

Dept. of Health Services: Details end of emergency COVID-19 response

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The federal government has announced the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency will end May 11. In Wisconsin, case numbers, hospitalizations, and deaths from COVID-19 are significantly lower than they were during the surge in late 2021 and early 2022, and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) has been making plans to move away from an emergency response to the virus.

The federal public health emergency has been in place since early 2020, and it gave federal and state governments flexibility to waive or modify certain requirements in a variety of areas. Associated legislation provided funding and additional flexibilities to help combat the virus.

DHS continues to transition its emergency COVID-19 response programs and services. Some programs, including COVID-19 testing and vaccine services, will continue to undergo changes in the coming months.

“The declaration of a public health emergency helped support Wisconsin’s efforts to combat COVID-19 with resources that saved lives statewide,” said DHS Secretary-designee Kirsten Johnson. “As the federal public health emergency declaration nears its end, DHS will continue to shift our COVID-19 response operations. However, it is critical that Wisconsinites know this does not mean COVID-19 has gone away. The virus remains a threat to health, and we must continue to care for ourselves and each other.”

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