

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of Milwaukee Health Department

MILWAUKEE - On Friday, May 29, 2020, the Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) released the following statement:

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, the City of Milwaukee has been committed to fulfilling our mission which is to advance the health and equity of Milwaukeeans through science, innovation, and leadership. We continue to learn more about this novel disease daily and will make changes to our response as needed. The Moving Milwaukee Forward Safely Plan shows how we plan to return to work and life as well as protecting our health during each phase.

HOW WE DETERMINE THE CURRENT PHASE

- The details for each phase are informed by health and economic data, a combination of input from community partners, industry/sector work groups, associations, public health experts, and the community at large.
- The specific criteria for transitioning between phases is established through data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the State of Wisconsin Badger Bounce back Plan, and the Federal plan to Open up America.
- The criteria may be updated as we learn more about this disease; how it spreads and affects our community as well as best practices for prevention.
- The MHD will modify and revise public health orders in phases, with each phase providing increased capacity for residents and businesses to return to normal.
- The MHD and City leaders will regularly review key indicators to decide if COVID-19 has been controlled enough to move to the next phase. MHD plans to do this weekly and announce the status of our collective progress on Fridays.

CURRENT PHASE

- On Thursday March 14th, the MHD issued the Phase 2 order which began the thoughtful reopening of the City of Milwaukee. This includes maintaining strict physical distancing with some businesses reopening.
- We also established the Gating Criteria which is modeled after the Badger Bounceback plan as well as the gating criteria established by the Milwaukee County health officers.

GATING CRITERIA

- The gating criteria are established to aid the MHD to reopen, so people can get back to working and living while reducing the risk of COVID-19.
- The core preparedness responsibilities of the MHD and Gating Criteria includes:

Cases:

A Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14 day period.

Current Status – RED—Percent Positive has been above 20%; 44.8% increase in the number of total cases from 5/14 to 5/29 (5/14 - 4,128 to 5/29 - 5,976)

Testing:

The ability for residents who have symptoms of COVID-19 to access a lab test. The ultimate goal is >2,400 tests per day.

Minimum requirement to move forward 1,000 tests per day

Current Status – RED—Current data shows there have been between 230 and 470 tests per day. For the past 5 days test results have been unusually high at 50% or greater.

Care:

The percentage of patients in hospitals with COVID-19 and hospital capacity to handle COVID-19 patients.

Minimum requirement to move forward 95-99% not in crisis care AND 10-20% of hospital patients are COVID

Current Status – Yellow—[per Milwaukee County COVID-19 Map](#)

Safety:

Adequate PPE available for healthcare personnel, long-term care facilities, and first responders. This includes masks, gowns, and gloves.

Minimum requirement to move forward 8-28 days of all PPE supply for majority of hospitals

Current Status – Yellow—[per Milwaukee County COVID-19 Map](#)

Tracing:

The ability to count, trace, and monitor COVID-19 cases and outbreaks

Minimum requirement to move forward 50-99% of positive cases contacted within 24 hours

Current Status – RED—16.05% of COVID+ cases received a contact attempt by MHD staff within 24 hours. This is way down due to the surge of cases.

FUTURE PHASES

The goal is to further reopen the City of Milwaukee while ensuring the health and safety of residents. We have heard from many concerned business owners and residents that support our need to stay the course and continue to put health first. It is our jobs as public health professionals to do just that, relying on data and science to drive our decisions. At this time, the disease is still spreading at an increasing rate. We need everyone to do their part to slow the spread. COVID-19 did not disappear when the WI Supreme Court ruling eliminated the State's Safer at Home order. Many areas where the state has reopened are seeing significant increases in the illness and they are being faced with difficult decision to go backwards and shut down again. The MHD is committed to moving us forward and have your best interests in mind to do that safely and not move backward. We need to stride forward with confidence.

Please check our website for information and updates: <https://city.milwaukee.gov/MMFS> and <https://city.milwaukee.gov/coronavirus> for daily updates and key indicators.

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