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Health Department updates COVID-19 Prevention and Control *Community Expectations*

Eau Claire, WI- November 13, 2020 10:00 AM- Today, the Eau Claire City-County Health Department is releasing revised COVID-19 *Community Expectations*. These *Community Expectations* were first released on October 15, 2020. Since that time, Eau Claire County has unfortunately seen a dramatic and dangerous increase of COVID-19 spread in our community. This is negatively impacting our hospitals, our public health system, our businesses, our schools, and most importantly the individuals and families in our community who are becoming sick and dying from this disease.

In the four weeks since the original *Community Expectations* were released, we have seen more than a doubling of our total cases and our health care and public health systems have become overwhelmed. However, our community is not powerless. Basic public health principles of physical distance, wearing masks, and staying home when sick will slow the spread. These expectations are not complicated and provide simple steps every individual and every organization can do to protect themselves and their friends and family. Everyone plays a critical role in following public health expectations and protecting ourselves, our neighbors, and our community.

The *Community Expectations* provide specific guidance for individuals, public spaces, and private and public gatherings.

Some of the expectations of Eau Claire County residents include:

- Stay at home as much as possible
- Avoid gatherings of any size with people who are not in your immediate family or household
- Keep 6 ft distance and wear a cloth face covering when you are in public spaces
- Stay home when sick

Some of the expectations for businesses and other entities open to the public include:

- Reduce occupancy to 50% and keep 6 ft between households in public spaces and businesses
- Establish policies that prohibit social activities that promote close contact (dancing, close contact sports, some performances)
- Adopt policies that actively support employees who are required to quarantine or isolate to stay home
- Avoid meeting in person as much as possible

Some of the expectations for public and private gatherings include:

- Being less than 10 people not including people of the same household
- Avoid gatherings of more than one household for socialization purposes
- Use assigned or fixed seating and document contact information of attendees

Additional expectations are outlined for personal one-on-one services and mass transportation. All residents are encouraged to read the full document.

In addition, the Health Department will do the following when complaints about *Community Expectations* are received:

- follow up on all complaints received particularly those that include verifiable information
- provide resources and education on public health principles and best practices
- formally document the follow up, including a letter sent to any entity that is not following the basic prevention and control expectations.

The Eau Claire County community needs and deserves compliance with these science-based principles and should hold one another accountable. Thank you for supporting businesses, educators, religious institutions, and the many other community-based entities that are working in creative and committed ways to follow these *Expectations*. It is not easy for these entities – they need our financial support. Please let them know they are appreciated. Their leadership work is not easy, but they are choosing to protect their employees, their customers, their students, their community.

If you have documentable community concerns, please contact the COVID-19 hotline at 715-831-7425 and they will provide your feedback to our team for follow-up.

Thank you for what you are doing. We are confident that our community can work together to slow the spread of COVID-19.

- More information on the Eau Claire City-County Health Department COVID-19 Prevention and Control – *Community Expectation* document may be viewed here: <https://coronavirus-and-covid-19-information-hub-eccounty.hub.arcgis.com/pages/local-prevention>
- Data related to COVID-19 disease status and community preparedness is available here: <https://coronavirus-and-covid-19-information-hub-eccounty.hub.arcgis.com/pages/local-statistics>
- Please visit the covid19eauclaire.org website for more information. Questions from the public may be directed to the COVID-19 Call Center: 715-831-7425.

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Promoting health and safety for all Eau Claire communities