

Marathon County Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
 Situational Report July 27, 2020 (10:00 AM)
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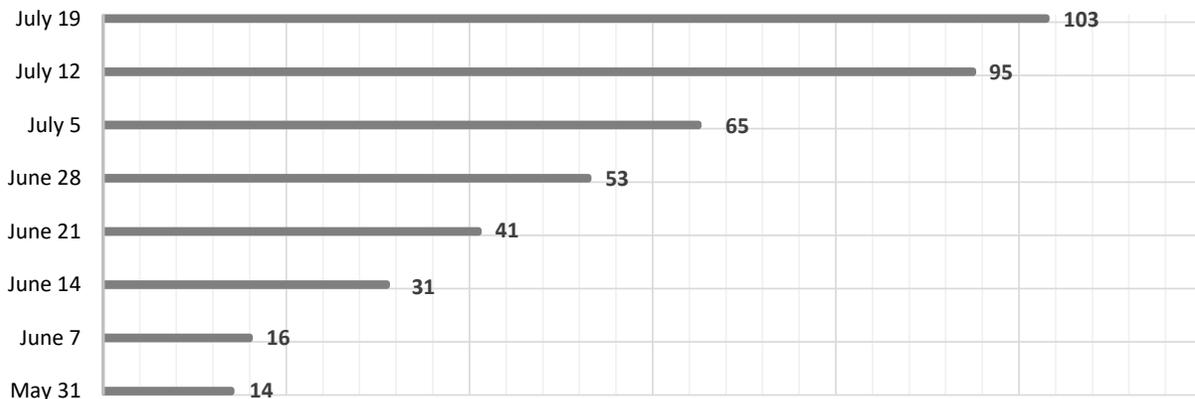
What we Know

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.

For the week of ending on July 25,

- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) reports 4,099,310 cases in the United States, and 145,013 deaths.
- [WI Department of Health Services](#) reports 47,870 cases, 4,368 (9.1%) ever hospitalized, 37,287 (77.9%) recovered, and 891 (1.9%) deaths. Refer to [state summary date and county level data](#).
- [Marathon County](#), reports 466 cases, 31 (6.6%) ever hospitalized, 274 (58.8%) recovered, and 4 deaths. 10,607 residents have tested negative for COVID-19. Refer to [Marathon County COVID-19 Dashboard](#). 10-39 years old account for 53% of all cases, with 27% of all cases among 20-29 year olds. For hospitalizations, all residents have been 20 years or older. As one gets older, risk for severe illness from COVID-19 increases. Other factors that increase risk for severe illness are individuals with underlying medical conditions.

Number of New Cases in Marathon County by Week



Marathon County’s [COVID-19 activity level](#) has remained high since June 24. In the past week, Marathon County had as many cases in 1 week as it took to reach the first 101 cases over 13 weeks (March 20 to June 19).

**COVID-19
 Activity Level
 Marathon County
 7/22/2020**

Low
Medium
High

Individuals, businesses, and other entities can reduce their risk for exposure by practicing physically distancing and avoid large gatherings, wear a cloth face covering when in public, wash hands frequently, and stay home if sick.

Strategies being carried out to control the spread of COVID-19 in Marathon County and counties across Wisconsin include: harm reduction behaviors, surveillance activities, and “boxing the virus in”. Controlling the spread of COVID-19 will keep business open and enabling schools to open in the fall.

Harm reduction behaviors are actions everyone can take to reduce their risk for being exposed to COVID-19:

- Watch your physical distance around others and avoid large gatherings,
- Wear masks when in the public and unable to physically distance,
- Wash your hands frequently, and
- Stay home when sick.

Refer to [Marathon County COVID-19 Order #1](#) for additional actions individuals, families, businesses, and other entities can do to reduce the risk for COVID-19.

Surveillance is the collecting data to inform health departments how quickly the virus is spreading in communities, who is being infected, and the severity of the virus. Data is important for two reasons: to monitor for warning signs in a surge in cases, and to determine the level of risk in a county.

“Boxing it in” is a containment strategy to control the spread of the virus and suppress a surge in cases. To “Box in the virus”, health care providers and local health departments are:

- Testing every individual who has symptoms of COVID-19,
- Isolating individuals with COVID-19,
- Finding everyone who had close contact to infected people, and
- Quarantining all close contacts.



The capacity of local and tribal health departments to do contact tracing is important to control the spread of COVID-19 in communities. In light of the increase in COVID-19 cases in recent weeks, the Health Department’s priority is to contact individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 to identify close contacts and to notify their close contacts.

Major Developments

U.S.

CDC updates for the week of July 19,

[Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings](#)

[Testing Guidelines for Nursing Homes](#)

[Help Stop the Spread of COVID-19 in Children](#)

[Toolkit for Retirement Communities](#)

[People Who Need to Take Extra Precautions](#)

[Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Veterinary Clinics Treating Companion](#)

[Animals During the COVID-19 Response](#)

[Rural Communities](#)

[Large-scale Geographic Seroprevalence Surveys](#)

[One-Stop Shop for COVID-19 Resources](#)

[Childcare Programs and Summer Camps](#)
[Evidence used to update the list of underlying medical conditions that increase a person’s risk of severe illness from COVID-19](#)
[Information for Healthcare Professionals about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
[Interim Guidance on Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) in Correctional and Detention Facilities](#)
[Duration of Isolation and Precautions for Adults with COVID-19](#)
[Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)
[Businesses and Workplaces](#)
[Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#)
[Hiring In-home services or repairs](#)
[Personal and Social Activities](#)
[Forecasts of Total Deaths](#)
[Interim Guidance for Use of Pooling Procedures in SARS-CoV-2 Diagnostic, Screening, and Surveillance Testing](#)
[Hospitalization Forecasts](#)
[Considerations for Retirement Communities and Independent Living Facilities](#)
[Back to School Planning: Checklists to Guide Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers](#)
[Screening K-12 Students for Symptoms of COVID-19: Limitations and Considerations](#)
[Guidance for K-12 School Administrators on the Use of Cloth Face Coverings in Schools](#)
[The Importance of Reopening America’s Schools this Fall](#)
[Preparing K-12 School Administrators for a Safe Return to School in Fall 2020](#)
[COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Country](#)
[Health Equity Considerations and Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups](#)
[What We Can Do](#)
[Childcare, Schools, and Youth Programs](#)
[FAQs for School Administrators on Reopening Schools](#)
[Toolkit for People with Disabilities](#)

On July 22, the CDC issue a press release by [Dr. Robert R. Redfield regarding misleading media reports](#) suggesting there are 24 times more SARS-CoV-2 infections than reported cases

On July 23, the CDC issue a press release on [new resources and tools to support opening of schools](#)

On July 24, the CDC release Estimated County – [Level of Prevalence of Selected Underlying Medical Conditions Associated with Increased Risk for Severe COVID-19 Illness](#) – United States, 2018.

Wisconsin

On July 17, PBS Wisconsin release interview with [Governor Evers on Latest Escalation of COVID Case Numbers](#). Governor Evers articulates the importance of incorporating the small gestures – social distancing, wearing face masks – into all daily activities to keep Wisconsin residents safe.

July 17, the State of Department of Health Services, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ryan Westergaard, release Facebook post confirming 6 confirmed cases of MIS-C in children, stating “[multisystem inflammatory syndrome is one of the ways that COVID-19 continues to affect communities](#), and another example of why we must all do all we can to stop its spread.”

On July 17, the Sheboygan Press release [880 new COVID cases take Wisconsin past 40,000, as growth spreads to other age groups besides 20-somethings](#)

On July 18, the New York Times release [Older Children Spread the Coronavirus Just as Much as Adults, Large Study Finds](#)

On July 20, Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul seeks [court order to immediately block DeVos Rule threatening K-12 Public Schools Pandemic Relief Funds](#)

On July 20, press release by the Broad Wisconsin Coalition Advocates for Public, Economic Health amid Pandemic on [Let's Go Wisconsin!](#)

On July 21, FOX 6 TV posts '[Young people engage in close contact: COVID-19 spreads as people attend social gatherings, officials say](#)

On July 22, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services posted [What should I do if I need to be tested before I travel?](#) on the COVID-19 Travel Frequently Asked Questions webpage

On July 22, the U.S. District Court [dismissed federal suit over local Wisconsin COVID-19 orders](#)

On July 22, the American Medical Association release [How Many COVID-19 cases are going undetected?](#)

On July 23, Governor Evers announces [K-12 Schools eligible for \\$46.6 million](#) through the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund.

On July 23, [WIAA announces moving forward with fall sports, football delayed to mid-September](#)

On July 23, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services shared [We're All In](#), a Wisconsin initiative to ensure the health of our citizens and the strength of our economy

On July 23, Governor Tony Evers shares in an interview with Wisconsin Public Radio he is [still strongly considering a statewide mask mandate in Wisconsin](#)

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 confirmed cases and conduct contact tracing to identify close contacts within 24 hours. Notify close contacts within 48 hours.
- Participate in a state/local health department community testing advisory group to develop strategies to support Wisconsin's testing goals of 85,000 COVID-19 tests per week. County level targets are based on the number of known cases in the community, the estimated number of contacts, and estimated number of acute respiratory infections. Marathon County's target for July is 1,000 tests per week. Testing goals include;
 - o Respond to every employer, corrections, and congregate care outbreak,
 - o Test every nursing home resident and staff member,

- Establish community testing programs for symptomatic individuals in target communities, and
 - Ensure everyone who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms gets a test.
- Further the development of a comprehensive and coordinated testing plan with area health care systems and the Portage Health & Human Services and Wood County Health Department
- Submit a request to the National Guard to hold a community testing event in Wausau in early August
- Follow-up on 23 active facility outbreaks to ensure best practices are in place to control further spread, having 30 facility outbreaks since April 7
- Followed-up on 12,672 negative, positive, or contacts to cases reported from March 1- July 26, 2020, an increase of 1,518 since July 26. Negatives include imported negative tests from the previous week and underrepresent the total number of negative tests as of July 26.
- Train 7 new contracted employees to join an existing 16 contracted employees to support contact tracing efforts

Community Containment and Mitigation

- Isolate residents tested positive for COVID-19 and quarantine close contacts and assure they have a safe place to stay.
- Notify the Marathon County Sheriff's Office Dispatch of individuals tested positive for COVID-19 to protect law enforcement officers, first responders, and public safety workers
- Field 406 calls from businesses or business related questions since March 25, having 10 calls during the week of July 19
- Maintain 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
- Made application to the National Guard to hold another community testing event in Wausau
- Provide recommendations to public/private schools regarding Department of Public Instruction (DPI) reopen guidance for the fall
- Promote the Wausau Area Chamber of Commerce [Consumer Safety Pledge](#) initiative

Health Care System Response

- Monitor regional availability of health care resources for the COVID-19 response; refer to [daily snapshot hospital capabilities](#)
- Participate in the NCW-HERC (North Central Wisconsin Health Emergency Readiness Coalition) hospital updates to stay abreast of health care system capacity in regards to testing and caring for patients
- 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
- Carryout a county-wide system to respond to PPE requests from allocations received from the state

Communication

- A [Letter to the Community](#) from the Wausau School District Superintendent, D.C. Everest District Superintendent, Greater Wausau Chamber of Commerce, Wausau Mayor and Marathon County Health Department asking individuals to carry out every day actions to limit the virus' spread
- Outreach efforts to populations:
 - Hispanic – Supported the food distribution in Abbotsford by creating a promotional flyer and share with community contacts in Merrill and Abbotsford

- Hmong – Hosted a radio program covered symptoms, what to do if sick, managing symptoms at home, and how to protect yourself and others; Shared funeral guidance with the Hmong American Center in English and Hmong specific to cultural practices – handling food, sunshine money, and giving speeches.
- Plain Clothes – Mailed guidance on softball/sports and information on daily case count and demographic
- Provide accurate, timely and consistent information via [Marathon County Health Department website](#)
- Information provided to community via [Marathon County Health Department Facebook](#)
 - Posts: 23, Shares: 234, New Followers: 92 for week of July 20-26
 - Posts: 529, Shares: 6,119, Followers: 4,495 from March 1 to July 26
- Issued 2 press release, conducted 6 interviews, and 5 media contacts during the week of July 20; a total of 28 press releases and 145 interviews/contact with the media since March 1
- Join the weekly MCDEVCO municipal meeting to provide updates and field questions from area municipalities regarding recommended safety practices
- Promoted Taylor County’s community test event held on July 21
- Responded to 192 calls from the general public during the week of July 20-26

What the Public Can Do

Watch your distance, stay 6 feet from others who don’t live in your household. When gathering with other people limit the number of people. Avoid group gatherings where physical distancing is hard to maintain.

Wear a cloth face covering when out in public and when around people who don’t live in your household, especially when social distancing is difficult to maintain.

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

Reach out for help if you’re feeling overwhelmed. It’s OK to ask for help. Call 211 to find a helping professional. Visit [Helping Wisconsin cope during COVID-19](#).

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.