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For Immediate Release

Iowa County Health Department

Director/Health Officer

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Case Count at 1,323; Dashboard Update

Iowa County – The Health Department reports an increase of 57 cases this past week bringing the total of cases to 1,323. During the previous week, 137 cases were reported, the week prior the increase was 213 cases and the week prior to that, 231 cases. The number of individuals that have recovered is 873, meaning 450 cases are active.

Cases are in all age ranges and across the entire county. See <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/county.htm> for a breakdown of the location of positive cases. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) released maps and corresponding downloadable data tables that break down confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths by new geographic boundaries. The new maps allow Wisconsinites to view existing COVID-19 case and death data by municipalities (cities, towns, and villages), zip code tabulation areas, and school district boundaries.

“There is continued good news with case numbers. The volume of cases each day is lower than numbers two weeks ago. The average case increase each day is 16.64 down from a daily average of 26.86 at last dashboard report, and 30.14 the week prior. The percent of positive tests has decreased to 9.8% down from 12.5%.

“We are grateful to community members following the recommendations. Every act of prevention makes a difference. It is important to note that testing has decreased due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. This last week, the average number of tests was 169, down from a daily average of 215 the week prior. In addition, the 14-day incubation period from Thanksgiving is not over, which will allow for identification of cases,” states Debbie Siegenthaler, Director, Iowa County Health Department. “Case activity in Iowa County remains at the critically high level, however all neighbor counties around Iowa County are in the high activity category. You can find the [Disease Activity Dashboard](#) at the Wisconsin DHS website. “What remains clear is that we must assume anytime we leave our home, we should anticipate we will come in contact with coronavirus”, added Siegenthaler.

“An important focus is individuals at a high risk who should be staying home as much as possible. This is extraordinarily important for this group of people”, Siegenthaler noted. Factors that place you at higher risk include having an underlying health condition, including asthma, obesity, compromised immune system due to conditions like cancer, HIV or AIDS, and serious chronic illnesses like kidney, heart, lung or liver disease. In addition, older adults, over the age of 60, are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. If you are unsure if you are high risk, please reach out to your health care provider. See also <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/risks.htm>

We continue to be concerned about hospital capacity, locally and regionally. Our local Dashboard includes local metrics for Upland Hills Health. Facility use status represents medical surge and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) capacity. This week, this metric is again red. Staffing status indicates the number of available staff to care for the volume of patients. This metric remains at yellow status this week. Critical supply status reflects adequate levels of critical supplies. This metric remains green.

Our regional health care infrastructure metric represents regional hospital bed use and is currently yellow, as 83% of regional hospital beds are in use. In addition, 83% of total regional ICU beds are in use. Regional hospital capacity can be found on the DHS website <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/disease.htm>

We are asking the Iowa County community to continue to:

- Limit indoor gatherings to 10 people or less.
- Limit outdoor gatherings to 25 people or less.
- Post-pone or cancel all non-essential events, gatherings and travel

In addition, we reiterate continued diligence in the following:

- 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 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.

Iowa County Dashboard Metrics

Epidemiology: Our percentage of positive cases decreased to 9.8%, changing this metric to yellow. The average cases reported daily metric decreased to 16.64, remaining in the red. The Outbreak metric remains red.

Healthcare Status: Testing rate remains green with an average of 169.36 tests performed daily. We encourage anyone with symptoms to contact his/her health care provider to be tested. Local health care partner's facility use status (represents med surge and ICU capacity) has changed back to red. Staffing status indicates the number of available staff to care for the volume of patients and is currently yellow. Critical supply status reflects at least fourteen days' worth of supplies. This metric remains green. Our regional health care infrastructure metric represents regional hospital bed use and is currently yellow, as 82.5% of regional hospital beds are in use. In addition, 82.6% of total regional ICU beds are in use.

Public Health Status: Community spread remains in red, as 43% of cases are reporting no known source of transmission in the past two weeks. Our goal is that fewer than 20% of cases have no known source of transmission. This value is a reflection of current information, some data is missing, as not all cases have been in contact with the health department. Our contact tracing efforts are at 90%. This metric is dependent on individuals either answering the phone or returning our calls, which remains an issue. Our health department volume and staffing metric has changed to yellow. With the decrease in the number of cases, we are caught up on contacting cases and other health department operations.

Emergency Management: Our emergency management partners remain yellow. PPE demand continues to be up and the supply chain is experiencing issues with gloves, gowns and N95 masks.

School Capacity Indicator Dashboard <https://www.iowacounty.org/COVID-19IowaCountySchoolGuidance>

This dashboard contains metrics from our Iowa County COVID-19 Dashboard along with new case rate metric (per 10,000) in the past two weeks. Today, the new case rate is 98, down from 158 per 10,000 at last dashboard report as well as the prior week's value of 178.

<i>Date dashboard was updated</i>	<i>Percent of tests that are positive</i>	<i>Average number of cases reported per day</i>	<i>Average number of tests per day</i>	<i>Outbreaks metric</i>	<i>Percentage of cases contracted by community spread</i>	<i>School Capacity metric: new case rate per 10,000</i>
July 20	1.45%	.92	42.8	Red	46%	--
July 27	2.1%	.71	33.1	Red	30%	--
August 3	2.6%	1.0	37.7	Red	42%	--
August 10	3.9%	1.71	43.6	Red	38%	--
August 17	4.2%	2.5	60	Red	54%	--
August 24	3.8%	2.0	53	Red	46%	--
August 31	3.3%	1.5	45	Red	43%	9
September 8	2.0%	0.93	45.4	Red	38%	5
September 14	1.3%	0.64	49.7	Red	40%	4
September 21	2.6%	1.79	70	Red	64%	11
September 28	3.5%	3.79	107.5	Red	60%	22
October 5	4.8%	5.57	116.5	Red	51%	33
October 12	6.8%	8.21	121	Red	43%	49
October 19	7.5%	11.58	153.8	Red	41%	59
October 23*	7.9%	11.35	142.9	Red	43%	67
October 30	8.4%	11.29	133.7	Red	42%	67
November 6	11.4%	16.86	148.3	Red	42%	99
November 13	14.5%	26.36	181.8	Red	41%	155
November 20	14.7%	30.14	205.7	Red	43%	178
November 27	12.5%	26.86	215.1	Red	44%	158
December 4	9.8%	16.64	169.4	Red	43%	98

*Shift in day of dashboard update due to data availability.

School Recommendation

The current recommendation is that schools consider remaining in virtual instruction for middle and high school students, and consider doing so for the entire district as operationally necessary or feasible until December 11, 2020. Several school boards and districts have made a pivot to virtual and we completely support these decisions. In addition, we recommend that schools postpone all contact sports through December.

Local Community testing for the remainder of December:

- *Lafayette County*: Thursday, December 10 from 11:00 am – 1:00pm at the Ames Road Multipurpose Building at 11974 Ames Road in Darlington.
- *Iowa County*: Thursday, December 17 from 11:00 – 1:00 at the Health and Human Services Center located at 303 West Chapel Street in Dodgeville.
- *Lafayette County*: Wednesday, December 23 from 11:00 am – 1:00pm at the Ames Road Multipurpose Building at 11974 Ames Road in Darlington
- *Iowa County*: Wednesday, December 30 from 11:00 – 1:00 at the Health and Human Services Center located at 303 West Chapel Street in Dodgeville.

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)

There are additional testing sites in southwest Wisconsin in Grant, Lafayette and Richland counties. Visit the Iowa County COVID-19 website and/or follow our Facebook page for a list of weekly testing opportunities in southwest Wisconsin.

Upland Hills Hospital continues to provide COVID testing. Please see the Upland Hills website for information on getting tested at their facility.

Important Sources of Information

- **Wisconsin Department of Health Services** <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>
 - Holiday Safety <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/community.htm#-holidays>
- **Iowa County website.** <https://www.iowacounty.org/departments/COVID-19>
- **Upland Hills Health** <https://www.uplandhillshealth.org/patient-visitors/covid-19/>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- **211 Wisconsin** 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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