in our community:

Individuals who test positive are asked to stay home and to separate themselves from others as well as notify any people they had close contact with, beginning two days prior to the start of symptoms. We ask that you stay isolated for at least 10 days after you first experienced symptoms or at least 10 days after you were tested if you did not have symptoms.

A close contact is defined as anyone within 6-feet of a COVID positive person for at least 15 cumulative minutes or who had direct contact (such as a handshake, hug, or sitting next to a person).

The following quarantine guidance is for individuals that are not fully-vaccinated:

- Anyone identified as a close contact is asked to self-quarantine at home, monitor for symptoms, and limit contact with others as much as possible.
- A 14-day quarantine remains the safest option if you are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19.
- Quarantine may be reduced to 10 days, provided people still monitor for symptoms for the full 14 days.
- Quarantine may be reduced to 7 days if a person receives a negative test result (PCR or antigen) that was collected on day 6 or 7.
The recommendations for fully vaccinated people who have a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 is to be tested 3-5 days after exposure and wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result.

Full information for residents who have tested positive or are a close contact of a positive case can be found on the Marathon County Health Department’s website at: https://bit.ly/MCCOVIDGuidance.

Local employers and businesses are asked to notify close contacts of positive cases within their workplace and support employees in following the recommended isolation and quarantine guidance.

**Following this guidance is a crucial step to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community.**

**COVID-19 Testing Guidance:**

If you have symptoms or have had direct contact with someone who has COVID-19, you are encouraged to get tested, using an antigen or PCR test. Unsupervised at-home tests are not recommended and do not get reported to the health department.

Common COVID-19 symptoms include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath/trouble breathing
- Loss of taste/smell
- Fever or chills
- Runny nose or nasal congestion
- Sore throat
- Unusual fatigue
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Head or body aches

If you are currently experiencing any of these symptoms, get tested, stay home and limit contact with others as much as possible while you wait for test results. If your symptoms are severe, please seek medical help by calling 911 or going to the emergency room.

Testing is available and free in Marathon County. For a list of testing locations, please visit: http://bit.ly/MCTestingInfo.

Vaccination continues to be the best way to protect you, your family, and your community. COVID-19 vaccines are widely available in Marathon County to everyone 12 years of age and older.

For information on where to get a vaccine go to http://bit.ly/MCVaccineInfo or vaccines.gov.

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