

From: [DCF BWF Work Programs Help Desk](#)
To: [DCF DL DFES BWF W-2 Agency CARES Coordinators](#); [DCF DL DFES BWF W-2 Agency Directors](#); [DCF DL DFES BWF TJ TMJ](#)
Cc: [DCF DL DFES BWF W-2 REGIONAL STAFF](#); [DCF DL DFES BWF Supervisors](#); [DCF DL DFES PTT W-2 Staff](#)
Subject: COVID-19 Executive Order Declaring Public Health Emergency and Requiring Face Coverings in Wisconsin
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Good Morning.

On July 30, 2020, Governor Evers issued a statewide mask order in response to the recent spike of COVID-19 cases throughout much of Wisconsin. Science and public health experts continue to highlight the importance of everyone wearing a mask. Below is the Governor's Order, which also contains a copy of the [public health emergency](#), [mask order](#), and [an FAQ document](#). Please do not hesitate to share any of the information provided.

Office of Governor Tony Evers



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 30, 2020

Contact: GovPress@wisconsin.gov or 608-219-7443

Gov. Evers Issues Executive Order Declaring Public Health Emergency and Requiring Face Coverings Statewide

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today declared a Public Health Emergency and issued an Emergency Order requiring individuals to wear face coverings when indoors and not in a private residence, with some exceptions as clarified and defined in the order. The order is effective at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, August 1, 2020, and will expire on September 28, 2020 or by a subsequent superseding order. Executive Order #82 declaring a public health emergency is available [here](#) and Emergency Order #1 requiring face coverings statewide is available [here](#).

“While our local health departments have been doing a heck of a job responding to this pandemic in our communities, the fact of the matter is, this virus doesn't care about any town, city, or county boundary, and we need a statewide approach to get Wisconsin back on track,” said Gov. Evers. “We’ve said all along that we’re going to let science and public health experts be our guide in responding to this pandemic, and we know that masks and face coverings will save lives. While I know emotions are high when it comes to wearing face coverings in public, my job as governor is to put people first and to do what's best for the people of our state, so that's what I am going to do.”

Wisconsin is seeing new and significant community spread and increase in cases of COVID-19 which requires that we declare a new public health emergency and require face coverings. Wisconsin has experienced a drastic rise in COVID-19 cases throughout the entire state, with 61 of 72 counties (84 percent) representing 96 percent of the state's population experiencing high COVID-19 activity. All regions of Wisconsin have high COVID-19 activity levels. This is a dramatic increase from where Wisconsin was in June, when only 19 of 72 counties (26%) were experiencing high COVID-19 activity.

The average number of new confirmed cases of COVID-19 has drastically increased throughout July, with an average of 556 new cases each day between July 1-7, an average of 764 new cases each day between July 8-14 (a 37% increase from the previous week), an average of 890 new cases each day between July 15-21 (a 16% increase from the previous week), and an average of 938 new cases each day between July 22-26 (a 5% increase from the previous week).

Under this order, Wisconsin residents ages five and older are required to wear a face covering when they are indoors or in an enclosed space with anyone outside their household or living unit. Face coverings are strongly recommended if you are outdoors and maintaining physical distancing is not possible. The order also enumerates exceptions to the requirement, listing activities such as when an individual is eating, drinking, or swimming. Individuals with health conditions or disabilities that would preclude the wearing of a face covering safely are also exempt from the requirement. A frequently asked questions (FAQ) document is available [here](#).

“The data is what drives our decisions, and that data tells us we have significant community spread in Wisconsin and need to take statewide action,” said DHS Secretary-designee Andrea Palm. “Community spread means that any interaction out in the community can mean exposure, and because people can spread COVID-19 without symptoms or even knowing they are sick, we need to take universal precautions in order for wearing face coverings to be effective.”

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the medical and scientific community continues to learn more about the virus, including how to best prevent its transmission. Recent scientific studies show that wearing face coverings is very effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

“Staying home, limiting interactions, practicing physical distancing, and washing your hands thoroughly are still the most effective ways to stop the spread,” said Dr. Ryan Westergaard, Wisconsin’s Chief Medical Officer and the State Epidemiologist for Communicable Diseases. “But we learn something new about this virus every day. A growing number of scientific studies tell us that face coverings, when used correctly and consistently by a large percentage of the community, are extremely effective for preventing the spread of COVID-19 through respiratory droplets.”

For up-to-date information about Wisconsin’s COVID-19 response, visit the DHS [COVID-19 webpage](#). We also encourage you to follow @DHSWI on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), or dhs.wi on [Instagram](#) for more information on COVID-19.

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Office of the Governor ♦ 115 East Capitol, Madison, WI 53702
Press Office: (608) 219-7443 ♦ Email: GovPress@wisconsin.gov
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If you have any questions regarding policies, please contact the W-2 Policy Mailbox at DCFW2PolicyQuestions@wisconsin.gov or the Help Desk at BWFworkprogramsHD@wisconsin.gov as appropriate. For contract questions, please contact Linda Richardson at Linda1.Richardson@wisconsin.gov. Your regional staff are also available for questions.

Thank you.

Jes Moss

Contract Manager

Bureau of Working Families

Division of Family and Economic Security

Department of Children and Families

201 E Washington Ave, A200

Madison, WI 53703

T: 608.422.6311

F: 608.261.6376

E: Jessica.moss@wisconsin.gov