

Marathon County Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)  
Situational Report May 4, 2020 (10:00 AM)  
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## What we Know

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a virus strain that began spreading in people in December 2019. Health experts are concerned because little is known about this new respiratory virus. On March 11, 2020 the COVID-19 outbreak was characterized as a pandemic by the World Health Organization.

As of May 3, 2020,

- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) reports 1,122,486 cases in the United States, and 65,735 deaths. Jurisdictions reporting cases: 55 (50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Marianas, and US Virgin Islands).
- [WI Department of Health Services](#) reports 7,964 cases, 1,608 hospitalized (20%), and 339 deaths. Sixty-seven (67) counties have one or more case. [Maps of rates of cases and percentage of deaths by county](#) now available.
- [Marathon County](#), reports 19 cases 1 death. 826 residents have tested negative for COVID-19.

Safer at Home, day 41, was put in place to slow the spread of this novel virus. Staying at home has helped to [flatten the curve](#), slowing the spread of COVID-19. Safer at Home has saved lives, protected health care workers and first responders, and prevented our hospitals from being overwhelmed. However, we know Safer at Home is not a workable long-term solution for our economy or way of life.

In recent weeks, plans have been created at a national and state level to safely reopen our businesses and communities. The [Badger Bounce Back](#) plan released on April 20 provides a phased in roadmap for Wisconsin, having [gating criteria \(metrics\)](#) to guide readiness to move from one phase to another.

As a state and county we are preparing to move from a strategy of “boxing in people” to “boxing in the virus”. To safely reopen, conditions that need to be in place include:

- Testing, where every resident who has symptoms of COVID-19 has access to a lab test
- Contact tracing capacity to control the spread of the virus and have everyone who is infected or exposed safely isolated or quarantined
- PPE and other supplies to protect health care and response workers
- Surge [capacity of our health care systems](#)
- State-wide public health data systems to track the spread of COVID-19

Testing and isolation are important tools for suppressing or delaying a substantial second wave. With testing and isolation, the magnitude of the number of cases in Wisconsin will be below the threshold of our hospitals’ capacity.

## Major Developments

### U.S.

CDC, posted [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#). Reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by cleaning and disinfection is an important part of reopening public spaces that will require careful planning.

On May 1, CDC posted updated guidance on [Coronavirus Travel in the United States](#), [COVID-19 Recommendation by Country](#), and [COVID-19 Forecasts for the United States](#). CDC recommends you stay home as much as possible, especially if your trip is not essential.

On May 2, CDC posted updated guidance on [Testing in the U.S.](#) and [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Veterinary Clinics During the COVID-19 Response](#).

## Wisconsin

On April 27, Wisconsin Department of Health Services Secretary-designee Palm, released Emergency Order #34, [Interim Order to Turn the Dial](#). The order reduces restrictions on certain businesses or sectors in a manner that is anticipated to have a minimal impact on the state's ability to meet its gating criteria.

On April 27, the [Badger Bounce Back Dashboard](#) is released.

On April 27, guidance on how to request testing for outbreak or emergency situations and community based specimen collection through the National Guard made available.

On April 28, Governor Evers directs the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to reopen 34 state parks and forests on May 1 under special conditions to help minimize overcrowding, allow for social distancing requirements, and to promote a safe and enjoyable experience for staff and visitors.

On April 28, Governor Evers announced that the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and Wisconsin Department of Justice filed a response to the Legislative Republicans' lawsuit that endangers lives by [blocking Safer at Home](#). The Evers Administration has asked the Wisconsin Supreme Court to toss the lawsuit.

On April 29, Governor Evers announced that dozen of organizations, which collectively represent more than one million Wisconsinites, [voiced their support for the extension of Safer at Home](#) in briefs filed with the Wisconsin Supreme Court. On April 28, more than 200 businesses, city, county, and tribal government officials, medical professionals, and organizations representing everything from labor and educators to religious entities, to civil rights, to veterans affairs, [signed a letter of support](#) for Wisconsin's Safer at Home efforts.

On April 29, Wisconsin Department of Health Services announced more than 400,000 Wisconsin [children who receive free or reduced price meals](#) through the National School Lunch Program will be eligible to receive food benefits to their families for March, April, May and part of June.

On April 30, Governor Evers announced Wisconsin received a 230,000 N95 respirator masks from FEMA, for distribution in the state. Wisconsin will also be receiving a Battelle Critical Care Decontamination System to help [decontaminate N95 respiratory masks](#). A process is being developed to collect, decontaminate, and swiftly return N95 mass for users.

On May 1, the [Supreme Court issued an order](#) stating will take the Emergency Petition for Original Action filed by the Legislature against Department of Health Services Secretary-designee Palm regarding the extended Safer at Home order. Oral arguments are scheduled for 10AM, May 5.

On May 1, Wisconsin Department of Health Services released [guidance on serologic \(antibody-based\) testing for COVID-19](#).

On May 1, Governor Evers announced that the State Emergency Operations Center, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Wisconsin Emergency Management, and Wisconsin National Guard are working with local health departments to create [community testing events](#) in places with a known lack of access to testing or additional testing is needed because of high rates of COVID-19.

A list of [Executive and Emergency Orders](#) and [Press Releases](#) available on WI Department of Health Services website.

## Actions Marathon County is Taking

The Marathon County Health Department, Emergency Management, and County Administration stay informed on a daily basis. Local actions are guided by the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), [WI Department of Health Services](#), [WI Emergency Management](#), and the State of WI COVID-19 Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). The following pandemic functions are being carried out.

### Contact Tracing and Surveillance

- Respond to reports of suspect and confirmed cases within the working day, conduct contact tracing for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 to identify close contacts
- Monitor testing capacity among health care systems, exploring options to increase testing across the county
- Followed-up on 1035 negative, positive, or contacts to cases reported from March 1 to May 3, 2020, an increase of 276 since April 27.

### Community Mitigation

- Isolate residents tested positive for COVID-19 and quarantine close contacts, monitor residents who are isolated or quarantined on a daily basis
- Notify the Marathon County Sheriff's Office Dispatch of individuals tested positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts to protect law enforcement officers, first responders, and public safety workers
- Fielded 201 calls from residences and businesses on "Safer at Home" since March 25, having 22 calls during the week of April 27
- Continue to develop alternative isolate site plans for residents known or suspected to be infected with COVID-19 who cannot isolate safely at home in the Wausau and Marshfield area
- Contributed to identifying regional and local metrics to monitor and inform decision making at a local, and multi-county level. The plan incorporates metrics from the Badger Bounce Back plan and the Medical College of Wisconsin contained in the [COVID-19 Economic Recovery Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce](#). Reviewed the [Back to Business](#) plan developed by the Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce and Wisconsin's Chamber.

### Health Care System Response

- Attend regional hospitals surge planning calls to monitor the need for establishing an alternative care site in Marathon County; monitor [daily snapshot hospital capabilities](#)
- Participate in weekly NCW-HERC (North Central Wisconsin Health Emergency Readiness Coalition) Board of Directors calls to keep abreast of response plans for hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, EMS

- Monitor long-term care facilities supply and staffing capabilities, and management of ill residents
- Respond to questions from general public on the need for testing and self-quarantine
- Implement a county system to respond to PPE requests from allocations received from the state

#### Communication

- Mailed information to the Amish Community on the Badger Bounce Back plan
- Weekly radio program was recorded and broadcast on Hmong radio
- Created one new video on Badger Bounce Back in Hmong and posted on our YouTube channel
- Outreached to Hispanic community by securing the phone line for Hispanic callers and creating the first ad for the *Noticias* newspaper
- Outreached to agricultural businesses who utilize H-2A temporary agriculture workers to inform them how to reduce the risk of COVID-19 and of the Health Department's role in the event a worker has COVID-19 symptoms. Learned about Family Health La Clinica's telehealth and testing services available in Marathon County.
- Provide accurate, timely and consistent information via [Marathon County Health Department website](#)
- Information provided to community via [Marathon County Health Department Facebook](#)
  - o Posts: 33, Shares: 274, New Followers: 64 for week of April 20-26
  - o Posts: 222, Shares: 3090, Followers: 3,465 since March 1
- Two contacts with the media, including one interview for a total of forty-six (46) contacts with media, and nine press release since March 1
- Join weekly MCDEVCO municipal meeting to provide updates and field questions
- Responded to 52 calls from the general public during the week of April 27

### What the Public Can Do

Stay at home. Limit the amount of time spent making essential trips to the store. Make essential trips no more than once a week.

Limit physical interactions to same people.

Keep at least 6 feet away from others and avoid direct physical contact.

Wash your hands frequently. Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.

Stay in touch over the phone with family and friends. Reach out and ask for help if you're feeling overwhelmed. Call 211 to find a helping professional. Visit [Helping Wisconsin cope](#) during COVID-19.

Continue to contribute to [flattening the curve](#) as we prepare to reopen our businesses and communities.

Seek credible sources of information from the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) and the [State of WI Department of Health Services](#) to learn more about COVID-19.