



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Health Department  
414.302.8600

October 30, 2020

To all who live, work, and play in the City of West Allis and Village of West Milwaukee:

The West Allis Health Department along with community leaders and residents has been responding to COVID-19 for many months. We certainly recognize the toll this situation has taken on everyone. Throughout the summer we were able to keep our case numbers under control and did not surpass the resources of our healthcare systems. Unfortunately, in recent weeks the numbers have increased locally, across Wisconsin and across the country. The growing number of cases is alarming because these cases are impacting our health department's ability to prevent further spread in the community, and our ability to investigate and contact trace everyone with COVID-19 or exposed to COVID-19. We, along with Milwaukee County, have reached a critical level of disease activity and burden. See our [Health Alert and Community Call to Action](#) for additional information on how you can help stop the spread of COVID-19.

**How are local public health departments responding to the surge in COVID-19 cases?** In the event a health department is not able to consistently notify positive cases and their close contacts in a timely manner, the West Allis Health Department along with other Milwaukee County-based Health Departments developed a prioritization framework to respond to confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in our jurisdiction. Due to the rapid and significant increase in disease activity, prioritization of follow-up will be given to the following groups that test positive:

- Age 65 and older;
- Children who are 19 years old and younger;
- College age students;
- Individuals that are connected to a facility outbreak or potential outbreak;
- All other individuals will be contacted as capacity allows

Putting this framework in place is necessary because of current conditions and in anticipation of continued escalation in COVID-19 cases. Additionally, the West Allis Health Department is asking residents who test positive with COVID-19 do the following:

- Stay home and isolate for a minimum of 10 days after symptom onset. If you did not have symptoms and were tested, remain isolated for 10 days from the date of testing. For detailed instructions go to <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02627.pdf>.
- You can return to work or school on day 11 if you meet the established criteria (free of fever and improvement in other symptoms for 24 hours).
- Notify your employer or school.
- **Notify your close contacts and tell them to quarantine for 14 days from their last date of contact with you. You can notify them directly or through [www.tellyourcontacts.org](http://www.tellyourcontacts.org).**

**What does this change mean for schools, team sports and youth activities, workplaces, and households?**

Schools:

School nurses/administration will be expected to identify and notify all close contacts exposed in the school (including classrooms, recess, extracurricular activities, sports, etc.) and provide instructions for quarantine. The school nurses will handle all questions from families and faculty/staff. The school nurses will reach out to the West Allis Health Department with any questions they are unable to answer. We will continue to provide return to work/school letters, as needed.



**Team Sports and Youth Activities:**

We will direct COVID-19 positive individuals to notify their coaches/organization leaders of their status and potential exposures on the team. Team Sports and Youth Activities not sponsored by the school district will be responsible for identifying and notifying participants of exposure and instructions for quarantine if they are a close contact to a confirmed case. These organizations may reach out to us with any questions, but we will not contact them with every team or youth activity exposure.

**Workplaces:**

When notified of a positive case, we will contact the employer to inform them of the positive case(s). Workplaces will be responsible for identifying and notifying employees of possible exposure and instructions for quarantine if they are a close contact to a confirmed case. Businesses can reach out to us with any questions.

**Household:**

We will request COVID-19 positive individuals to notify their household contacts (family members and roommates) of their exposure. We will provide positive individuals with quarantine information that they can pass along to their household contacts.

**So what can the community do?** As the number of cases in our community continues to climb it is vitally important for all of us to do our best to avoid non-essential public gatherings and outings. The West Allis Health Department, along with other suburban Milwaukee County Health Departments, now strongly recommends all residents and businesses fall back to **PHASE B** of the [Safe Opening Capacity Guidance](#). Guidelines/recommendations specific to Phase B include but not limited to:

- Public gatherings up to 10 people;
- Occupancy for retail establishments, bars, restaurants, and spa/salon services up to 50% capacity.

By better limiting the number of people who gather at a location, watching our physical distance, wearing face coverings, washing hands, and cleaning and disinfecting, individuals including those most at-risk will be better protected from getting COVID-19. For businesses, we encourage you to visit the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation ([WEDC](#)) and Occupational Safety and Health Association ([OSHA](#)) websites for information on safe business practices in your respective industries. Businesses that do not have a safety plan can contact the Health Department for assistance in creating one. The mitigation strategies offered by these agencies can further support our collective efforts to slow the spread.

The health and safety of those in West Allis and West Milwaukee is our first priority. We thank you for your continued patience and cooperation throughout this unprecedented public health crisis. For additional information, you can view the websites for the [City of West Allis](#), the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#), and the [Centers for Disease Control](#) or call the West Allis Health Department at 414-302-8600.

Sincerely,

*Robert Leischow*

Robert Leischow, MPH  
Health Commissioner