

September 16, 2020

TO: Kathryn Schauf, Dale Peters

FR: Merey Price

RE: Eau Claire City Council and County Board Ordinances related to Communicable Disease General Orders

Based on the 9/14/20 Eau Claire Board of Health meeting, as president of the Board I would like to offer the following summary of our recommendations to the Eau Claire City Council and Eau Claire County Board for their consideration. The Board of Health unanimously passed the motion regarding these recommendations.

Undoubtedly all involved want to protect the health of the community. However, as the governing body of the Health Department, according to state statute the Board of Health has responsibility for protecting the health of the public. In both the City and County proposed communicable disease ordinances there are two areas we believe could negatively impact the public's health.

In a situation where the City Council and County Board do not agree on the appropriateness of a general order and one body approves while the other does not, that will create a patchwork of expectations and enforcement that will add confusion, questions and ultimately impact the effectiveness of managing the communicable disease.

The other area of concern is the potential delay of necessary public health action during a crisis when timing will be critical. The requirement for publication limited to the local newspaper could mean a delay since the local paper is no longer published 7 days/week. Language in the ordinance related to official publication being as soon as possible would best protect the public.

During the midst of this pandemic, we recognize there is a wide variance in public opinion and beliefs about COVID-19. Nonetheless, you can be assured that the local health officer, Health Department and Board of Health will continue to support the public's health using the best public health principles and practices available. We also appreciate the heavy responsibility for any person or group involved in making public health decisions and always stand ready to assist.

Thank you.