



## Health Department

Empowered to Live Well

June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Dear resident:

On May 19<sup>th</sup>, the Health Department issued guidelines for businesses and organizations to assist them with safe reopening. Our goal was to provide guidance to support a measured, phased approach to resume business, retail and commercial operations. In reviewing our key indicators today, our indicators show promising trends, but we also know COVID-19 is still circulating in our community. All of the indicators have become yellow or green. With this, the health department is moving to Phase C of our reopening plan for those businesses and organizations who can safely follow guidelines in this Phase. If a business or organization is not able to follow safe business practices with an expanded reopening, we advise they continue to follow Phase B guidelines.

While businesses are able to expand the number of customers they serve in Phase C, it continues to be critically important to protect ourselves and our neighbors when we are out in the public by keeping our distance from one another, wearing cloth face coverings, practicing good respiratory etiquette, and making sure we are all washing or sanitizing our hands frequently. These steps will help us stop the spread when we are out shopping at the grocery store, visiting a restaurant, getting our haircut, etc. These messages may sound old and tiresome, but by continuing to practice these everyday habits, we can continue to see steady progress in reducing the spread of COVID-19. These messages and recommendations will continue regardless of what phase of reopening our communities are in.

Here is a brief summary of our indicators:

**Cases:** The data for our case totals change dramatically by the day. In assessing our trends, this indicator continues to be **yellow**, which is no clear upward or downward trend.

**Testing:** The number of COVID-19 tests performed each day continues to be below the threshold of 2,000 tests per day in Milwaukee County; however, the percent of tests resulted as positive is now below 10%. This indicator has changed from red to **yellow**.

**Care:** Our care indicator is currently **green**, which shows that none of our hospitals are in crisis care and less than 10% of hospitalized patients are COVID+.

**PPE:** This indicator is **yellow**, showing that hospitals have 8-28 days of the personal protective equipment supply they need.

**Tracing:** This indicator is also **yellow** and demonstrates the public health systems' ability to contact and identify those who have been exposed in a timely manner. Many of the Milwaukee County health departments are able to do this tracing for our cases. The



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challenge, and often the time delay, is getting detailed information and reaching individuals.

With all of the indicators in yellow or green the suburban Milwaukee County health departments will be recommending businesses and organizations proceed with caution as they begin to follow Phase C guidelines. This includes the guidelines for restaurants and bars to be at 75% occupancy, retail stores at 50% capacity, and places of amusement at 50% capacity. Additionally, the recommendation is for mass gathering limits to be at 50 people or fewer. Examples of large events and gatherings include conferences, festivals, parades, concerts, sporting events, weddings, and other types of assemblies. Mass gatherings, large community events and being in public settings like stores and restaurants can contribute to the spread of COVID-19, so while we are adjusting these guidelines, we ask people to continue to take precautions when in public settings or gathering in groups. These precautions include:

- \*Maintaining a social distance with people of more than six feet;
- \*Wearing cloth face coverings;
- \*Washing hands frequently;
- \*Keeping the event or gathering outside as much as possible; and
- \*Having people stay home if they are ill.

The Health Department will continue to monitor our criteria to assess when we can fully move into full reopening. All of our guidelines should be used in conjunction with sector specific guidelines by agencies like the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation ([WEDC](#)), the Wisconsin Department of Health Services ([DHS](#)), the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families ([DCF](#)) and others. The Health Department supports the growth and recovery of all businesses as we work together to achieve our goals within a community that must learn to operate with the presence of COVID-19

### Resources for Reopening:

- Suburban Milwaukee County Safe Opening Capacity Guidance [Chart](#)
- Milwaukee County of Emergency Management [dashboard](#)
- WEDC Reopen [Guidelines](#)
- The Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, Medical College of Wisconsin and Milwaukee 7 Economic Development Partnership collaborated to launch an online toolkit designed to help businesses open and operate safely. It can be accessed [here](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Jacqueline M. Ove, MS".

Jacqueline Ove

Health Officer