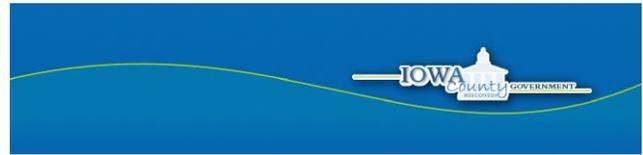


## IOWA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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October 9, 2020

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*For Immediate Release*

### Iowa County Health Department

*Director/Health Officer*

*Debbie Siegenthaler RN, MSN*

### Another Significant Increase; Case Count at 262, Indoor Public Gatherings Limited to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19

**Iowa County** – The Health Department announces thirteen additional cases bringing the current COVID-19 confirmed case count in Iowa County to 262. The recent cases are distributed in persons in the following age ranges relatively evenly: 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56-65 and 66-75 years. The number of individuals that have recovered is 195, meaning 67 cases are active. The Health Department contacts all positive cases. Due to the sharp increases in cases, the Health Department is experiencing delays in the time frame in which we are able to reach out to close contacts.

“Locally, we remain at HIGH disease activity levels. This week we had an increase of 56 cases, up significantly from last week’s increase of 32 cases. The week prior our increase was 34 cases. We are experiencing widespread community transmission and an important way to reduce spread is to limit situations where large groups of people are gathering,” said Debbie Siegenthaler, Director, Iowa County Health Department.

#### **Governor’s Announcement**

This week, a new order directed by Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers through Department of Health Services (DHS) Secretary-designee Andrea Palm was issued to limit public gatherings to no more than 25 percent of a room or building’s total occupancy. Emergency Order #3 and the list of exemptions can be viewed online [here](#).

This directive was effective Oct. 8, 2020, and will remain in effect until Nov. 6, 2020. The order applies to any gatherings at locations that are open to the public such as stores, restaurants, and other businesses that allow public entry as well as spaces with ticketed events. A frequently asked questions document is available [here](#).

“I am pleading with people to meet the spirit of this order and be part of the response in slowing the spread. It’s up to us to prioritize the health and well-being of our community. We need cases to grow slower so that we can lessen the surge in our hospitals and our public health and emergency response systems. A surge in health system capacity is happening in several parts of the state. In Dane County, hospitalizations are high. Remember, our hospital response locally includes transferring very sick patients to hospitals in urban areas such as Dane County. If you are high risk (60 years and older or have a chronic medical condition or compromised immune status)... please take extra precautions to reduce your exposure”, added Siegenthaler

Under this order, public gatherings are limited to no more than 25% of the total occupancy limits for the room or building, as established by the local municipality. For indoor spaces without an occupancy limit for the room or building that is established by the local municipality, public gatherings are limited to no more than 10 people.

**You Stop the Spread:** All of us can help protect the people, places, and experiences that matter most. Taking a few simple steps to stop the spread of COVID-19 reduces the risk - even for young, healthy people - for you and those around you.

- Wear a cloth face covering in public settings, especially when it is difficult to practice physical distancing.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from other people when possible when you leave your home.
- Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Stay at home as much as possible and especially if you are sick. Cancel events and avoid groups, gatherings, play dates, and nonessential appointments.

### Community Testing

The Health Departments of Iowa and Lafayette County have partnered to provide a Covid-19 Community test site in our counties, alternating each Tuesday. The first test site was held Tuesday, October 6 in Dodgeville and will be held every other Tuesday forward for the foreseeable future, from 10 am to Noon. Iowa County hosts this community test site at the Health and Human Services Center located at 303 West Chapel Street in Dodgeville. Next week, October 13 only, the Lafayette County Test site will begin a 10:30 and every other Tuesday forward for the foreseeable future they will start at 10 am at the Lafayette County Ames Road Multipurpose Building at 11974 Ames Road in Darlington. We ask that people go to [COVIDconnect.com](https://register.covidconnect.com) and register to be tested at one of these sites.

Testing is free and open to anyone (age 5+) who feels they have a need to be tested. Minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian with consent. Appointments are not required, but it is requested that those who wish to be tested pre-register at <https://register.covidconnect.wi.gov>.

People should consider visiting the testing site if:

- \* They have had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.
- \* They have COVID-19 symptoms
- \* They have regular exposure to a large number of people (i.e., people who work in grocery stores)
- \* They work closely with high-risk populations (i.e., healthcare workers, people who work with people who are incarcerated, people who work in long-term care facilities)

Upland Hills Hospital will continue to provide COVID testing as they have since the pandemic began. Please see the Upland Hills website for information on getting tested at their facility.

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### Important Sources of Information

- **Wisconsin Statewide and Regional metrics** [DHS website](#)
  - WI Department of Health Services (DHS) <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/outbreaks/index.htm>
  - Regional metrics <https://publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus/data#metrics>
  - Activity risk level <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/local.htm>
  - County-specific data <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/cases-map.htm>
  - Decision Tool for Individuals and Families <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/decision.htm>
- **Resources on the Iowa County website.** <https://www.iowacounty.org/departments/COVID-19>
  - COVID 19 Dashboard (updated each Monday)

- Daily Iowa County Case Count (updated Monday-Friday)
  - New cases are reflected on the Iowa County Health Dept Facebook page each day (Monday thru Friday). The WI DHS website updates each afternoon with county numbers. We update case numbers that occur over the weekend on Monday's Case Count. Positive cases will continue to be reported to the state and followed up on as they have been.
  - Local Data graphs
  - School Resources and Capacity Indicators
  - Mass Gathering Guidance
  - Community Testing
- Upland Hills Health <https://www.uplandhillshealth.org/patient-visitors/covid-19/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
  - **Frequently Asked Questions:** CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>
- **211 Wisconsin** is an easy and helpful resource for COVID 19 questions. Simply call 211 from your phone <https://211wisconsin.communityos.org/>

**Social Media sites:**

Iowa County Public Health on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/iowacountyhealthdepartment/>

Upland Hills Health on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/UplandHillsHealthHospital/>

Iowa County Emergency Management on Twitter - <https://twitter.com/ICEMWI>

Iowa County Emergency Management on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/icemwi/>

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