



Waukesha County

Office of the County Executive

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WAUKESHA COUNTY ANNOUNCES VACCINATION PREPARATIONS AND CONTACT TRACING MODIFICATIONS

Residents are Asked to Celebrate Holidays Safely as COVID-19 Cases Continue to Rise

(Waukesha, WI)- Today, Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow and Health Officer Benjamin Jones are asking residents to focus on safety ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday as COVID-19 cases rise and Waukesha County Public Health enters a new phase in managing the pandemic. The County is preparing to add new modifications to its contact tracing process to continue tracking all positive cases in the county. It is also taking its first steps in preparing for vaccine distribution as early as December.

“Today we are at a critical juncture in our fight against the coronavirus,” said County Executive Paul Farrow. “While the announcement of an effective and hopefully safe vaccine is reassuring, we need to act now to save lives. Waukesha County has boosted its Public Health infrastructure to historic levels, but we need the public’s help to control cases, especially ahead of the holiday season. Small gatherings like birthday parties, sleepovers, and dinner parties are some of the biggest drivers of new cases.”

Vaccine Distribution Preparations

Waukesha County Public Health anticipates that a COVID-19 vaccine will be approved by the Food and Drug Administration soon, with some doses available locally by the end of the year. The County is in the process of hiring a Vaccination Coordinator who will manage supply chain, site logistics, coordination of volunteers and staff to include both population level vaccination, as well as, deployment of a strategy as soon as a vaccine is available in the community. The County is also currently working with the state to prepare for local distribution.

Contact Tracing Modifications

This week, Waukesha County Public Health will deploy a new process to engage community partners to assist in contact tracing as the county shifts its focus on tracking positive COVID-19 cases. The new process will coach businesses to notify close contacts of positive cases at their facilities. This is an extension of a similar process that the County developed in partnership with local schools.

(Continued)



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The County will also begin prioritizing cases that are at the highest risk of getting seriously ill from the virus, and of spreading it. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 who are 60 and older or who are 22 and younger will receive follow-up calls by disease investigators. Contact tracers are in the process of being trained to follow a streamlined follow-up process with individuals aged 23 – 59.

These modifications to standards of practice within disease investigation and contact notification will allow Waukesha County Public Health to meet the current demands on disease containment in a sustainable way. The new modifications are in addition to [changes](#) that were made on October 20.

“Waukesha County’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve to meet the current demands of the community,” said Public Health Officer Benjamin Jones. “These changes are necessary to keep up with the growing number of cases statewide. However, we need the public’s help to stop the virus. When CDC guidelines are followed, especially in schools and businesses, transmission of the virus is very low. We recognize that some in our community may be feeling vigilance fatigue and may have a tendency to become less careful and consistent in efforts to protect against the spread of the virus as time goes on. As the holidays approach and we spend more time indoors, this is the time to remain vigilant to prevent the spread of the virus.”

Waukesha County remains committed to the health and wellbeing of the citizens of our county and continues to work diligently to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. More information about Waukesha County’s response to COVID-19 is available at www.waukeshacounty.gov/covid19.

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