



Waukesha County

Department of Health and Human Services

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WAUKESHA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH LAUNCHES NEW DIGITAL TOOL TO HELP TRACK COVID-19 CASES

(Waukesha, WI)- Starting on Monday, February 1, 2021, certain Waukesha County residents who test positive for COVID-19 will receive either a text alert or email from Waukesha County Public Health instead of a phone call. Text message notifications will come from the number “48355.”

“This new system will have a significant impact on our ability to keep schools and businesses open by streamlining our contact tracing process,” said Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow. “Not only will it simplify locating local cases of the virus, more people are likely to look at a text message than answer a phone call, so we expect to reach more people, as well.”

When someone between the ages of 23 - 59 tests positive for COVID-19, they will be sent either a text message or an email link to an online, confidential form to complete as part of the contact tracing process. This age group is lower risk for getting seriously ill from or spreading the virus. Quarantine and isolation information will be available through links provided on the platform.

Waukesha County Public Health’s use of text alerts and emails are part of a plan that will allow elevated contact tracing efforts to continue through spring by reducing the number of staff needed to conduct contact tracing. Utilizing automated messaging also has the potential to reach people who are more likely to respond to a text message or an email than to answer a phone call. Individuals who do not respond to the text message may receive a follow up phone call or a letter from Public Health.

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 who are 60 and older or who are 22 and younger will continue to receive follow-up calls by disease investigators. Waukesha County’s contact tracing process will continue to engage schools and long-term care facilities in partnership to assist in contact tracing cases in those facilities.

The text messages are hosted by Patient Education Genius (PEG), a healthcare technology company that specializes in building interoperable mobile-first engagement solutions. More information about PEG is available at www.patienteducationgenius.com/.

Waukesha County remains committed to the health and wellbeing of the citizens in the county and continues to work diligently to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. More information on the Waukesha County COVID-19 response is available at www.waukeshacounty.gov/covid19. You may follow County Executive Farrow on Twitter at [@WaukeshaCoExec](https://twitter.com/WaukeshaCoExec) or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CountyExecutivePaulFarrow/.

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