

Eau Claire COVID-19 Prevention and Control Order Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

Is COVID-19 a disease or a virus?	Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a disease that is caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).
Why was there a local order issued?	On May 13, 2020, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that the Safer-at-Home Order was not enforceable. This local order has been issued to minimize the risk of Eau Claire County experiencing a surge of COVID-19 cases that would surpass our healthcare system capacity.
Why was the local order extended to July 8?	The new order will go into effect at 12:00 am on June 25, 2020 through July 8, 2020, though the decision to modify the order may occur before then or a new order may be issued in the interim. The need for and details of local public health orders are based on public health principles and local data. Local orders are updated or modified based on increased understanding of the COVID-19 disease and the status of local disease spread and preparedness. Current data and understanding of COVID-19 indicate the need for only a minor relaxation of requirements for public gatherings.
What is changed with the new order effective June 25, 2020?	A number of changes are effective with the new order including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public gatherings may have up to 100 people indoors and 250 people outdoors, with physical distancing between households maintained. • Door-to-door solicitation is discouraged, but not prohibited. • Recommended occupancy for public spaces and buildings is 50%. • Limiting the number of workers present on premises is recommended, but not required. • Self-service food and beverage operations and self-dispensing unpackaged food are discouraged, but not prohibited. • Physical distancing must be regulated in smaller spaces where large groups may form, such as restrooms, coat closets, or other spaces. • Waiting areas at 1-on-1 personal services are now encouraged to remain closed, but not required to be closed. • Wearing a cloth face covering when physical distancing can not be maintained is strongly encouraged.
How are public health departments able to issue a local order?	Chapter 252 of the Wisconsin Statutes specifically authorizes local health officers to respond as is “reasonable and necessary” to suppress and contain disease. This order is issued in accordance with that authority.
How will this order be enforced?	When enforcing this local order, the main goal is to provide education about safest practices for stopping the spread of COVID-19. If a person or business continues to violate the order after receiving education, local law enforcement has the authority to enforce the order, and the person or business may receive a citation.

Why is this important?	Immunity to the virus is uncertain, which means anyone who comes into contact with it could get sick. There is no vaccine to prevent people from getting ill, and people of all ages, from babies to elderly people, can get very sick from this virus. Certain people, including older adults and people who have severe medical conditions (heart or lung disease, diabetes) are at higher risk for more serious complications.
Why are other counties doing different things?	As required by statute, every local health officer must act as appropriate for the conditions in their jurisdiction, which may lead to differences between counties. If you have questions about actions another county has taken, please contact that county directly.

Travel, Gatherings, and Public Events & Spaces

Am I required to stay home?	No, you are not mandated to stay home. The order strongly encourages everyone to stay at home or their place of residence, minimize travel out of Eau Claire County, and keep the number of in-person contacts minimal to decrease the spread of disease.
Is it okay to hold religious services under this order?	Activities falling under 1st Amendment protections (such as religious gatherings or political assembly) are not included in the prohibition on public gatherings and are permitted.
What qualifies as a public gathering?	Public gatherings are those planned events that are intended to gather a number of people for a prolonged period (more than 15min). Examples may include movie, concert, festival, conference, sporting event, meeting, lesson, or class. Social gatherings such as wedding receptions, parties, celebrations, and funeral visitations are also considered public gatherings if held in a location open to the public.
What are the requirements for public gatherings?	Gatherings must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet all of the requirements for public spaces (Paragraph #2) in the order, including 6 ft distance between people that don't live together - Not have more than 100 people when meeting indoors - Not have more than 250 people when meeting outdoors - Have documentation (by organizers) of all attendee name, address, email, and phone number - Screen and prevent (by organizers) attendance of anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19
Are employees included in the attendee limit?	Paid employees and volunteers who would not otherwise attend the event are excluded from the attendee limit. Employees and volunteers who would not otherwise attend the event are generally not at an event with

	the purpose to participate and are needed to assist in the health and safety measures.
What if my gathering is held at a venue with both indoor and outdoor space?	If the gathering will utilize both indoor and outdoor space at the same venue, the gathering must be limited to the indoor gathering limit (100 people under the June 25 order).
Does the order restrict sporting events?	Sporting events that result in a gathering of more than 100 people in an indoor setting or more than 250 people in an outdoor setting, including all spectators and participants, are prohibited. Sporting events that result in a gathering below these limits may be permissible if the nature of the activity allows for physical distancing to be maintained and the other requirements of the order (Paragraph #2 and #3) are maintained (e.g. tennis, golf).
Am I required to wear a face covering?	<p>In close contact situations cloth face coverings worn by all people involved may be protective, and this order strongly encourages people to wear them in these settings, if it is safe to do so. It is important to note that cloth face masks are not a substitute for physical distancing.</p> <p>The order requires the use of face coverings in one-on-one personal service settings that cannot maintain six feet of physical distancing because of the closeness needed to provide the service, such as at salons or body art facilities. Examples of situations in which face covering use may not be feasible include children under the age of 2 and other people that are unable to remove a mask without assistance. Additionally, persons with health conditions that make breathing difficult may not be able to wear a mask. In each of these situations, it is strongly recommended that these 1-on-1 services be discouraged if they are optional. Masks should not be worn while in the water, such as while swimming.</p>
Does this order restrict landlord entry?	This order does not prohibit a landlord from entering a residence in accordance with all other legal requirements but does require that physical distance is maintained in such settings.
What does this order mean for outdoor markets?	A communal marketplace (farmer’s market, flea market, craft sale) may not always be considered a public gathering. Similar to an indoor retail space, if customers are present with the intention to shop and not to congregate in groups for a period of time, the marketplace would be required to follow the restrictions for public spaces in Paragraph #2 . Any event that occurs within the marketplace, such as a demonstration or performance, would be considered a public gathering and required to follow the public gathering restrictions. Six ft physical distance between

	anyone in the marketplace who doesn't live together must be maintained at all times.
Can parks, playgrounds, and other amenities be open?	Under this order, all businesses, facilities, playgrounds, campgrounds and other amenities may open and operate unless they are unable to meet and maintain the safety and protection measures outlined in the order. Local municipalities may make decisions based on their ability to carry out these procedures. Physical distancing should be maintained at all time when using any open facility and be aware that surfaces may need disinfecting prior to use.
How does this order affect travel?	Travel for leisure is strongly discouraged but not prohibited. Please review the orders in the community that you are traveling to in order to determine local requirements, if any. If leaving Eau Claire County and breaking physical distancing or otherwise engaging in activities that may expose oneself to COVID-19, self-quarantine is encouraged for 14 days once you return, along with monitoring for symptoms. Please see additional information regarding travel on the Wisconsin Department of Health Services website at https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/travel.htm
Are car parades allowed?	Car parades are not recommended as they may create an opportunity for disease to spread between people. If car parades do take place, it is very important to make sure physical distancing (at least 6 feet between people of different households) is maintained, riders in cars remain in the vehicles, and the parade is not a hazard to public safety. Parades need to meet the requirements in #2 of the order .
Are garage/thrift sales allowed?	Garage sales that are held on private property are not considered public space or a public gathering for the purposes of this order. However, the WI Dept of Health Services recommends postponing or cancelling garage sales. If a sale is held, hosts are strongly encouraged to consider incorporating physical distancing, routine cleaning, and other disease prevention measures during their sales. Additional suggestions for ideas to effectively host a sale are available here: https://coronavirus-and-covid-19-information-hub-eccounty.hub.arcgis.com/pages/community-events-and-gatherings
Are window visits allowed at long-term care facilities/assisted living facilities/nursing homes?	Window visits are not recommended as elderly residents of these facilities are especially likely to get very ill from COVID-19. These visits create opportunities for potential spread of disease to our most vulnerable populations. Long-term care facilities should continue to implement policies and practices that are consistent with CDC and Wisconsin DHS guidelines.

Businesses and Employees

<p>How do I know if my business can open?</p>	<p>This order relies on public health principles to guide business operations. If your business is unable to comply with the public health and safety practice provisions in paragraph 2 of the order or is a venue for public gatherings as defined in section 3, then those elements of your business should not be operating.</p>
<p>Is physical distancing required at my facility?</p>	<p>With limited exemptions, physical distancing must be maintained at any open public space and building to comply with this order. Please review paragraph 2 of the order for details.</p>
<p>How is the local order different for businesses than the Safer-at-Home order?</p>	<p>The local order does not make a distinction between “essential” businesses and “non-essential” businesses. The intent of the order is that all businesses can open if operating in compliance with the restrictions in the local order which is based on specific risk for the spread of COVID 19.</p>
<p>What is incidental and brief contact as it relates to the physical distancing requirements?</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that maintaining 6 feet of physical distance at all times is not possible in all settings. Situations such as passing by someone in an aisle or walkway or completing a brief sales transaction are not prohibited by the order. However, measures are identified in the WEDC reopen guidelines to reduce risk for disease transmission in such settings, including but not limited to the installation of physical barriers.</p>
<p>What constitutes a public vs. private space or building?</p>	<p>A public space or building includes those spaces outdoors and indoors that are held open for public use and to which the public is invited. This generally does not include residential yards, or parking lots or portions of buildings reserved and signed for employee or resident use only.</p> <p>Private spaces or buildings involving gatherings of individuals outside of a household unit are encouraged to observe physical distancing at all times, and review and apply WEDC guidelines as appropriate.</p>
<p>How can I determine a safe occupancy limit for my facility?</p>	<p>Venues that host public gatherings (defined earlier in this document) are unable to hold events of more than 100 people indoors or 250 outdoors – with physical distancing maintained - unless meeting a Constitutionally protected exception. They must also meet paragraph 2 of the order.</p> <p>Public spaces and business operations that do not fit the definition of a public gathering must meet the standards identified in paragraph 2 of the order. In addition, recommended occupancy is 50%. The intent of this number is to provide facility owners and operators with a preliminary number to calculate potentially allowable occupancy. However, each facility is responsible for ensuring that their facility can effectively facilitate physical distancing of 6 feet and must account for the actual layout and furnishing of their facility when identifying a suitable occupancy limit.</p>

<p>Are the WEDC guidelines a recommendation or required?</p>	<p>Businesses may operate if they are able to meet all of the requirements of the order. If businesses may operate under the order, then they must also review and apply the WEDC requirements as much as possible.</p>
<p>Can my business that provides one-on-one services (e.g. hair/nail salons, tattoo/piercing parlors) be open?</p>	<p>All businesses must meet the requirements of paragraph 2 of the order to operate. One-on-one personal services that by their nature cannot maintain six foot physical distancing need to follow additional safety measures which are outlined in the order and listed on the covid19eauclaire.org website. These services are recommended to have no more than 20 clients per day, per provider and waiting rooms are recommended to be closed</p>
<p>How many appointments are allowed at my facility each day if the facility provides one-on-one personal services?</p>	<p>Providers (individual practitioners, stylist, body artist, etc.) are recommended a maximum of 20 appointments per day with time being allotted to clean and disinfect between each appointment.</p> <p>In a single facility where multiple providers/practitioners conduct services at the same time, the number of providers/practitioners is also limited to the number that can operate with the required 6 ft physical distance being maintained between each practitioner’s workstation.</p>
<p>Can a grocery store provide self-service of food?</p>	<p>Grocery stores are discouraged to provide self-service operations (food or beverages) and self-dispensing of unpackaged foods.</p>
<p>How can I effectively monitor employees and customers for COVID-19 symptoms?</p>	<p>Employees should not work if they have any symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19 or have been identified as a contact of an individual that has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Business owners are encouraged to implement policies and procedures to make being absent for illness purposes as simple as possible for their employees.</p> <p>Employers must adopt policies to screen and prevent customers, visitors, and guests from entering their premises that are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or have been identified as a contact of an individual that has been diagnosed with COVID-19. The order does not require any specific method for this and should not be interpreted as requiring any interviewing or evaluation of all visiting customers, although facilities may elect to implement such policies. Symptoms are listed on our website covid19eauclaire.org.</p>
<p>What should I do if someone at my business refuses to follow safety procedures?</p>	<p>It is the responsibility of each business owner to ensure that their facility complies with these principles. Facility owners have the right to restrict access and service to individuals that compromise their ability to comply the order.</p>

Schools and Childcare

<p>Are there different expectations for childcare centers and schools related to occupancy?</p>	<p>Our local public health order establishes the same expectations for childcare settings and schools. Both are subject to the applicable parts of the local public health order and should follow the guidance provided by their respective state agency (DCF, DPI). Examples of the relevant portions of the local public health order include the 50% occupancy recommendation, requirement of 6 ft distance where possible, and the active screening for ill employees or visitors.</p>
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