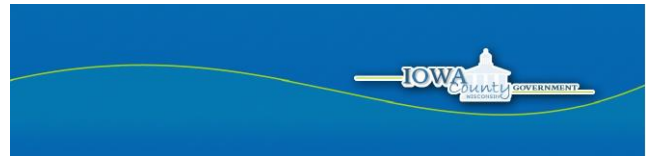


## IOWA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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*For Immediate Release*

### Iowa County Health Department

Director/Health Officer Debbie Siegenthaler RN, MSN

#### Wisconsin Supreme Court Overturns Safer At Home; Plans in Iowa County

**Iowa County** – Late yesterday we learned that the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled against Governor Evers and Wisconsin DHS Secretary-designee Andrea Palm to overturn Emergency Order #28, the Safer At Home Order.

We've been getting calls and messages around what's next locally. Take heed that leadership in Iowa County including the Health Department, Corporation Counsel, Sheriff's Department, Emergency Management, County Administrator, County Board, District Attorney, municipalities and local law enforcement took significant time and thoughtful effort today to devise a plan that protects public health and moves forward the local economy. It is critical we continue with essential preventative measures in our community under these new circumstances.

Iowa County Health Department Officer/Director Debbie Siegenthaler urges county residents to continue taking the necessary steps to protect the health and safety of themselves, their families and community. We commend the residents of Iowa County for the efforts made with public health efforts to slow the spread of COVID 19. We have been successful in slowing the spread and flattening the curve in Iowa County and we want to continue to keep residents safe and healthy.

"Now is not the time to stop our successful preventive measures in Iowa County", said Debbie Siegenthaler, Director/Health Officer, Iowa County Health Department. "After lengthy discussion and thoughtful consideration with key leaders locally, Iowa County has elected to not issue a local order at this time. It is important that residents and businesses understand the issuance of an order remains an option and may be implemented if voluntary compliancy is not sufficient. Siegenthaler adds, "In the event the spread of the virus overwhelms our public health and/or healthcare response or unreasonably jeopardizes public health, we will need to exercise options that protect the health of Iowa County residents".

"I expect and trust that businesses will take responsibility to protect the health of their employees and customers and assist in the prevention and transmission of COVID-19 in their facilities", said Siegenthaler. Businesses and consumers are encouraged to follow Safer at Home principals and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) guidelines <https://wedc.org/reopen-guidelines/>. Detailed guidance, by sector, is available through [WEDC](#) and [DHS](#).

There are many things that businesses and organizations should be doing to prepare for a safe reopening, including:

- Develop flexible sick leave policies that encourage staying home when ill
- Set aggressive infection
- Ensure all operations support 6' physical distancing
- Implement a system to limit and direct traffic in your business

control policies (hand washing, surface cleaning, barriers to reduce contact between customers and staff)

- Source needed disinfectants, soap, sanitizer, and PPE if used

- Create a system to monitor any symptoms your employees may have

- Cross train and prepare for absenteeism

- Ensure policies are consistent with public health guidance, state and federal law

- Communicate your plan to employees and customers

Siegenthaler adds, "Now, more than ever, it is important to take the following steps to protect yourself and others from COVID-19:"

- Stay home as much as possible and if you are sick.
- Minimize physical contact with anyone outside of your household.
- Maintain 6 feet of distance between yourself and others if you need to go out.
- Minimize travel, especially to areas considered to be "viral hot spots" within and beyond our state borders.
- Practice good hygiene:
  - Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
  - Avoid touching your face.
- Wear a fabric face covering when you must be in public.
- Individuals over the age of 60 should consider sheltering-in-place to protect themselves from COVID-19. For more information visit <https://www.cdc.gov/.../2019-.../prevent-getting-sick/index.html>

The Iowa County Health Department will continue to follow up on positive cases of COVID-19 and conduct contact tracing for contacts of positive cases. As of 2pm, May 14, 2020, the Iowa County Health Department has identified 11 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Remember, COVID-19 doesn't spread itself. People spread it. We don't have a cure or a vaccine yet. Our best tool is isolation for those we know are sick and physically distancing ourselves from others. Each of us represents an opportunity to interrupt the transmission of this virus. The Iowa County Health Department will continue to keep you up to date on information that impacts our community.

**Please monitor the following Social Media sites:**

Iowa County Public Health on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/iowacountyhealthdepartment/>

Upland Hills Health on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/UplandHillsHealthHospital/>

Iowa County Emergency Management on Twitter - <https://twitter.com/ICEMWI>

Iowa County Emergency Management on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/icemwi/>

**Monitor the following websites:**

Iowa County COVID 19 <https://www.iowacounty.org/>

Upland Hills Health <https://www.uplandhillshealth.org/patient-visitors/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-information/>

WI Department of Health Services (DHS) <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/outbreaks/index.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>