

Marathon County Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)  
 Situational Report August 17, 2020 (10:00 AM)  
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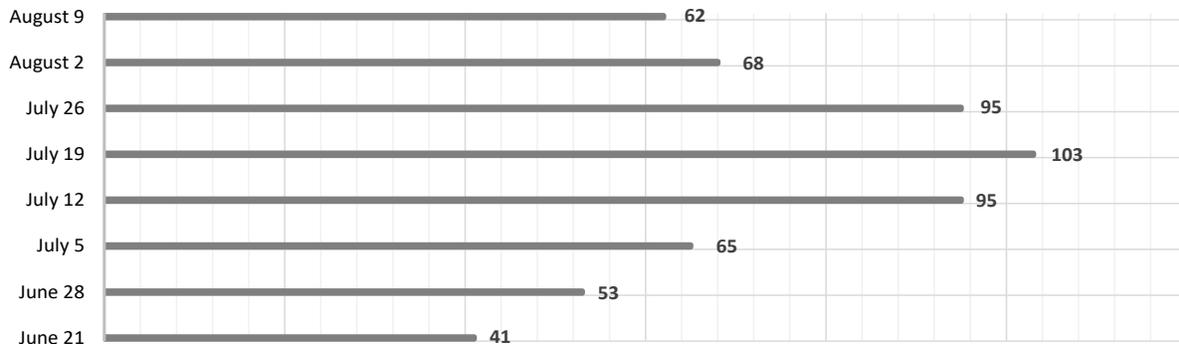
**What we Know**

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 August 15,

- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) reports 5,285,546 cases in the United States, and 167,546 deaths.
- [WI Department of Health Services](#) reports 65,056 cases, 55,172 (84.8%) recovered, 5,275 (8.1%) ever hospitalized, and 1,038 (1.6%) deaths. Refer to [state summary date and county level data](#).
- [Marathon County](#), reports 691 cases, 509 (77%) recovered, 52 (8%) ever hospitalized, and 12 deaths (1.7%). 15,482 residents have tested negative for COVID-19. Refer to [Marathon County COVID-19 Dashboard](#). 20-39 years old account for 40% of all cases, with 24% 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 been high as of June 24.

<p><b>COVID-19 Activity Level Marathon County 8/12/2020</b></p>	<b>Low</b>	<p>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 indoors and in public, wash hands frequently, and stay home if sick.</p>
	<b>Medium</b>	
	<b>High</b>	

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 a mask when you are not at home and indoor spaces or unable to physically distance,
- Wash your hands frequently, and
- Stay home when sick.

COVID-19 has significantly increased in Wisconsin as more people return to work and have more interactions in public. Wisconsinites are being asked to [wear face coverings](#) as a way to slow and prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus. 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 for exposure 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 working to:

- Test every individual who has symptoms of COVID-19,
- Isolate individuals with COVID-19,
- Find everyone who had close contact to infected people, and
- Quarantine all close contacts.



The capacity of health departments to do contact tracing is important to control the spread of COVID-19 in communities. In light of the increase in cases in July, 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 August 9,

[Travel during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

[People at Increased Risk](#)

[Toolkit for People Experiencing Homelessness](#)

[Businesses and Workplaces](#)

[Guidance for K-12 School Administrators on the Use of Cloth Face Coverings in Schools](#)

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

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

[When You Can be Around Others After You Had or Likely Had COVID-19](#)

[COVID-19 Forecasts: Hospitalizations](#)

[COVID-19 and Seasonal Allergies FAQs](#)

[What in-home Social Service Providers and Clients Need to Know about COVID-19](#)  
[Evaluation for SARS-CoV-2 Testing in Animals](#)  
[COVID-19 Forecasts: Cases](#)  
[Hiring in-home services and repairs](#)  
[Worker Safety and Support](#)  
[COVID-19 Employer Information for Gyms and Fitness Centers](#)  
[Information for Pediatric Healthcare Providers](#)  
[Updated Isolation Guidance Does Not Imply Immunity to COVID-19](#)

On August 14, the CDC MMWR (Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report) released [Mental Health, Substance Use, and Suicidal Ideation During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) – United States, June 24-30, 2020. During June 24-30, 2020, U.S. adults reported considerably elevated adverse mental health conditions associated with COVID-19.

American Academy of Pediatrics released [Children and COVID-19: State-Level Data Report](#)

The Commonwealth Fund published [Do Americans Face Greater Mental Health and Economic Consequences from COVID-19? Comparing the U.S. with Other High Income Countries](#)

## Wisconsin

On August 7, the Wisconsin State Journal published [State updates data to include backlog of negative COVID-19 test results](#)

On August 7, the Journal Times publish [Wisconsin's COVID-19 testing ability dropping because supplies are being redirected to other states](#)

On August 7, the WTMJ-TV Milwaukee published [‘The virus is insidious’: Medical College of Wisconsin encourages public to wear masks to combat COVID-19](#)

On August 7, the State of Wisconsin Board of Aging and Long-Term Care released [Changes to Medicare Due to Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

On August 10, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services announced Wisconsin is Forming Partnerships with New Labs to [Support COVID-19 Testing in Nursing Homes and Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities](#)

On August 10, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development released [Information on Unemployment Data](#)

On August 11, the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs released [Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs Receives Nursing Assistance from USDVA and WI National Guard](#)

On August 11, Governor Evers announced [Wisconsin COVID-19 Death Toll Surpasses 1,000](#)

On August 11, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel published [Wisconsin's COVID-19 death toll passes 1,000. Here's a look at who is dying, and how the rate compares to other leading causes of death.](#)

On August 11, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel published [Mask mandates have broad support among Wisconsin voters, new poll shows](#)

On August 11, the AMA published [COVID-19 underlines data need for Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders](#)

On August 11, the AMA published [What national pastime's COVID-19 troubles should teach America](#)

On August 12, message from UW Chancellor Rebecca Blank and Athletic Director Barry Alvarez on today's [decision by the Big Ten to postpone the fall 2020 sports season](#)

On August 12, [Milwaukee Bucks Player Pat Connaughton is # Resilient Wisconsin](#) video

On August 13, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services announced it will be accepting applications for [COVID-19 Testing Pilot](#) which will provide payments to organizations to conduct testing in community-based settings, outbreak-based settings, and in high-risk congregate settings.

On August 13, Governor Evers announced the launch of [Wisconsin's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Investment dashboard](#) website. The [website](#) will provide information regarding how and where Wisconsin is investing federal funding, including significant funding from the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

On August 13, Governor Evers and Lieutenant Governor Barnes release [Let's Mask Up, Wisconsin](#) video

On August 13, the Wisconsin Public Radio published [DHS Hospital Partners Say COVID-19 Testing Materials Have Been Diverted from Wisconsin](#)

On August 13, the Wisconsin State Journal published [Health secretary discourages fans at Packers games this fall](#)

On August 14, the Wisconsin Counties Association released [Guidance in Implementing Regulations Surrounding Communicable Disease](#)

On August 14, the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) issued press release [Board Defines Alternate Season; Winter & Spring Seasons Shortened](#)

## 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 August 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
- Identified 14 cases from the August 7 National Guard community testing event; 548 individuals tested
- Follow-up on 24 active facility outbreaks to ensure best practices are in place to control further spread, having 44 facility outbreaks since April 7
- Follow-up on 18,319 negative, positive, or contacts to cases reported from March 1- August 16, 2020, an increase of 2,077 in the past week. Negatives include imported negative tests from the previous week and underrepresent the total number of negative tests as of August 16
- Oversee 24 contracted employees who are carrying out disease investigation and contact tracing activities

#### Community Containment and Mitigation

- Isolate residents tested positive for COVID-19 and quarantine close contacts and assure they have a safe place to stay
- 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
- Field 429 calls from businesses or business related questions since March 25, having 4 calls during the week of August 10
- Field questions and 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
- Field questions and [complaints](#) regarding Wisconsin's requirement for face coverings

#### 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

- Outreach efforts to populations:
  - Hispanic – Assisted food distribution event held at St. Bernard Parish, redistributed Wausau Regional Chamber Ready Let's Grow daily emails in Spanish
  - Hmong – Redistributed Wausau Regional Chamber Ready Let's Grow daily emails in Hmong

- Plain Clothes – Mailed weekly state and local data, fact sheets on hand washing and mask wearing, and a resource sheet from “Resilient Wisconsin”
- Provide accurate, timely and consistent information via [Marathon County Health Department website](#)
  - Updated the webpage to include Mask Complaint form
- Inform the community via [Marathon County Health Department Facebook](#)
  - Posts: 25, Shares: 257, New Followers: 6 for week of August 10
  - Posts: 603, Shares: 6,843, Followers: 4,625 since March 1
- Issued 1 press release, conducted 3 interviews, and 1 media contacts during the week of August 10; a total of 32 press releases and 163 interviews/contact with the media since March 1
- Field 129 calls from the general public during the week of August 10

## 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 indoors or in an enclosed space, other than at a private residence.

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.