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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Spread in Large Gatherings

Portage County Health and Human Services Division of Public Health has these recommendations for large gatherings, such as rallies, family gatherings, and sports events, which can lead to community spread of COVID-19.

In order to protect yourself and others, please practice the following preventive measures:

- Stay home when ill
- Wear a cloth face covering
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available
- Practice physical distancing of at least 6 feet from people not in your household

Vulnerable populations, including the elderly and immunocompromised, have increased risk for serious and life-threatening complications if they become infected with COVID-19, but anyone can develop symptoms or become seriously ill if infected with the virus. It is also important to remember that COVID-19 can be spread by those who are not experiencing symptoms, as recent cases in Portage County have shown.

It is recommended that participants self-monitor their symptoms for 14 days after attending large gatherings. If one does develop symptoms, that person should self-isolate and call their doctor to get tested. Working together to stop the spread of COVID-19 is critical in protecting our community and establishing a new normal that allows us to interact with each other outside of our homes.

The World Health Organization Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, recently stated, "We're asking everyone to treat the decisions about where they go, what they do and who they meet with as life-and-death decisions – because they are. It may not be your life, but your choices could be the difference between life and death for someone you love, or for a complete stranger. We all have a part to play in protecting ourselves and one another from COVID-19."

To help think through the safety of the desired activity or gathering and how decisions might impact others, utilize the Decision Tool from Wisconsin Department of Health Services here:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/decision.htm>

To view the current status of COVID-19 activity in Portage County, visit <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/local.htm>

If you have questions or would like additional guidance, please call or email our department at (715) 345-5907 or PCPublicHealth@co.portage.wi.us.

If you have general COVID-19 questions call 2-1-1 or text your zip code to 898211 Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

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Where Government Serves the Community