



# Jefferson County Health Department

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## NEWS RELEASE

To: Local Media  
From: Gail Scott, RN, BSN, Director/Health Officer  
Date: March 18, 2020

### **Jefferson County Health Department Shares New State Emergency Order Prohibiting Mass Gatherings of 10 People or More to Slow the Community Spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

At this time, Jefferson County Health Department is sharing Governor Tony Evers statewide moratorium on mass gatherings of 10 people or more to slow the spread of COVID-19. Effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 5:00pm, all public and private mass gatherings are prohibited in the State of Wisconsin. “Mass gathering” is an event or any group of people, public or private, that brings together 10 or more people in a single room or enclosed/confined space. Canceling, closing, or limiting beyond this requirement voluntarily is permitted.

Gatherings that do bring together less than 10 people must:

- a. Preserve social distancing of 6 feet between people, and
- b. Follow all other public health recommendations from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and Centers for Disease Control.

As of 5:00pm on Wednesday, March 18, 2020, all public and private schools in Wisconsin shall be closed for both instructional and extracurricular activities. They are to remain closed for the entirety of the public health emergency or until any other orders lift this restriction.

In addition, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services has ordered all bars and restaurants closed. Restaurants may remain open for take-out or delivery service only. No seating or consumption of food is allowed at the restaurant, and social distancing must be preserved of six feet between customers during pick up of food.

#### **Other Exemptions to this Order:**

1. Retail food establishments (grocery/convenience stores) are exempted from the State’s order as long as the below requirements are followed:

- a. All seating intended for food consumption is closed.
- b. Cease self-service operations including salad bars, beverage stations, buffets.
- c. Prohibit customers from self-dispensing any and all unpackaged food.

2. Residential care centers, and group homes are exempted. Childcare locations, (including those that operate within a facility that is otherwise prohibited), are allowed to remain open under the following specific restrictions:

- a. Centers may not operate with more than 10 staff present at a time, and
- b. Centers may not operate with more than 50 children present at a time.

These childcare restrictions go into place at 8:00am Thursday, March 19, 2020.

3. Other exemptions include those in healthcare, voting facilities, commercial and non-profit entities (offices, manufacturing, utility facilities, job centers), retail, government, hotel and motels, transportation, and some non-instructional uses of schools. If you would like more information on these exemptions, please contact your local health department.

We know these new requirements have a tremendous impact on peoples' lives, but this is a critical moment to slow the spread of this disease in our community. The sooner we slow transmission, the more cases we can prevent. We would like people to take the time now to prepare for widespread illness in the future.

Please visit our website [www.jeffersoncountywi.gov](http://www.jeffersoncountywi.gov) and follow us on [twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for updates.

Please share this information widely. Thank you for your partnership in keeping Jefferson County safe and healthy.

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