

# Evers orders ban on gatherings of 50 or more people

Posted on Monday, Mar 16, 2020

Gov. Tony Evers announced via Twitter today that he has directed the state Department of Health Services to ban gatherings of 50 or more people.

The order exempts infrastructure and services such as grocery stores, food pantries, childcare centers, pharmacies and hospitals.

The gov's office didn't immediately respond to calls seeking comment on how the order would impact bars, restaurants and other private businesses. His tweets also didn't indicate how long the ban will last. The gov tweeted more details would be announced at a 1:30 p.m. media briefing.

"This isn't a decision I made lightly and we understand this will have an impact on Wisconsin workers, families, businesses and communities, but keeping folks safe and healthy has to be our highest priority," Evers tweeted.

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Folks, it's on all of us to practice social distancing and take every step possible to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. That is why I have directed [@DHSWI](#) Secretary-designee Andrea Palm to order a ban on mass gatherings of 50 or more people. 1/3

— Governor Tony Evers (@GovEvers) [March 16, 2020](#)

Just ahead of Evers' announcement, the Department of Military Affairs said the

State Emergency Operations Center had moved to a Level 1 response, bringing all state agencies into a central location to better coordinate the response to the outbreak.

It is the first time the center has moved to Level 1 in response to a health-related incident. Military Affairs spokesman Andrew Beckett said the last time the agency went to a Level 1 for any reason was the flooding that hit the state in 2008.

Beckett said every state agency is represented in the central location either physically or through a virtual connection. That speeds up the state's response vs. communicating vs. phone or email

"They can see that person in the seat. They are able to talk to them. They are able to begin the communication that needs to happen," Beckett said.

See links to resources on the coronavirus

here: <https://www.wispolitics.com/2020/coronavirus-resources/>