

Wisconsin Parents Association Leadership Response to COVID-19 in Wisconsin

Thursday March 12, 2020

Today Governor Evers, with the Wisconsin Department of Health Service (WIDHS) and the Wisconsin National Guard, released new information and guidelines addressing the current COVID-19 outbreak.

First, Governor Evers declared a Public Health Emergency for the state of Wisconsin. This declaration is not a comment on the number of confirmed cases in the state. Rather, this an executive strategy to help flatten the curve: to slow the spread of infection, with the distinct purpose of alleviating pressure on our healthcare services. Declaring a public health emergency allows WIDHS *“to take all necessary and appropriate measures to prevent and respond to incidences of COVID-19. It allows the Department to purchase, store, or distribute appropriate medications, regardless of insurance or other health coverage, as needed to respond to the emergency. It also authorizes state funds to support local health departments with costs related to isolation and quarantine, as well as the use of the Wisconsin National Guard.”* (From Governor Evers’ press release, dated today:

https://homeschooling-wpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Press-Release_-_Gov.-Evers-Declares-Public-Health-Emergency-Due-to-COVID-19.pdf)

Additionally, Governor Evers and WIDHS Secretary Designee Andrea Palm issued new guidelines for responding to the COVID-19 outbreak in Wisconsin. These include:

- Ongoing recommendations for frequent, proper handwashing; avoiding touching your face; covering your coughs and sneezes; staying home if you are sick; sanitizing surfaces.
- Recommending social distancing for everyone in the state.
- Recommending cancellation of events with 250 or more people.
- Recommending not traveling to areas in the U.S. with sustained community transmission. If you do travel to places with sustained community transmission, isolate in your home for 14 days.
- Special recommendations for long-term care facilities.

You can read the full memo here:

<https://homeschooling-wpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/WIDHS-Memo-2020-05.pdf>

It is the understanding of WPA that these are temporary recommendations, based on the current and evolving situation, and that the recommendation to cancel events of more than 250 people applies to events in the immediate future, and is in effect for the next 30 days. **Based on these new recommendations, the WPA board is not cancelling the 37th Annual WPA Conference and Resource Fair, scheduled for May 8-9, 2020, at this time.**

WPA is working closely with the Holiday Inn Stevens Point - Convention Center, who is also monitoring the ongoing situation, and updating all their public health procedures accordingly. You can read their statement from today here:

<https://homeschooling-wpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Ambridge-Hospitality-Group-Business-Message.pdf>

The WPA Board will continue to closely monitor this evolving situation, and provide updates as needed. For answers to conference-related questions, you can visit our [Conference FAQ page](#).

As Governor Evers' press release also states, *"This can be a frightening time, but our state has incredible health professionals who are working to contain the spread. We cannot do this alone, we need all hands on deck to protect the public from COVID-19."*

Thank you,
Wisconsin Parents Association Board of Directors