



BREAKING NEWS

The U.S. Senate has reached what is believed to be a tentative agreement on a \$2 trillion economic stimulus package with a vote expected for later this week. [Read more in today's federal update.](#)

[The City of Green Bay has filed a federal lawsuit](#) seeking to force the state to cancel in-person voting for the April 7th election, instead allowing clerks to mail ballots to all registered voters.

The suit comes amid [repeated commitments made by Governor Evers and Republican legislative leaders](#) to proceed with the April 7th election as planned. [Voters are encouraged to request absentee ballots online via MyVote.wi.gov.](#)

Assembly Speaker Vos and Senate Majority Leader Fitzgerald today held a briefing with state press to discuss the state's response to the COVID-19 virus. [Watch the press call here.](#)

[According to the latest data available from the Department of Health Services](#), Wisconsin now has 585 confirmed positive cases of the COVID-19 virus and 6 confirmed deaths. 10,089 negative test results have been reported.

DAILY UPDATES - MARCH 25, 2020

State Updates:

- The Department of Workforce Development has announced that it is closing all of the state's Job Centers beginning Wednesday to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
 - The Department reports that between Monday and Tuesday of this week, nearly 40,000 unemployment insurance claims were filed statewide.
 - Those looking to file unemployment insurance claims are encouraged to do so through the Department's website.
 - Those seeking employment may still do so by registering on JobCenterofWisconsin.com.
- A third Department of Corrections employee has tested positive for COVID-19 according to a report by the WI State Journal.
 - The employee whose positive test was confirmed Tuesday, works for the Division of Community Corrections office in Milwaukee Co and has since been directed to quarantine.
- Dane County today confirmed its first death due to COVID-19, reporting that the individual was in their late 70's.
- The Department of Ag, Trade and Consumer Protection has issued cease and desist letters to 16 companies suspected of price gouging. Such offers have included N95 masks and other critical items.
 - To report suspected price gouging, please complete the online form.
- Some area universities are stepping in to offer free, online tutoring to area students from kindergarten to senior high.
 - NBC 26 in Green Bay reports St. Norbert College and UW-Oshkosh have instituted a program and are accepting applications now.

Federal Updates

- [The U.S. Senate is currently working to approve a stimulus package to aid the U.S. economy amid the COVID-19 outbreak.](#)
 - The \$2 trillion package reportedly includes a number of items intended to assist both individuals and businesses, and could be voted on by the Senate sometime this week. The U.S. House will not be scheduling a vote until the Senate has approved the measure.
 - According to early reports, the package is likely to include:
 - \$250 billion for direct payments to individuals and families. This would include direct payments of \$1,200 each for individuals with an adjusted gross income of \$75,000 or less, \$2,500 for married couples with a combined income of \$150,000 or less, and an additional \$500 per child. The plan would be scaled down by income and would be completely phased out at \$99,000 for an individuals and \$198,000 for a couple;
 - \$350 billion for loans to small businesses;
 - \$250 billion in unemployment insurance benefits;
 - \$500 billion in loans for distressed companies. This item includes oversight boards and the creation of an inspector general to review fund allocation;
 - \$130 billion for hospitals heavily affected by the pandemic; and
 - \$150 billion for state and local governments impacted.
- [The Office of Rural Development within the U.S. Department of Agriculture is taking steps to help rural residents cope with COVID-19.](#)
 - The agency is taking steps to guarantee loans, provide housing support, support telecom needs and more. [Read how.](#)
- [The U.S. Department of Labor has released guidance for employers and employees](#) amid the COVID-19 pandemic, including a FAQ section.

GENERAL INFORMATION

GOP COVID-19 Webpage

- [The Assembly GOP Caucus has launched a new GOP COVID-19 webpage.](#) It will serve as a resource for up-to-date information, links to DHS and CDC information, graphics, and more.
- [The Federal Emergency Management Agency has created the Coronavirus Rumor Control page](#) to help folks distinguish between rumors and facts.

Education

- Governor Evers has directed the Department of Health Service to mandate a statewide closure of all K-12 schools. All schools will be closed beginning Wednesday, March 18th, and will remain closed through the duration of the public health emergency.
- There are options for children who were participants in the Child Nutrition Program at school and may be facing food insecurity during the break.
 - [While School Food Authorities \(SFAs\) are not required to provide meals during a dismissal, they are encouraged to ensure that the needs of low-income children are met during extended school dismissals.](#)
 - Check with your local school districts for information regarding meals for children during the school closure.

Businesses

- Governor Evers has directed the Department of Health Services to issue a “Safer at Home” order that allows some businesses to continue operation. [A Q&A and a listing of essential industries is available on the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation’s \(WEDC\) website.](#)

- Businesses performing essential functions not included in the categories listed on the WEDC website, [may request such designation by submitting this online form to the agency.](#)
- [The Department of Health Services has provided guidance for employers on COVID-19.](#)
- [The federal Center for Disease Control has compiled interim guidance for businesses and employers.](#)
- [Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce has also developed a toolbox of guides](#) to help employers navigate the COVID-19 virus.

Dining

- Despite the Governor's orders to close all restaurants and bars, take-out and delivery services are still permissible.
 - [The Wisconsin Restaurant Association has worked to compile a list of participating restaurants](#) offering such services.

Voting

- Ahead of Wisconsin's spring election, absentee ballots are available until Thursday, April 2. Additionally, Friday, April 3 is the last day for individuals to vote early, in-person.
- [Late Friday, a federal judge extended the deadline](#) for Wisconsin residents to register online to vote.
- Governor Evers has repeatedly stressed that individuals should request their absentee ballot to vote.
- For more information on early or absentee voting, registration, and polling locations, visit myvote.wi.gov.
- The [Wisconsin Elections Commission](#) has a list of all clerks, as well as any recent communications.

Ways You Can Help

- Give Blood – [click here](#) to find a blood drive/donation center near you.
 - The Red Cross has indicated cancellations of blood appointments are at record highs. Encourage others to donate if they are healthy.

- Local food banks are asking for your assistance.
- The United Way and other [groups have created an online portal for those looking for volunteering opportunities in their community.](#)
- [Help your local small businesses.](#) Grab a meal for take-out or buy gift cards and shop online from local businesses to help them stay afloat during this time of uncertainty.
- Volunteer to pick up groceries or prescriptions for elderly in your community, or volunteer with a local organization who provides these services (ie: Meals on Wheels).
- Limit stockpiling, as grocery stores will remain open.

Services

- Internet:
 - [Charter is providing free Spectrum broadband and Wi-Fi access for 60 days](#) to households with K-12 and/or college students who do not already have a Spectrum broadband subscription and at any service level up to 100 Mbps. To enroll, call 1-844-488-8395
 - [Comcast is increasing speeds from 15/2 Mbps to 25/3 Mbps for all customers, and new customers are receiving two months of free service.](#) More information on Comcast's Internet Essentials program can be [found here](#).
 - [TDS is providing free broadband access](#) for new K-12, college student households for 60 days.
- Unemployment:
 - Information relating to unemployment benefits and COVID-19 can be found on the [Dept. of Workforce Development's informational page](#).
 - Applicants are encourage to apply for benefits online.
- Kids:
 - [Scholastic offers free online courses for children.](#)
 - [50 activities parents can do with their kids during shutdown.](#)