

Wisconsin GOP not requiring state convention attendees to sign COVID-19 waivers

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The Wisconsin GOP isn't requiring attendees at next week's state convention to sign a waiver related to COVID-19.

Those who attended a rally featuring Vice President Mike Pence in Pewaukee last week were required to sign one acknowledging "an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19" and agreeing not to hold liable the campaign or the hotel that hosted the event if they got sick. Likewise, President Trump's campaign required attendees at an Oklahoma event last month to sign a waiver amid warnings against large gatherings due to the coronavirus.

State GOP Executive Director Mark Jefferson said in a statement to WisPolitics.com "attendees recognize that attending an event comes with risks and are able to assess those risks for themselves."

The state GOP convenes July 10-11 in Green Bay for the convention. The party had originally planned to gather in May, but delayed that due to the pandemic. The party also shortened the event to two days rather than the traditional three.

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Jefferson said the party is taking a series of precautions for those who attend, including: making masks available for all attendees, providing hand sanitizer throughout the KI Convention Center in Green Bay, and increasing spacing throughout the event.

"The Republican Party of Wisconsin has worked closely with the venue to ensure that necessary precautions are taken," Jefferson said. "We will also provide a

complete refund to any attendee who decides not to attend if they are not feeling well, have been exposed to COVID-19, or are showing any symptoms of illness.”

According to the latest data from the Department of Health Services, Brown County is the state’s second-largest hotspot with 276 new COVID-19 cases in the past eight days for a cumulative total of 2,937 and an infection ratio of 11.3 per 1,000 people. It’s one of 36 counties ranked “high” by DHS for COVID-19 activity.

The state Dem Party went to an all-virtual format last month for its convention, featuring officeholders and Vice President Joe Biden, among others, addressing activists largely through recorded messages.