

Public Health Recommendations

Forest County Recommendations

This document is replacing the previous Forest County COVID-19 mitigation and response plan. It will be reviewed at a minimum on a quarterly basis.

Public health recommendations for Forest County businesses, organizations, community groups and individuals.

Forest County continues our commitment to control the transmission of COVID-19 throughout our communities. Forest County Health Department, along with the Forest County Board of Health, recommend everyone follow recommendations provided by the CDC and WI DHS on best practices for residents, businesses, organizations and community groups. We all have a part in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

General Public Health Recommendations

Individuals

It is up to each of us to keep our communities safe and healthy. We can take actions to reduce the spread of COVID-19 by:

- Getting Vaccinated
- Wearing a mask in public spaces
- Using physical distancing when out in public
- Washing hands frequently
- Staying home when sick
- Getting tested if you have symptoms or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19
- Avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces.
- Follow public health guidance if you test positive or are a close contact of a positive case.

Businesses and Worksites

- WI Economic Development Corporation COVID-19 Business Resources <https://wedc.org/programs-and-resources/covid-19-response/>
- Occupational Safety and Department of Labor (OSHA) Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/safework>
- Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) COVID-19 Information for Businesses, Employers, and Workers <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/employers.htm>
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection COVID-19 Guidelines for Food Supply, Delivery and Recreational Facilities https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/News_Media/Covid19FoodSupplyDelivery.aspx

Schools

- Wisconsin Department of Health Services Recommendations for Schools <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/schools.htm>
- CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>
- American Academy of Pediatrics: COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools <https://www.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>
- DHS Guidelines for the Prevention, Investigation, and Control of COVID-19 Outbreaks in K-12 Schools in Wisconsin <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02757.pdf>
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction: COVID-19 Infection Control and Mitigation Measures for Wisconsin Schools 2021/2022 https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspwp/pdf/DPI_Infection_Control_and_Mitigation_Measures_for_Schools.pdf#msdyntrid=iSHRzI8yr8yXK9eU-1V_xHrKXuE5Wrxsv3hYbFDNTZI

Childcare

- Department of Children and Families (CDF) COVID-19 Resources <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/childcare/providers>

- Wisconsin Department of Health Services Guidelines for the Prevention, Investigation, and Control of COVID-19 Outbreaks in Child Care Settings <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02878.pdf>

Long Term Care

- CDC guidance for Wisconsin nursing homes and intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ICF/IID) and/ who have chronic medical conditions <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/nursing-homes.htm>
- Preventing and Managing COVID-19 Outbreaks in Assisted Living Facilities and Skilled Nursing Facilities <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02897.pdf>
- Centers for Medicare <https://www.cms.gov/outreach-education/partner-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-partner-resources>

Disease metrics

Forest County Health Department monitors a variety of COVID-19 data metrics to help inform decision making and recommendations. We continue to follow recommendations and guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). The recommendations within this plan are subject to change as guidance is updated by the CDC and DHS.

DHS offers regional and county-level data for disease activity, hospital capacity and vaccination that we monitor daily. This data can be viewed here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>

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Forest County Health Department’s recommendations are based on COVID-19 case activity level as determined by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. The case activity level is a summary indicator that combines COVID-19 case rate per 100,000 people in the last two weeks (burden) and trajectory, which is the percent change in cases from the previous to the current week. The case activity level is either low, medium, high, very high, or critically high. Recommendations for critically high and very high case activity are combined in this plan.

Forest County COVID-19 Disease Activity Levels Explained

Disease activity level, burden and trajectory data for Forest County is provided by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and can be viewed here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/disease.htm>

This data is updated on a weekly basis and uses the data from the previous two weeks.

Burden (total number of cases per 100,000 in the last two weeks)			
<i>Burden (case rate per 100,000)</i>		<i>Burden (case rates) in percentages</i>	
Low	Case rate less than 10 per 100,000	Low	0.0001%
Moderate	Case rate 10 – 50 per 100,000	Moderate	0.0001% - 0.0005%
Moderately high	Case rate 50 – 100 per 100,000	Moderately high	0.0005% - 0.001%
High	Case rate 100 – 350 per 100,000	High	0.001% - 0.0035%
Very high	Case rate 350 – 1000 per 100,000	Very high	0.0035% - 0.01%
Critically high	Case rate over 1000 per 100,000	Critically high	Over 0.01%

Trajectory Status	Value (change from prior 7-day period to most recent 7-day period)
Shrinking	Percent change in cases is less than or equal to negative 10 percent, and is statistically significant (p-value is less than 0.025).

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Burden (case rates) for Forest County with a population of 9,004	
Low	0.9 cases in the previous two weeks
Moderate	0.9 – 4.5 cases in the previous two weeks
Moderately high	4.5 – 9 cases in the previous two weeks
High	9 – 31.5 cases in the previous two weeks
Very high	31.5 – 90 cases in the previous two weeks
Critically high	Over 90 cases in the previous two weeks

Growing	Percent change in cases is greater than or equal to 10 percent, and is statistically significant (p-value is less than 0.025)
No Significant Change	Any other conditions besides those that meet the “shrinking” or “growing” statuses described above.

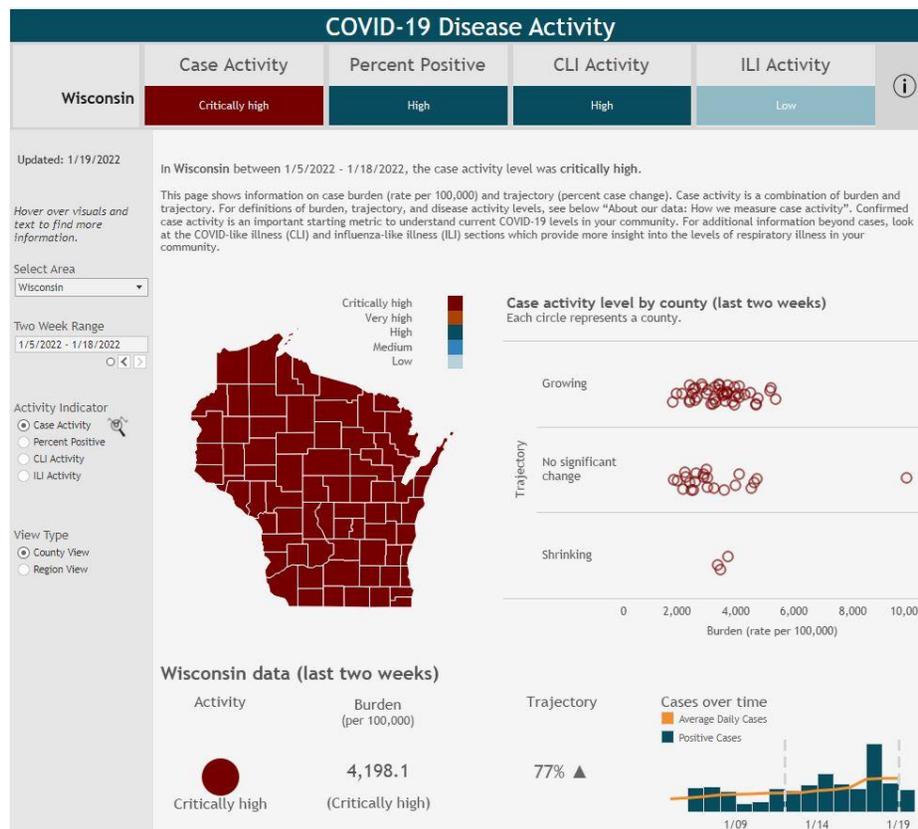
Trajectory is the percent case change from the previous to the current week and indicates whether the change is statistically significant.

Disease Activity Level: based on burden cases per 100,000 and case trajectory in the last two weeks	
Critically High	Burden is critically high and trajectory is shrinking, no significant change, or growing.
Very High	Burden is very high and trajectory is shrinking, no significant change, or growing.
High	Burden is moderate and trajectory is growing. Burden is moderately high and trajectory is no significant change or growing. Burden is high and trajectory is shrinking, no significant change or growing.
Medium	Burden is low and trajectory is growing. Burden is moderate and trajectory is shrinking or no significant change. Burden is moderately high and trajectory is shrinking.
Low	Burden is low and trajectory is shrinking or no significant change.

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You can also view statewide, regional and county specific data at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/disease.htm>.



<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/local.htm#activity>

This is a current snapshot of the disease activity in Wisconsin. As you can see the whole state is listed as **critically high**.

The Omicron variant is here now. From what we know about the variant the CDC shortened the recommended time for isolation for the public. People with COVID-19 should isolate for 5 days and if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are resolving (without fever for 24 hours), follow that by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others to minimize the risk of infecting people they encounter. The change is motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after.

Data from South Africa and the United Kingdom demonstrate the vaccine effectiveness against infection for two doses of an mRNA vaccine is approximately 35%. A COVID-19 vaccine booster dose restores vaccine effectiveness against infection to 75%. COVID-19 vaccination decreases the risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. CDC strongly encourages COVID-19 vaccination for everyone 5 and older and boosters for everyone 16 and older. Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our communities.

Public health will follow the current DHS guidelines for contact tracing, prioritizing resources to outbreaks in congregate settings. For more information and local COVID-19 updates go to: www.forestcountypublichealth.org or follow us on Facebook.

IF YOU TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 (ISOLATE)

Everyone, regardless of vaccination status should:

Stay home for 5 days

If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house, you must wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.

If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.

IF YOU WERE EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WITH COVID-19 (QUARANTINE)

If you:

- **Are fully vaccinated (2 doses of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and not boosted)**
- **Completed the primary series of J&J over 2 months ago and are not boosted**

- **Unvaccinated**

- Stay home, and isolate away from others for 5 days. After that continue to wear a mask around others for 5 more days. If you can't quarantine you must wear a mask for 10 full days.
- Test on day 5 if possible-if negative continue to monitor for symptoms a full 10 days.

If you develop symptoms, get tested and stay home for 5 days from symptom onset, if your symptoms are improving you may leave your house after 5 days wearing a mask for 5 more days.