



February 23, 2021

Dear West Allis and West Milwaukee residents and community leaders:

The West Allis Health Department (WAHD) response to COVID-19 is reaching the one-year milestone. During this time there have been slightly more than 7,200 confirmed COVID-19 cases in our jurisdiction. We certainly recognize the toll this response has taken on everyone as we grow weary of the messages to wear masks, stay physically distant, and not engage in large gatherings.

Over the last month COVID-19 cases in our jurisdiction have been steadily declining. A recent two-week case rate was approximately 116 new cases per 100,000, compared to a rate of 1,156 cases per 100,000 in mid-November 2020. Milwaukee County data are also showing positive trends. In reviewing [Gating Criteria for Milwaukee County](#), three of the five indicators are yellow, including *Testing, PPE, and Tracing*. The *Care and Cases* indicators are currently Green, indicating less than 10% of hospitalized patients are COVID-19 positive and a 14-day downward trend in percent positive tests.

Since receiving our initial allocation of the COVID-19 vaccine the West Allis Health Department has administered slightly more than a 1,400 doses. While the data show promising trends, new genetic variants of the COVID-19 virus and being largely indoors through the remaining weeks of winter could quickly reverse these trends. The West Allis Health Department continues to recommend individuals and the community follow the guidance of wearing face masks, staying at least 6 feet apart, avoiding crowds, washing hands, and getting tested for COVID-19 if you are feeling sick.

The WAHD is moving from our Phased Reopening Model to a longer-term plan of Safe Practices Guidelines. These guidelines align with other suburban municipalities in Milwaukee County. The purpose of the realignment was to provide businesses with tools and information on how to reduce risk rather than general occupancy guidelines. Further details on the Safe Practice Guidelines and information on how businesses can complete and be recognized for having a Safety Plan in-place are available on the [WAHD website](#). Key aspects of the Safe Practice Guidelines include:

- Public gatherings limited to 50 people;
- Recommended occupancy limits for restaurants and bars at a capacity where the number of individuals allows for maintenance of physical distancing and protective measures; and
- Recommended occupancy limits for retail establishments, salons and spa services, and gyms and places of amusement where the number of individuals allows for maintenance of physical distancing and protective measures.

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

In health,

Robert Leischow, MPH  
Health Commissioner