Tony Evers
Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

Good afternoon,

I want to provide you with an update of how the Department of Health Services is responding to COVID-19. The number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 has been increasing internationally as well as here in the United States. Because of this, we are adapting our response to prepare for a possible pandemic.

What are we doing?

- We are continuing to closely monitor the situation and conduct disease surveillance for COVID-19. To date, we have had one person test positive for COVID-19 in Wisconsin. **The risk of anyone getting COVID-19 in Wisconsin is still low.**
- We are working with CDC, local public health agency partners, and healthcare systems to ensure they are prepared to handle a pandemic.
- We are developing and sharing guidance for employers, schools, childcare programs, and colleges/universities to help them plan for a pandemic.

What can you do?

It's always good practice to be prepared for emergency situations, whether it is due to disease, an extreme weather event, or power outage. Take time now and make sure you and your loved ones are ready for any of these types of events.

Always practice good hygiene and health habits:

- **COVID-19 spreads like the flu—through respiratory droplets. You can do the following to help stop its spread:**
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water and scrub for at least 20 seconds.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- o Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - o Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- **Also, remember it's not too late to get your flu vaccine! Wisconsin has been hit hard by the flu and other respiratory viruses this year.**
- **Stay home when you are sick.**
- Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces and objects.
- **Practice other good health habits.** Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

While the risk of anyone getting COVID-19 in Wisconsin is still low, it is important to have a plan. If there is a COVID-19 pandemic in Wisconsin, the Department of Health Services recommends you:

- **Make sure you have medications for you and your family (including pets!).** Make sure you have any prescription and nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.
- **Get your health records.** Get copies and maintain electronic versions of health records from doctors, hospitals, pharmacies, and other sources, and store them for personal reference.
- **Talk with family members and loved ones.** Make sure you know how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them.
- **Plan for school closures.** If you have children, start to plan alternative childcare options if there are school closures.
- **Talk with your supervisor.** Find out about work from home options or flexible leave possibilities. DPM will be providing guidance to supervisors across the enterprise in case of a pandemic.
- **Store a two week supply of water and food.**

How can you stay updated?

Please keep in mind that this is an evolving situation and our advice may change in the upcoming weeks and months. For up to date information on COVID-19 in Wisconsin, please see the DHS [Outbreaks and Investigations webpage](#).

Thank you,

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