



**Trempealeau County
Health Department**



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Press Release from Trempealeau County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management, Human Resources, Human Services, District Attorney's Office and the Health Department

This press release is being issued to advise the public that there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Trempealeau County. As preventive measures, Trempealeau County is constantly assessing policies and procedures, as well as keeping up to date with the latest information from State and Federal officials, to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. To keep residents informed, the County is in the process of adding information to its website to keep Trempealeau County residents updated on the latest news related to the coronavirus, including information specific to Trempealeau County. The County is also setting up an informational telephone hotline at 715-538-2311 ext. 330. It is currently in English and we plan to include Spanish in the near future. It will contain the most recent information available. We expect the telephone hotline to be up and running this week. Urgent information will be transmitted through Nixle.

As the Corona virus (named COVID-19) epidemic continues to spread through Wisconsin, there is significant information available to the public from a variety of sources in the media. While they do their best to be accurate, the best sources of accurate information for the nation is the Center for Disease Control (CDC) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>) and, for Wisconsin, on the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) website at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/coronavirus.htm>. In addition, accurate information for Trempealeau County can be found on the County website at <http://www.tremplounty.com/tchome/>.

Governor Evers has recently declared a state of emergency for the state of Wisconsin. As of today, the Governor has ordered all schools, K-12, to close starting at 5:00 PM on March 18th. These closings will be re-evaluated as the pandemic evolves. We know that this creates a hardship for many families, however, it is necessary to protect our community/residents from this rapidly spreading virus.

The Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management, Human Services, Human Resources, District Attorney's Office, local Law Enforcement and the Health Department are communicating regularly to address the rapidly changing situation. Departments are closely monitoring what is happening around the state in regards to changes in policy and procedures. We will keep the public updated as quickly as possible with this ever changing situation. Urgent information will be transmitted through Nixle. Residents of Trempealeau County and neighboring communities can immediately begin receiving pertinent information via text message, email, and web by going to <https://nixle.com/register/> or texting your zipcode to 888777.

It is the intention of all offices in the Trempealeau County Courthouse to continue to provide all services to our residents and businesses. It may be necessary to make some changes in how these services are provided to keep our residents and staff safe from the COVID virus.

Effective immediately, Trempealeau County is taking the following precautions:

- If you are able to accomplish your county business by telephone or on line, please use these services. This protects both you and county staff from spreading COVID.
- If you need to visit the courthouse, please telephone the department involved in advance of your visit. You may be able to avoid the trip. Please observe the signs at the front entrance requesting you to use a facemask if you have cold or cough symptoms.
- Seniors who need home delivered meals please call the ADRC at 715-538-2001
- We are suspending senior bus routes to La Crosse, Eau Claire and other out of county locations for shopping trips.
- We are offering in county trips to seniors for groceries as needed.
- All County volunteer drivers are required to not have a fever or cough.
- No transportation will be provided to individuals with a fever or cough.

Also, residents are being urged to watch out for your senior neighbors, friends and family members. Since the elderly are particularly susceptible to this virus, consider calling them to check on them, help keep them calm, offer to get their groceries, putting gas in their cars, etc. Ask them what you can do to help them stay healthy and safe.

To help protect County employees and visitors to County facilities, extra cleaning and sanitizing is being done at County facilities. Our Human Resources Department is evaluating County policies to make sure that those individuals who use County facilities are protected as much as possible.

The Trempealeau County Courts will continue to monitor the COVID situation and remains committed to protecting the health and safety of anyone participating in the legal process while continuing to maintain an open, public and efficient court system. This order can be seen at

<http://www.tremplocounty.com/tchome/documents/Latest%20News/State%20of%20Wisconsin%20Circuit%20Court%20Trempealeau%20County%20COVID-19%20Order.pdf>

The Trempealeau County Health Department has also been busy monitoring the situation. The Health Department is monitoring any residents who were possibly exposed to the virus, checking on their health and taking appropriate actions. Our local health department staff continue to assess the health of residents and take any action deemed necessary, including, but not limited to, isolation and quarantine, to protect our community.

The Health Department is unable to test for COVID 19. Please contact your health care provider. They are the only ones that can order a test. They will evaluate your symptoms and decide if testing is appropriate using Wisconsin Department of Health guidelines.

The State of Wisconsin has recently issued orders limiting mass gatherings to no more than 10 people to slow/prevent the spread of the disease. They have also closed many businesses such as bars and eat-in areas of restaurants. Carry outs are still available from your favorite restaurants and you are encouraged to continue support them with your business. A copy of the press release can be found on the DHS website. <https://evers.wi.gov/Documents/COVID19/UPDATEDOrder10People.pdf>

The State has also issued orders that child care centers may not operate with more than 10 staff present at a time and may not operate with more than 50 children present at a time. They also need

to practice social distancing (6 feet) and follow all other Department of Health Services guidance for parents dropping off and picking up children at the child care setting. A copy of this order is posted on the Wisconsin DHS website.

https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/WIGOV/2020/03/18/file_attachments/1404852/DHS%20Order_3.18.2020.pdf

To protect our residents, Trempealeau County has developed the capabilities to live-stream County meetings on our Trempealeau County Cable Television (TCCTV) station as well as on our website. As a result, due to COVID-19 and the limitations imposed on gatherings during this crisis time period, County meetings will be live-streamed on TCCTV and website. This will allow Trempealeau County residents access to actions by their county government while also practicing social distancing. This will start with the Personnel/Bargaining Committee meeting tomorrow, March 19, 2020 at 1:30 pm.

General recommendations to stay healthy and keep our community healthy are:

- If you are sick, stay home.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water. (If this is not available, please use hand sanitizer which is at least 60% alcohol.
- Cover coughs and sneezes. Do not cough or sneeze into your hands as germs will spread every time you touch a surface. Use a tissue and toss it in the garbage. If a tissue is not available, please cough and sneeze into your forearm or inside of your elbow. These areas don't touch other surfaces frequently and are less likely to spread the virus.
- Avoid touching your face, especially your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Do extra cleaning of frequently touched surfaces that may harbor germs. An example would be doorknobs.
- Practice social distancing.
- If you develop symptoms of the virus (fever, cough, shortness of breath are most common), please call your health care provider immediately for instructions.

Be assured that all steps are being taken to help prevent the spread of this virus. Together we are trying to protect Trempealeau County, its residents and businesses from the COVID-19 virus.

Barb Barczak RN
Director/Health Office