

PIERCE COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE AND ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Financial Resources to Help Get Through COVID-19

- **Economic Impact Payments (Stimulus Checks):** The distribution of economic impact payments will begin in the next three weeks and will be distributed automatically, with no action required for most people. However, some taxpayers who typically do not file returns will need to submit a simple tax return to receive the stimulus payment. Social Security recipients who are not typically required to file a tax return do not need to take an action and will receive their payment directly to their bank account. The IRS will use the information on the Form SSA-1099 and Form RRB-1099 to generate \$1,200 Economic Impact Payments to Social Security recipients who did not file tax returns in 2018 or 2019. Recipients will receive these payments as a direct deposit or by paper check, just as they would normally receive their benefits. However, those receiving SSI and VA pension/disability payments are not connected to the system in the same way so the pathway for those folks to receive a stimulus have not been decided yet. Please do not call the IRS about this. When more specific details become available, this website will be updated: <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus>
Frequently asked questions about the Economic Impact Payments:
<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/economic-impact-payments-what-you-need-to-know>
- **Mortgage Relief:** Work with your financial institution. Do not skip payments without talking to your financial institution.
<https://www.npr.org/2020/03/19/818343720/homeowners-hurt-financially-by-the-coronavirus-may-get-a-mortgage-break>
- **UW Extension List of Financial Resources to Help Get Through COVID-19**
<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/toughtimes/covid-19-financial-resources/>
- **Energy Assistance:** In recognition of the financial impact that COVID-19 has brought to many households and the adjustments agencies are making to continue to serve the energy needs of our community, the Division of Energy Services is making the following change to the processing of WHEAP applications:
 - Beginning Monday March 30th, applications being submitted will now be processed based on a one-month income eligibility. For example, if Joe applies for Energy Assistance on 04/02/20, Joe will only need to provide information on his March household earnings (earned and unearned).
 - Applications can be completed via **PHONE** (by calling 715-273-6788, M-F 8-4:30) OR by **MAIL** (<http://homeenergyplus.wi.gov/docview.asp?docid=28799&locid=25> (print and send) to: **Pierce County - Energy Assistance Program, PIERCE COUNTY DEPT. OF HUMAN SERVICES, 412 W KINNE ST., ELLSWORTH WI 54011-9230**
 - Pierce County offices are currently closed to the public until further notice
 - Applications for 2019-2020 the Home Energy Plus Program year will be accepted through May 15th

INCOME GUIDELINES FOR THE 2019-2020 HOME ENERGY PLUS PROGRAM YEAR:

60 PERCENT OF STATE MEDIAN INCOME GUIDELINES

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ONE MONTH INCOME	ANNUAL INCOME
1	\$ 2,389.42	\$28,673
2	\$ 3,124.67	\$37,496
3	\$ 3,859.83	\$46,318
4	\$ 4,595.08	\$55,141
5	\$ 5,330.33	\$63,964
6	\$ 6,065.50	\$72,786
7	\$ 6,203.33	\$74,440
8	\$ 6,341.25	\$76,095

- 2. Temporary Suspension of Evictions and Foreclosures** – Governor Evers directed DHS to temporarily order the suspension of evictions and foreclosures for 60 days amid the COVID-19 public health emergency. Read Emergency Order #15 here - https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/WIGOV/2020/03/27/file_attachments/1412941/EO%2015%20Ban%20on%20Evictions%20and%20Foreclosures%20PDF.pdf
- 3. I am struggling to complete my renewal with Great Rivers Consortium. What can I do?**
All FoodShare, HealthCare (Except SeniorCare), W-2 and ChildCare will have their March renewal/review dates extended 3 months from their current certification period. Your renewal must be completed no later than June 2020. April renewals will also be extended. More information will be forthcoming.
- 4. I have an appointment with the AARP Tax Aide or VITA program. What is the status of my appointment?**
AARP and VITA tax preparation assistance is suspended until further notice. They will continue to assess whether they can open again in some or all sites for the remainder of the tax season.
- 5. I have heard that I have until July 15 to file my taxes, is that true?**
Yes, the Federal and Wisconsin Tax Day is moved from April 15 to July 15. All taxpayers and businesses will have this additional time to file income taxes and make payments without interest or penalties.
- 6. Will I qualify for unemployment benefits if the coronavirus (Covid-19) caused my employer to shut down operations? In addition, if an employer lays off employees due to the loss of production caused by the coronavirus, will the employees be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits?**
Wisconsin unemployment benefits are available to individuals who are unemployed through no fault of their own. If an employer must shut down operations and no work is available, individuals may be eligible for unemployment if they meet the monetary criteria and the weekly eligibility criteria. This is also the case if an employer shuts down production.

Unemployment COVID-19 Public Information

Frequently asked questions about the COVID-19 Coronavirus and Wisconsin Unemployment Benefits for [claimants](#) and [employers](#).

- [Am I required to search for work during the COVID 19 pandemic?](#)
- [Will I qualify for unemployment benefits if the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) causes my employer to shut down operations?](#)
- [My employer has not told me that I am laid off, but my workplace is closed and I don't have hours. Am I still eligible?](#)
- [My hours have been reduced, am I still eligible to apply for UI benefits even though I still have a job?](#)
- [If I impose a self-quarantine because of the coronavirus, will I be eligible for unemployment benefits?](#)
- [If I am in mandatory quarantine because of suspicion of having the coronavirus, will I be eligible for unemployment benefits?](#)
- [If I am ill because of the coronavirus and unable to work, will I be eligible for unemployment benefits?](#)
- [Is the coronavirus considered a disaster, and can I receive Disaster Unemployment Assistance?](#)
- [What happens if the school I work at shuts down for coronavirus. Will I be eligible?](#)
- [I am required to attend a re-employment services session but I don't want to go to a public location until COVID-19 has run its course. What do I do?](#)
- [What if I am required to participate in a re-employment session and do not complete it online, via phone or otherwise?](#)
- [Is there still a "waiting week" for those applying for unemployment insurance?](#)
- [Will filing for unemployment benefits negatively affect my immigration status?](#)

7. What about the Wisconsin Homestead Tax Credit?

For most claimants, the deadline for filing a 2019 Schedule H or H-EZ is April 15, 2024. If you are a taxpayer with a fiscal taxable year (one ending on a date other than December 31), your deadline for filing Schedule H or H-EZ is 4 years, 3 1/2 months after the end of the fiscal taxable year to which the claim relates.

If I qualify for homestead credit for years prior to 2019, can I file a homestead credit claim for those years? Homestead credit claims for prior years can be filed up until the filing deadline for each year's claim:

Claim Year	Filing deadline
2018	April 15, 2023
2017	April 15, 2022
2016	April 15, 2021
2015	April 15, 2020

Note: If any due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, use the next business day. The deadlines for 2014 and prior year homestead credit claims are past and claims for those years cannot be filed.

8. What does Governor Evers's Safer at Home order mean?

- https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/WIGOV/2020/03/24/file_attachments/1409408/Health%20Order%20%2312%20Safer%20At%20Home.pdf

9. I am not feeling well (fever, cough, shortness of breath, headache, diarrhea, etc.) what should I do?

Contact your medical provider before going to a clinic or hospital. **Telehealth** options may be available for questions about COVID-19 symptoms as well as for regular medical appointments. Telehealth benefits through Medicare and Medicaid have been expanded as a result of COVID-19.

- **Allina** – Complete the online COVID-19 free screening interview. It's available 24/7 and takes about 15 minutes to complete. They will provide you with next steps based on your symptoms. Coronavirus testing is not being done in any Allina outpatient settings such as clinics, urgent cares, or emergency departments. Resources are being managed for the most critically ill patients and their health care workers.
- **Mayo** - First, call their Mayo Clinic Health System primary care clinic/provider for a phone screening. Your provider or nurse will direct you to our dedicated COVID-19 Nurse Line. If you meet testing criteria, you will be directed to a local testing site. If Mayo Clinic Health System patients meet the criteria for testing, patients will be directed to the drive-through testing location. At the drive-through location, Mayo Clinic Health System staff will collect the specimens using appropriate precautions. The specimens will then be sent to Mayo Clinic in Rochester for analysis. Patients will be advised of next steps.
- **Vibrant Health** - At this time, coronavirus testing is limited to those who are critically ill. If you think you've been exposed to COVID-19, do not go to the clinic. To protect their patients and providers, they are not taking walk-in patients at this time for COVID-19 or other illnesses. Please contact your healthcare provider by phone so they can discuss a plan for your care.

10. Pharmacy Services

• Ellsworth

- Village Pharmacy, 157 E. Main St. (in Nilssen's) 715 941-6037
Open M-F 9am-6pm, Sat. 9am-1pm, closed Sunday.
Free delivery in town, \$3 to mail, curbside pick-up.

• River Falls

- Family Fresh Pharmacy, 303 S. Main St., 715 425-132
Open 9am-8pm M-Th, 9am-7pm Fri, Sat 9am-3pm and Sun 10am-1pm.
Drive-thru, mail, free delivery within city limits M-F until 4pm.
- Freeman Drug, 104 S. Main St., 715 425-2255
Open 8am-8pm M-Th, 8am-7pm Friday, Saturday until 3pm.
Free delivery in town M-F about 3:30pm, mail, curbside pick-up.

- Walgreen's 1047 N. Main St., 715 426-4089
Open M-F 9am-8pm, Sat 9am-6pm, Sun 9am-5pm
Drive-thru or mail.

• Spring Valley

- Spring Valley Drug 104 S. McKay Ave., 715 778-5684
Open 9am – 5:30pm M-F(except closed 12:30-1:30 for lunch) Sat 9-12
Free delivery in towns of Spring Valley and Elmwood, free mailed prescriptions

11. No Visitor Policies in Effect

- **Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities** are admitting residents but are not allowing visitors other than end-of-life care.
- **Mayo Clinic Health System** – All Mayo hospitals and clinics in Northwest Wisconsin have implemented a no visitor policy for everyone's safety. Exceptions to this policy for inpatient care include one visitor for end-of-life patients, birth of a child and pediatric patients. Also, one visitor will be allowed for outpatient care if the patient has a physical or cognitive impairment, or is a minor. All visitors will be screened to assess for COVID-19 symptoms. Mayo Clinic Health System understands that these restrictions will be difficult for patients and their loved ones. Mayo Clinic Health System is taking these necessary steps to protect everyone's safety. Family members are encouraged to consider other ways to connect with their loved ones, such as by phone or other devices.
- **Allina Health** – has instituted a NO VISITOR policy with limited exceptions. Visitors w/cough, fever or stuffy/runny nose will not be allowed. Visitors must wear a badge, PPE, and screening stickers at all times. Must use hand hygiene frequently and maintain social distancing with no linger in public spaces.
 - The Emergency Department will only allow one adult/ parent/guardian for pediatric patients, vulnerable/incapacitated adult patients, or trauma/critical care patients. All other patients may have one responsible party wait in lobby and allowed to visit as designated by care team for compassionate exceptions only.
 - The Inpatient units will only allow one adult/parent/guardian per patient and any exceptions would need to be approved by house supervisor.
 - Pediatric patients may have one parent/guardian in room & person be there overnight in accordance w/usual policy.
 - Labor & delivery patients are allowed one designated visitor per stay and a doula would be the one visitor. The newborn is not allowed outside visitors unless d/t compassionate exception. A partner/primary caretaker is allowed to visit the newborn.
 - Compassionate care patients- those at end-of-life, critically unstable patients and those undergoing surgery. Visitors to the Intensive Care Unit must be limited to the critically unstable patients only to avoid risk to other patients and staff. The patient care manager will need to authorize this.
 - Mental health patients-no visitors except for child/adolescent patients may have one parent/guardian and adult geriatric-psychiatry patients may have a guardian.
 - Discharge planning – Allina recognizes that a caregiver may need to be present to assist with discharge planning. This planning is critical to maintain the safety of patients, therefore the no-visitor policy is not intended to slow the process. One person per patient will be allowed on the unit to assist w/preparation. The patient care manager will determine who will be present and does not usually need to occur before the day of discharge.
 - Clinic- one visitor is allowed with patient if under 18 (a parent/guardian) or if the visitor is a personal care attendant for the patient, if personal assistance is needed while at appointment. **Visitor must be over 18 and cannot be having flu-like symptoms, including cough, fever, or respiratory concerns.**

12. PIERCE COUNTY FOOD PANTRIES AND GROCERY STORES BY LOCATION

- If going to the food pantry for the first time, bring a utility or phone bill to verify your address.
- Use the food pantry in your school district or the Pierce County Food Pantry.
- All of grocery stores listed have a web page, and many also have a Facebook page.
- If there is not a grocery store in your local community, please consider calling your local convenience store to see about their supply of food items and other essential supplies.

ELMWOOD

Elmwood Food Pantry 108 S. Main Street (715) 639-2307
1st Tues, 3 -6pm & 3rd Tues 9am -1pm

ELLSWORTH

Pierce County Food Pantry 440 N. Maple St. Ellsworth (715) 273-2070
Mon, Tues Thurs 9:30am - Noon, Wed 4 -6pm

Fill out order form, order packed and brought to car. If unable to do your own pick-up, fill out proxy form and someone you designate can get order

Nilssen's Foods 157 E. Main St. (715) 273-5500 Hours 7am – 8pm
At-risk guests encouraged to shop early in day

PLUM CITY

Plum City Food Pantry 301 First Street (715) 647-2191
Thursdays 10am -2pm except 2nd Thurs 3 -7pm

PRESCOTT

Prescott Area Food Pantry 911 Pearl Street (715) 262-4143
Mon, Wed & Fri 9am -2:30 pm, Thurs 10am – 5pm

Has a Facebook page

Call ahead to order & arrange pick-up time (supplies put in car) OR **delivery, if needed**, as they have volunteers doing this

Ptacek's IGA 1005 Eagle Ridge Drive (715) 262-5636 Hours 5am – 10 pm daily
online shopping, email when ready & pick-up curbside
Monday delivery in town, contact them if other arrangements needed

RIVER FALLS

River Falls Community Food Pantry 705 St. Croix Street (715) 425-6880

Mon 10am - Noon & 6:30-8pm, Wed 1 -5pm, Thurs 6:30-8pm, Fri & 2nd Sat 10am -Noon
Just providing boxes of basics UNLESS call requesting other items d/t dietary restriction or concern that children won't eat regularly provided items-could possibly substitute
Items loaded into car.

River Falls Virus Response Team is helping to deliver to homebound

Dick's Fresh Market 1121 S. Main Street (715) 426-5920 Open 8am-8pm
shopping for at-risk customers from 8-9am daily.

home delivery on Tuesday within city limits for a \$3 charge, open to anyone.

Family Fresh Market 303 S. Main Street (715) 425-7277 Open 6am – Midnight daily
Reserved shopping hours of 7-9am on Tuesdays and Thursdays for at-risk customers
Online shopping w/ fastlane.com(on their web page), schedule your pick-up, call when you arrive & staff bring out. Fees vary but free trials available then monthly or annual subscriptions
Provide delivery in town and beyond for a charge

Whole Earth Market Co-op 126 S. Main St. (715) 425-7971 Open 9am-8pm M-F, 9am-6pm S&S
shopping for at risk customers from 8-9am M-F
website has order form for members which can be completed and emailed-2 bag limit
arranging member volunteers to deliver orders after pre-pay, if needed

SPRING VALLEY

Spring Valley Community Food Pantry S425 Church Ave (715) 778-5988
2nd & 4th Wed 10 -11:30am & 4:30-6pm

A Butchery Shoppe S422 McKay Avenue (715) 778-5016 Open 9am – 6pm daily (see next line)
At this time store requests only elderly and at-risk on M,W,F 9-10am
Curbside pick-up available 8am-3pm M-Th, just call ahead to place order
SV Seniors Staying Put **volunteers are delivering orders** M-F, call store for more Information

OTHER FOOD RESOURCES

Food Share Program

(commonly referred to as "Food Stamps")

Contact: Pierce County Human Services Department

Website to sign up: www.access.wisconsin.gov

Phone: 716-273-6788

(WIC) Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children

Contact: Pierce County Public Health Department

Phone: 715-273-6758

School Breakfast & Lunch Programs

Contact your individual School Districts

Ellsworth - 715-273-3911

Elmwood - 715-639-2711

Plum City - 715-647-2511

River Falls - 715-425-1800

Spring Valley - 715-778-5551 Ext. 5109

Prescott - 715-262-5782

Household income determines whether a family is eligible for reduced price or free meals. The School breakfast & lunch programs must meet nutrition requirements established by the federal government.

Backpack Program

With school staff recommendation, an eligible student receives a backpack of nonperishable food on Fridays. This program is available at some Pierce County Elementary Schools, **contact the school nurse for more information.**

Food Harvest of St. Croix Valley

Afton-Lakeland School - 475 St. Croix Trail, Lakeland MN 55043

3rd Saturday of the month, Doors open at 7am, distribution begins at 8am. All Welcome.

Bring 2 large boxes, clothes baskets or wheeled cart and \$15.

West CAP Inc.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

Phone: 715-977-1191

Senior Meal Programs

Midday meals offered daily to senior citizens at six sites in Pierce County. Meals can be delivered in each area to persons who are temporarily or permanently homebound.

Phone: 715-273-6780

Food Wise - UW-Extension, Pierce County

Foods, nutrition and resource management, education, information and materials for income eligible individuals and families.

Phone: 715-273-6781

Salvation Army - Emergency Food

Pierce County 715-307-7750

Walmart – Now only open 7 am to 8:30 pm. Special hour-long shopping times will be offered for before the store opens. Pharmacy and Vision Centers will also be open during this time. Online shopping and pick up available.

ALDI – On Tuesdays and Thursdays, ALDI stores will open at 8:30am and reserve the first hour of business for vulnerable shoppers. This includes senior citizens, expectant mothers, and those with underlying health concerns. They are posting visual cues in the store and asking customers and employees to observe social distancing.

14. Can I get home delivered meals?

- Home-delivered meals will continue as scheduled and can be offered as an option for those in need. Requests for home-delivered meals can be made by contacting the Aging and Disability Resource Center at (715) 273-6780.

15. How can I connect with my family and friends using conference calls or videos?

- <https://www.freeconferencecall.com/>
- <https://www.freeconference.com/>
- <https://www.zoom.us/>
- <https://tools.google.com/dlpage/hangoutplugin>
- https://www.uberconference.com/?_bt=410594939039&_bk=uberconference
- Conference NOW: <https://conferencenowapp.com/>
- FaceTime (iPhone) <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/facetime/id1110145091>
- Google Duo (Android) <https://duo.google.com/about/>

16. I need recommendations for a tablet that's easy to use and I need to learn how to use a tablet.

- a. Here are some suggestions about which type of tablet is best for seniors: <https://assistedlivingtoday.com/blog/best-tablets-for-seniors/>
- b. Here is information from [Generations on Line](#) for their app that teaches seniors how to use tablets. It is the same program that is used for Sip and Swipe. [Easy Tablet Help for Seniors](#)
- c. Here are ideas for how seniors can get online: [Stuck at Home Guide](#)

17. What resources are available for seniors who are socially isolated and need companionship or a check-in call?

- **Friendship Line:** <https://www.ioaging.org/services/all-inclusive-health-care/friendship-line>

18. The Alzheimer's Association WI Chapter is now offering a phone in support group for family members of loved ones living in a healthcare facility. With the "no visitors" policy in our nursing homes, assisted livings, group homes and others it is a very stressful time for family members. This support group is offered every Friday morning.

- a. Fridays from 10:00 am - 11:30 am
- b. To register, please call 800.272.3900. Once registered, you will receive connection instructions.
- c. Visit <https://alz.org/wi> to learn more about caregiver programs and resources. To further extend your network of support, visit ALZConnected®, our online community, at <https://www.alzconnected.org/>

19. I'm concerned about Fraud related to COVID-19:

- **Key Points:**

- Beware of anyone contacting you in person, on the computer or by phone, claiming to have a cure or vaccine.
- Do not give your Medicare number, Social Security number, or any personal information in response to unsolicited calls, text, email, or home visits.
- Hang up (or shut the door) on anyone who claims they have a test kit for the virus.
- Be suspicious of anyone offering anything related to COVID-19 such as testing kits, any supplies, or treatments.
- Don't succumb to fear-based tactics of scammers. Cut off those who make you afraid and contact familiar sources instead.



Fraud Alert
COVID-19.pdf

- <https://wqow.com/2020/03/21/bbb-warns-government-relief-checks-trigger-latest-coronavirus-scam/>