



RAYMOND F. PRZYBELSKI, DIRECTOR  
(715) 345-5350 or Toll Free (866) 920-2525  
FAX (715) 345-5966

RUTH GILFRY HUMAN RESOURCES BUILDING  
817 WHITING AVENUE  
STEVENS POINT, WI 54481-5292

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: [pcpublichealth@co.portage.wi.us](mailto:pcpublichealth@co.portage.wi.us)

### **COVID-19 Update: 4<sup>th</sup> Case Confirmed in Portage County**

Portage County—Portage County Division of Public Health announced today that an additional case of COVID-19 was confirmed earlier today. There are now a total of 4 confirmed cases in Portage County. The newest confirmed case had recently traveled domestically out of state and developed symptoms shortly afterwards. The individual followed self-quarantine protocols that have been developed state, and federal recommendations.

“We are in daily contact with positive individuals in Portage County and continue to monitor their symptoms and ensure they are receiving support to be able to maintain isolation” said Gary Garske, Portage County Health Officer.

In order to slow the spread of COVID-19 in Wisconsin, Governor Tony Evers directed Department of Health Services (DHS) Secretary-designee Andrea Palm to issue a Safer at Home order that prohibits all nonessential travel. This order went into effect at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, March 25, 2020, and will remain in effect until 8 a.m. on April 24, 2020, or until a superseding order is issued.

The Portage County Division of Public Health and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) responsibilities include:

- Identifying and contacting anyone who has been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19. These people are asked to quarantine themselves for 14 days from their exposure and will be monitored for fever and respiratory symptoms. People with symptoms are tested for COVID-19.
- Performing follow-up testing for individuals who test positive to determine when a person can be released from isolation.
- Providing guidance to clinicians regarding testing.
- Preparing Wisconsin for community spread of COVID-19.

Portage County Division of Public Health is keeping track of cases during this outbreak. The health department is working with our local, state, and federal partners to deal quickly and effectively when people have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been around people have been infected with the coronavirus.

The public should follow simple steps to prevent illness and avoid exposure to this virus including:

- Avoid social gatherings with people of all ages (including playdates and sleepovers, parties, large family dinners, visitors in your home, and non-essential workers in your house);
- Frequent and thorough hand washing with soap and water;
- Covering coughs and sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands);
- Regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces;
- Avoiding touching your face;
- Maintaining a social distance of 6 feet from others in public places; and
- Avoiding non-essential travel; and
- Staying at home as much as possible.

There have been many questions regarding CDC recommendation to wear cloth face covers when out in public. The purpose of wearing face covers is to protect others from your droplets that may shed, especially some individuals could be positive for COVID-19 and be asymptomatic. According to Wisconsin Department of Health Services, "Cloth face covers are

recommended when individuals must leave the home to conduct essential activities, when sick, and for those who have seasonal allergies.”

This remains a rapidly evolving situation and we encourage the public to frequently monitor the COVID-19 page at the Portage County website, at <https://www.co.portage.wi.us> or the Portage County Division of Public Health Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/PortageCountyDPH/>, the DHS website at <https://www.wisconsin.gov> and clicking on the COVID-19 ribbon, follow @DHSWI on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), or dhs.wi on [Instagram](#). Additional information can be found on the [CDC website at https://www.cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

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