

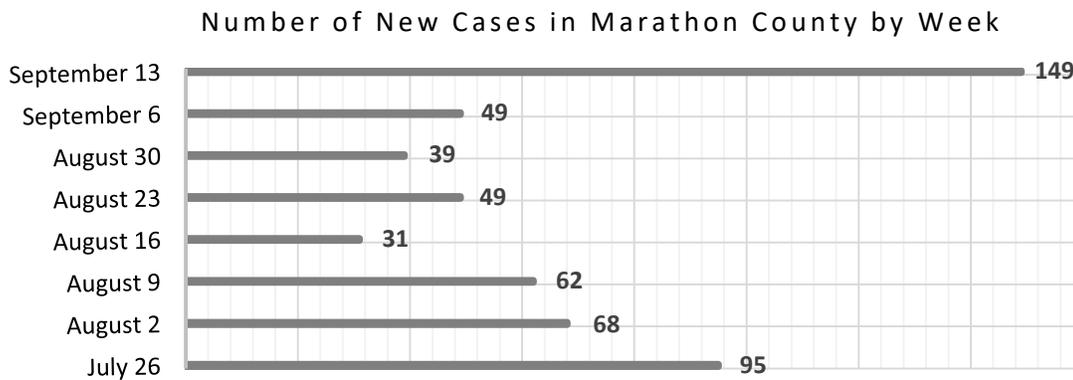
Marathon County Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
 Situational Report September 21, 2020 (10:00 AM)
 Joan Theurer, Health Officer

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 September 19,

- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) reports 6,706,374 cases in the U.S., and 198,099 deaths.
- [WI Department of Health Services](#) reports 99,562 cases in WI, 84,632 (85%) recovered, 6,619 (6.6%) ever hospitalized, and 1,241 (1.2%) deaths. The seven day average of the percent of positive is 9.5%. Refer to [state summary date and county level data](#).
- [Marathon County](#), reports 1,008 cases, 781 (77.5%) recovered, 72 (7%) ever hospitalized, and 14 deaths (1.4%). 19,751 residents have tested negative for COVID-19. Refer to [Marathon County COVID-19 Dashboard](#). 20-39 years old account for 37% of all cases, with 22% 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.



WI Department of Health Services has Marathon County’s [COVID-19 activity level](#) as high. The activity level is based on the number of new cases in the past two weeks and percent change from the previous to the current week.

COVID-19 Activity Level Marathon County on 9/16/2020	Low
	Medium
	High

Individuals, businesses, and other entities can reduce their risk for exposure by practicing physically distancing and avoid large gatherings, wear a face covering when indoors and 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 and schools stay open.

Harm reduction behaviors are actions everyone can take to reduce their risk in 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.

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 complete disease investigation and contact tracing is important to control the spread of COVID-19 in communities. With the surge of cases this past week, the Health Department has been unable to follow-up with every new case within 24 hours and notify close contacts within 48 hours per standard. The department has had to halt the monitoring of individuals in isolation and quarantine to assess their COVID-19 symptoms and ensure their basic needs are met.

Major Developments

U.S.

CDC updates for the week of September 13,

- [General Business Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Travel: Frequently Asked Questions and Answers](#)
- [Considerations for Food Pantries and Food Distribution Sites](#)
- [Indicators for Dynamic School Decision-Making](#)
- [Homelessness and COVID-19 FAQs](#)
- [Long-Term Effects of COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit](#)
- [COVID-19 Forecasts: Hospitalization](#)
- [Help Stop the Spread of COVID-19 in Children](#)
- [Children, Teens, and Young Adults](#)
- [COVID-19 Forecasts: Deaths](#)
- [Keep Children Healthy During the COVID-19 Outbreaks](#)
- [COVID-19 in Children and Teens](#)

[Considerations for Outdoor Farmers Markets](#)
[Travel during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
[New CDC data finds adult obesity is increasing](#)
[Considerations for Monitoring and Evaluation of Mitigation Strategies Implemented in K-12 Schools](#)
[Monitoring and Evaluation of Checklist for K-12 Schools](#)
[Considerations for Outdoor Learning Gardens and Community Gardens](#)
[Overview of Testing for SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\)](#)
[Large-scale Geographic Seroprevalence Surveys](#)
[COVIDView Weekly Summary](#)
[If You Are Sick or Caring for Someone](#)
[Schools and Childcare Programs](#)
[Colleges, Universities, and Higher Learning](#)
[How COVID-19 Spreads](#)
[Cases in the U.S.](#)

On September 13, the World Health Organization (WHO) [Call on Young People to Take Precautionary Measures](#)

On September 15, CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) published [SARS-CoV-2 Associated Deaths Among Persons Aged <21 Years – United States, February 12-July 31, 2020](#)

On September 16, CNBC published [U.S. health officials say CDC is developing new coronavirus testing guidance for screening schools, businesses](#)

On September 18, CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) published [Transmission Dynamics of COVID-19 Outbreaks Associated with Child Care Facilities – Salt Lake City, Utah, April-July 2020](#)

Wisconsin

On September 11, WI Department of Health Services posted [Flu Guy: Flu Vaccine Is Best Prevention](#)

On September 13, CNBC published [Coronavirus cases are going in 11 states – as Fauci warns of ‘disturbing’ data](#); including Wisconsin

On September 14, Governor Evers [Announces \\$8 Million TRAVEL Grants Programs for Tourism Industry](#)

On September 14, Governor Evers, OCI Commissioner Afable, DHS Secretary-designee Palm [Encourage Wisconsinites Who Lost Health Insurance Anytime this Year to Enroll](#)

On September 14, Wisconsin Public Radio published [As COVID-19 cases rise, officials say too few people are tested. ‘COVID-19 fatigue’ could be contributing to low testing rates.](#)

On September 14, WI Department of Workforce Development [Releases information on Unemployment Data](#)

On September 14, WisEye Morning Minute: [Evers Defends Not Naming Businesses Hit By COVID](#)

On September 14, Wisconsin State Journal published [Majority of surveyed Wisconsin districts offering in-person school](#)

On September 14, New York City posted [Certified Young Person Paul Rudd Wants You to Wear a Mask](#)

On September 15, WI Department of Health Services released [The Disability Determination Bureau Accepts Telephonic Signatures on Certain Forms](#)

On September 15, Wisconsin Public Radio published [UW Campuses Still Ramping Up COVID-19 Surveillance Testing Of Dorm Residents](#)

On September 15, WI Department of Health Services released [Crisis Standards of Practice for COVID-19 Contact Tracing and Symptom Monitoring](#)

On September 15, WMTV NBC 15.COM published [Wisconsin likely to return to Chicago's quarantine list next week](#)

On September 16, KHN published [Lack of antigen testing reporting leaves country 'blind to the pandemic'](#)

On September 16, Wisconsin State Journal published [As COVID-19 cases surge, Gov. Tony Evers doesn't rule out extending mask order, other actions](#)

On September 16, Wisconsin Public Radio published [Big Ten reserves course, announces plans for fall season](#)

On September 16, KFF published [COVID-19 Racial Disparities in Testing, Infection, Hospitalization, and Death: Analysis of Epic Patient Data](#)

On September 16, CDC released [COVID-19 Vaccination Program Interim Playbook for Jurisdiction Operations](#)

On September 16, WI Department of Health Services released [New Call Center Expands Support for People in Emotional Distress](#)

On September 17, WI Department of Health Services published [Prevention and Control of Acute Respiratory Illness Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Facilities](#)

On September 17, WI Department of Health Services released [Halloween Guidance](#) posted to the COVID-19 Staying Safe in Your Community page.

On September 17, WI Department of Health Services published [Essential Visitor Guidance for Nursing Homes](#)

On September 17, WI Department of Health Services published [Be Aware of a Text Messaging Scam Targeting FoodShare Members and Applicants](#)

On September 17, the Wisconsin Public Service Commission of Wisconsin announced [PSC Votes to Extend COVID-19 Utility Disconnection Moratorium to Nov. 1](#)

On September 18, WI Department of Health Services released [Wisconsin Awarded \\$16.7 Million Federal Grant to Counter Addictions to Opioids and Stimulants](#)

On September 19, USA Today Network Wisconsin published [Coronavirus in Wisconsin Schools: Search and track COVID-19 cases](#)

Actions Marathon County is Taking

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

- Carry out standards based on staff capacity given the number of new cases in a day; 1) respond to reports of confirmed cases and conduct contact tracing to identify close contacts within 24 hours, 2) notify close contacts within 48 hours, and 3) monitor those in isolation and quarantine to assess their COVID-19 symptoms and ensure their basic needs are being met.
- 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. Marathon County's target for September 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,
 - o Establish community testing programs for symptomatic individuals in target communities, and
 - o Ensure everyone who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms gets a test.

For the time period of September 2-15, the percent positive was 5.3% for a total of 2,802 tests performed during this two week time period.

- 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; assessing flu and COVID testing capacities, explore surge testing models
- Follow-up on 15 active facility outbreaks to ensure best practices are in place to control further spread, having 66 facility outbreaks since April 7
- Follow-up on 23,782 negative, positive, or contacts to cases reported from March 1- September 20, 2020, an increase of 1323 in the past week. Negative reports have been processed and imported into the state database thru September 16
- Trained 1 new contracted employee; oversee a total of 26 contracted employees who are carrying out disease investigation and contact tracing activities or support tasks

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 452 calls from businesses or business related questions since March 25, having 8 calls during the week of September 13
- 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](#), provide education and resources to area businesses/organizations regarding Wisconsin's requirement for face coverings. Received 45 complaints the week of September 13 for a total of 646 since the on-line form was made available on August 13

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:
 - o Hispanic – Provided Flu vs. COVID materials to be distributed by Community Liaison
 - o Hmong – Sent the flyer on Hmong Institute Resource to the Hmong American Center
 - o Plain Clothes – Mailed guidance on risk associated with mass gatherings, where to get tested, and updated data and case counts
- Provide accurate, timely and consistent information via [Marathon County Health Department website](#)
- Inform the community via [Marathon County Health Department Facebook](#)
 - o Posts: 18, Shares: 144, New Followers: 56 for week of September 13
 - o Posts: 695, Shares: 7,233, Followers: 4,749 since March 1
- Conducted 5 interviews during the week of September 13; for a total of 34 press releases and 177 interviews/contact with the media since March 1
- Field 159 calls from the general public during the week of September 13

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.