



HO-CHUNK NATION

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Media

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2020

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On Wednesday, the Wisconsin Supreme Court overturned Emergency Order #28 (Safer At Home). The Court determined that Safer at Home is subject to administrative rule-making, and because it was not established in rule (but rather it was established via order), the Supreme Court found EO #28 “unenforceable”. This ruling takes immediate effect; there is no 6 day stay.

Even though the State Court ruled in this way, the Ho-Chunk Health Department strongly encourages all of our Tribal Communities and employees to continue to comply with the key components of the Safer at Home Order. You can help keep our communities healthy by:

1. Stay home when ill
2. Maintain 6-foot distance from others whenever possible
3. Wear a mask in public to protect others
4. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water
5. Minimize travel to areas considered “viral hot spots” within and beyond our state borders
6. Avoid large gatherings
7. Get tested if you have ANY one of the 12 symptoms of COVID-19

Continuing to follow the Stay at Home order principles and the guidance tools for opening up our economy in a slow and measured way (Badger Bounce Back Plan) is the only way to prevent COVID-19 from spreading in our communities.

The efforts directed at infection control that we have all be practicing the last 2 months were done to protect the health of our Tribal communities. The science is sound and has not changed. We know that the virus did not go away, change, or become less communicable because of a State Supreme Court ruling. As we go forward through the next days and weeks the Ho-Chunk Health Department will be working with local partners and surrounding local health departments to consider what next steps will be needed to keep our communities safe during this continued pandemic. We understand this is a very difficult time for everyone but together we can protect those most vulnerable to COVID-19 such as our Elders, immune compromised, and young children.

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The Health Department encourages our Tribal businesses, government and organizations to reopen in a safe manner. There are several guidance tools to help businesses, and organizations to reopen safely and can be found at <https://wedc.org/reopen-guidelines/>. The Health Department expects that even more detailed public health guidance, by sector, will be released early next week from both our State and Federal partners. Until then the following preparations should be considered:

- Develop flexible sick leave policies that encourage staying home when ill
- Set aggressive infection control policies (hand washing, surface cleaning, barriers to reduce contact between customers and staff)
- Source needed disinfectants, soap, sanitizer, and PPE if used
- Ensure all operations support 6' physical distancing
- Create a system to monitor any symptoms your employees may have
- Cross train and prepare for absenteeism
- Implement a system to limit and direct traffic in your business
- Ensure policies are consistent with public health guidance, state and federal law
- Communicate your plan to employees and customers

Moving forward the Ho-Chunk Health Department will continue to monitor and investigate the transmission of COVID-19 within our communities and provide care to those who have been impacted.