



## MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Pierce County Public Health Revises COVID-19 Call to Action Advisory in Response to Dramatic Case Increases**

Pierce County Public Health (PCPH) has released a revised COVID-19 Advisory which includes new criteria for indoor and outdoor gathering size recommendations. The criteria have specific recommendations for gatherings at each of the four COVID risk levels defined by the Harvard Institute for Health's Path to Zero.

Before a recent increase in cases largely connected to K-12 schools and University of Wisconsin- River Falls, Pierce County had been in the second lowest tier in the Harvard four-tiered system. Pierce County has been at the highest risk level, "Tipping Point" for the last two weeks. "While this recent increase in cases have been driven mostly by younger people, who are less likely to have adverse health outcomes, there is some evidence that spread has reached family members and workplaces. We are working closely with university and school leadership to take measures to contain spread," said AZ Snyder, Health Office/Public Health Director.

The gatherings tool should be used as a starting point for the decision-making process. Snyder states, "Because the COVID-19 situation is constantly changing, using these new criteria will give the community access to a decision-making tool that evolves with the pandemic." While this tool will be a helpful starting point, PCPH also encourages those making gathering decisions to consider other things such as age and risk level of the population attending the event. Limiting close contacts is still the best way to avoid the virus.

Using the mass gathering recommendations for Pierce County's current COVID risk level, restricting indoor gatherings to 10 people and outdoor gatherings to 25 people is advised. If Pierce County is able to decrease cases to the next lowest level, the mass gathering limits will move to 25 inside and 75 outside.

In addition to gathering recommendations, the advisory recommends:

- Safe business practices, which include recommending against mass gatherings on-site.
- Against non-essential travel, especially if it includes flying or visiting crowded spaces.
- Encouraging prevention of disease guidelines, such as physical distancing, wearing face coverings, staying home when you are ill, and following proper cleaning and hygiene recommendations.

Please continually monitor the Pierce County Dashboard for the communities current COVID Risk Level: <https://infogram.com/1pmrng9gxiziq7t3yelrwqyrgmsz9pjvgv3>

The advisory can be found on the Pierce County COVID-19 Hub: <https://covid-piercecounty-wi.hub.arcgis.com/>



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