



## NEWS RELEASE

### Coulee COVID-19 Collaborative Update: We Need Your Help

**For Immediate Release:** September 23, 2020  
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The Coulee COVID-19 Collaborative (a partnership between Gundersen Health System, Mayo Clinic Health System, La Crosse County and other stakeholders) continues to work together and offer recommendations regarding COVID-19 in La Crosse County. Using the Harvard Global Health Institute model as a guide for assessing the level of COVID-19, the metrics show:

Data for the week ending 9/20/2020:  
 Metrics 1 – 3

Metric 1	New case rate	97.0 per 100,000/day	Concern Trend: Growing
Metric 2	New hospitalizations rate (7 day rolling average)	4.05 per 100,000/day	Satisfactory
Metric 3	Hospitalization Care Capacity		Satisfactory

Community, Public Health and Testing Metrics: Metrics 4-9

Metric 4	Cases Interviewed	Concern
Metric 5	Identified contacts traced	Concern
Metric 6	Contacts reached 1-2 days	Concern
Metric 7*	Daily testing goal	Satisfactory
Metric 8	Testing turnaround time	Concern
Metric 9	Positive test ratio	Concern

\*Testing goal is difficult to determine during surge.

Given the information from these metrics and the growing case rates in our community in La Crosse County, the Coulee COVID-19 Collaborative highly recommends the following to assure a safe and healthy community:

1. **When in public or associating with people outside your household, anticipate exposure to COVID-19. You can reduce this risk by following all recommendations, including wearing a mask and maintaining 6 feet between yourself and others.**
2. **Avoid any businesses or locations that are not following recommendations on masks, physical distancing and capacity limits.**
3. **If you have recently tested positive for COVID-19, isolate at home and notify anyone you have been in contact with to follow quarantine instructions: <https://lacrossecounty.org/covid19/if-you-have-been-exposed>**

4. If you have been in close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive, quarantine for 14 days and get tested if symptoms occur. If you are asymptomatic, get tested if you develop symptoms or are advised by county health officials.
5. **If you have symptoms, you should be tested**, please call medical facilities prior to arrival for screening purposes and pre-registration or visit <https://lacrossecounty.org/covid19/testing-information> for info on community testing sites.
6. **Avoid all unnecessary travel.**
7. **Personal social gatherings** are not recommended.

#### For Businesses, Public Buildings, and Venues

- **Minimize mass gatherings** in businesses, public buildings, and venues. **Capacity should be limited to 25% of total capacity OR 50 people indoors (100 outdoors) whichever is less. Masks and physical distancing should be required. Venues should consider cancelling or rescheduling any large gatherings planned for the next 14 days.**
- **Businesses should actively screen employees. All symptomatic employees should stay home.**
- **Organizations that care for populations vulnerable to COVID-19** including older adults, individuals at high risk or with underlying health conditions, etc. should limit visitors and increase screening of employees.

#### And as always:

- **Wear a mask** and keep a 6-foot distance when with others outside your household; indoors or out.
- **Wash your hands** frequently and avoid touching your face.
- **If you have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, stay home.**

La Crosse County has continued to see a surge of cases in young adults. From September 14-20, 80.4% of cases were between the ages of 18 and 24 and this has far reaching impacts. Many of these young people are college students and all are important members of our community. Many are young professionals, members of young families, and workers who fill vital roles in the local workforce which can lead to further spread. Cases in the workforce often means closures of daycares, critical staffing shortages at long term care and assisted living facilities and impacts to K-12 schools' learning options. Additional outreach to this population is being developed by partnering community stakeholders.

The Health Department continues to prioritize contacting cases and contacts at highest risk, however due to record high numbers of cases over the past seven days has reached capacity. It is important that the public knows some cases and contacts may not receive a phone call at this time. **For this reason, we ask any newly diagnosed person with COVID-19 to visit <https://lacrossecounty.org/covid19/if-you-have-been-exposed> and isolate themselves immediately.** Cases should also personally notify anyone they have had close contact with about their positive test result and direct their contacts to quarantine and follow directions on [the website](#). This notification should be shared with any person in contact with the positive case while they had symptoms AND during the 48 hours before symptoms developed.

We implore each and every member of the community to follow these guidelines and help protect our community. Recommendations based on these metrics are also available at [www.couleecovid19.org](http://www.couleecovid19.org)

