

Sen. Wirch: Sharing the latest news you can use COVID-19

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Kenosha – Hello, neighbor. The news is constantly changing these days, and it can be hard to keep up. In this update, you will find a review of recent news items. This week, Governor Evers eased restrictions on a number of businesses and ordered the reopening of most state parks; legislative Republicans plowed ahead with their challenge to the Safer at Home order; additional federal unemployment benefits became available to Wisconsin residents; and our state and nation reached some grim milestones. These are difficult times for all of us, but we will get through it together. I hope this is helpful. Stay safe and healthy.

In Case You Missed It (ICYMI)

79 Inmates, 5 Employees Test Positive for COVID-19 at Kenosha Co. Jail, Detention Center

<https://www.tmj4.com/news/coronavirus/79-inmates-5-employees-test-positive-for-covid-19-at-kenosha-co-jail-detention-center>

Kenosha County COVID-19 Info Hub

<https://kenosha-county-covid-19-response-kenoshacounty.hub.arcgis.com/>

Racine County Health COVID-19 Info

<https://crchd.com/covid-19>

Governor Tony Evers Eases Restrictions on Some Non-Essential Businesses

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2020/04/27/wisconsin-governor-eases-restrictions-some-nonessential-businesses/3035661001/>

Governor Reopens 34 State Parks, Including Bong

<https://fox6now.com/2020/04/28/gov-evers-directs-dnr-to-reopen-several-state-parks-forests-with-special-conditions/>

State Begins Issuing Additional \$600 in Federal Unemployment Benefits

<https://www.tmj4.com/rebound/coronavirus-money-help/dwd-to-begin-issuing-additional-600-a-week-in-unemployment-benefits-wednesday>

Republican Challenge to “Safer at Home” Moves Forward

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2020/04/28/gov-tony-evers-faces-legal-fight-coronavirus-response-sees-hope/3037290001/>

Wisconsin's COVID-19 Death Toll Reaches Reaches 300

<https://fox6now.com/2020/04/29/6418-positive-cases-of-covid-19-in-wisconsin-300-deaths-3k-recovered-61k-negative/>

Wisconsin Adds Hundreds of Workers to Help with “Unprecedented” Volume of Unemployment Claims

<https://fox6now.com/2020/04/28/wisconsin-adds-hundreds-of-workers-to-h>

[**elp-with-unprecedented-volume-as-unemployment-claims-soar/**](#)

Trump Orders Meat Packing Plants Open as Worker Deaths Rise

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/28/trump-to-order-meat-plants-to-stay-open-215555>

Health Experts: Wisconsin Will Likely See More Cases as Testing Expands

<https://waow.com/2020/04/28/health-officials-wi-will-likely-see-more-cases-as-testing-expands/>

U.S. Reports Over 1 Million Confirmed COVID-19 Cases, 60,000 Deaths

<https://www.cnn.com/us/live-news/us-coronavirus-update-04-29-20/index.html>

U.S. Coronavirus Death Toll Surpasses Vietnam War

<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/04/28/the-us-coronavirus-death-toll-surpasses-american-casualties-from-the-vietnam-war.html>

52 Positive Cases of COVID-19 Possibly Tied to Wisconsin Election

https://journaltimes.com/news/local/kenosha-postpones-july-4-fireworks-cancel-veterans-parade/article_573e1ebd-de76-5ea1-8f26-b2668a304a22.html

New Poll Finds Americans Overwhelmingly Support Stay-at-Home Restrictions

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackbrewster/2020/04/22/americans-overwhelmingly-support-stay-at-home-restrictions-new-poll-finds/#2b2ae56a2e12>

Wirch: Constituent Services More Important Than Ever During Pandemic

<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/22/wirch/press/constituents-services-more-important-than-ever-during-pandemic/>

State Announces Special Food Benefit for Children in Light of Pandemic

<https://racinecountyeye.com/dhs-announces-special-food-benefits-for-qualifying-children-in-light-of-pandemic/>

COVID-19 Hitting Close to Home

Local Businesses Already Getting Calls After Evers Loosens Restrictions

https://www.kenoshanews.com/news/local/local-businesses-already-getting-calls-after-evers-loosens-restrictions/article_9645a78f-2f37-5126-8d86-b69ae41a3be7.html

City of Racine Launches #StaySafeRacine Campaign

http://www.thewheelerreport.com/wheeler_docs/files/042920racine.pdf

Employee at Pleasant Prairie Meat Packing Plant Dies of COVID-19

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/2020/04/28/more-wisconsin-meatpacking-workers-hit-coronavirus/3034621001/>

New Projection Model Estimates Kenosha County Will See COVID-19 Peak in Early June

https://www.kenoshanews.com/news/local/new-projection-model-estimate-s-kenosha-county-will-see-covid-19-peak-in-early-june/article_2f5a1abf-cb19-5c32-9fbc-03e7aa03ec86.html

Remembering the Neighbors We've Lost During the Pandemic

<https://journaltimes.com/multimedia/collection-our-neighbors-weve-lost-d>

[uring-covid-19-pandemic/collection_cb43a477-1ba1-5a62-87ab-fefdb24a65b0.html](https://www.wisconsin.gov/pressroom/covid-19-pandemic/collection_cb43a477-1ba1-5a62-87ab-fefdb24a65b0.html)

Drive-Through COVID-19 Testing Site Opening at Gateway Kenosha Campus

https://www.kenoshanews.com/news/local/drive-through-covid-19-testing-center-to-open-at-gateway/article_988053cb-425d-5551-bbea-c3817b4ce8ad.html

Kenosha Postpones July 4 Fireworks, Cancels Veterans Parade

https://journaltimes.com/news/local/kenosha-postpones-july-4-fireworks-cancels-veterans-parade/article_573e1ebd-de76-5ea1-8f26-b2668a304a22.html

Has COVID-19 impacted you or your family? Interested in sharing your story? Reach out to me at sen.wirch@legis.wisconsin.gov.

***Concerned About Voting During a Pandemic?**

I have received a number of comments and concerns regarding in-person voting during an outbreak. News reports have identified at least 52 people who tested positive for COVID-19 after voting in-person in the April 7 election. To avoid any possible exposure, you can request an absentee ballot for all elections remaining in 2020 by visiting <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>.

***Use of SNAP Benefits for Online Grocery Orders Discussed**

I recently listened to an AARP call for seniors in the 1st Congressional District. Congressman Bryan Steil took part in the call and expressed his support for a change to allow people to use SNAP benefits for online grocery orders and no-contact pickups. This would be a great move, allowing people to reduce their contact with possibly infected individuals, particularly for seniors and other vulnerable populations.

***AARP Hosting Weekly Tele-Town Halls on COVID-19 Issues**

Every Thursday at noon, AARP hosts a tele-town hall where they discuss various COVID-19 -related topics that are relevant to seniors. Experts in different fields take part each week, and participants can just listen or ask a question. Find more at: <https://states.aarp.org/tag/tele-town-hall>.

***HarborMarket Cancels Remaining Winter Season, Summer Market in Question**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kenosha HarborMarket has cancelled the remaining dates of the winter season. They are currently working on issuing refunds to vendors impacted by the cancellation. At this time, the Board is in discussion about how to proceed with the summer season. They have advised that if the summer market does proceed as scheduled, there are likely to be changes to the structure of operation. Further information will be coming soon.

***State Warns of Potential COVID-19 Student Loan Relief Scams**

With federal student loan payments temporarily suspended due to the public health emergency, the state Department of Financial Institutions is warning against potential scams. There have been reports of borrowers receiving emails claiming they owe a fee to have their payments suspended. This is not the case. All eligible federal student loans are automatically enrolled in the suspension program. Don't fall for the scam, and find more information at <https://www.wispolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/200428DFI.pdf>.

***Kenosha, Racine Public Libraries Begin Curbside Pickup Services**

If you or your children have already burned through all of the books in your home, have no fear. Public libraries in Kenosha and Racine are offering curbside pickup of materials. Check out your local library's website to find a good book and arrange a pick up time. Kenosha: <https://www.mykpl.info/>;
Racine: <https://www.racinelibrary.info/>

***Caring for Your Mental Health During a Pandemic**

We are living in a time of great uncertainty. It's completely normal to feel extra worry, stress and anxiety. That's why the state Department of Health Services has launched Resilient Wisconsin, a site bringing together the latest mental and

behavioral health self-care tools and practices. You are not alone; we are all in this together. Find more at <https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/resilient/index.htm>.

***Wondering about the Status of Your Stimulus Payment?**

The IRS has set up a site where, by entering your personal information, you can check the status of your federal stimulus payment. For those who have not filed a tax return for 2018 or 2019 and are not Social Security or SSI recipients, you can use this same site to file a short form in order to receive the stimulus.

Visit <https://irs.gov/coronavirus> and click “Check your payment status”. From there, to find out when your payment will arrive, select “Get my payment” and follow the directions. You can also use this site if you have filed your tax return but need to provide your bank information for direct deposit of stimulus funds. For non-filers who need to complete the short form, select “Non-filers: Enter Payment Info Here”. The first direct deposit stimulus payments went out this week.

***How to File an Unemployment Claim**

The Department of Workforce Development is encouraging all who have lost their jobs or whose hours have been reduced due to COVID-19 to file their unemployment claims online at <https://dwd.wi.gov/ui/>. The site also features a “Frequently Asked Questions” section and information on the federal coronavirus stimulus. You can find a how-to video on filing an unemployment claim here: https://media.wisconsin.gov/ui/ext/benefits/how_to_apply.htm.