



The [statewide COVID-19 website](#) is a one stop shop that consolidates information from state agencies, and provides up-to-date information and guidance regarding COVID-19. DHS has also offered information on their website on [How and Where to Get Tested](#).

If you're not busy, please make a call, send a card, or write a letter to someone you know who lives alone or may need assistance.

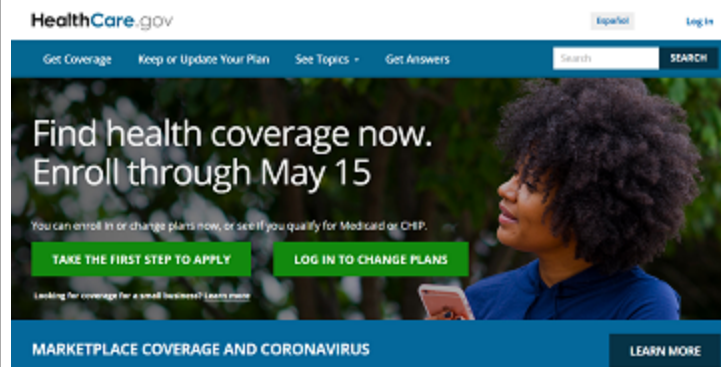
Bless each of you during this difficult time of uncertainty and suffering. Take good care!

[See previous eUpdates](#)

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## Special Enrollment Period for Health Insurance



Monday was the beginning of a special enrollment period to sign up for health insurance using the Affordable Care Act Marketplace: [HealthCare.gov](#). This enrollment period will go through May 15th.

Normally this opportunity would only be available in the Fall during open enrollment. Due to the pandemic and the effect that it has had on people's health and employment, President Biden has directed the marketplace to reopen so that Americans can have another chance to make sure that they are adequately covered at the most competitive rate.

For free help signing up for a plan, visit [WisCovered.com](#) where experts can help simplify the enrollment process and provide information about programs like [BadgerCare](#) for families that qualify for free coverage.

[Read more.](#)

## Factors Contributing to the Vaccine Shortage

Recently the Biden administration was able to secure a supply of 600 million COVID-19 vaccine doses, which is enough to vaccinate 300 million Americans or about 90% of our total population. This is great news, which means that we have a supply sufficient to reach herd immunity in our country. However, there are other factors besides dose supply that are slowing the distribution of the vaccine.

A [shortage of syringes](#) is one such bottleneck that is making it difficult to get shots in arms.

Another is the fact that only a few manufacturers are able to manufacture the vaccines consistently, which requires specialized equipment.

Eliminating these types of bottlenecks will be necessary for the most efficient rollout possible.

[Read more.](#)

## **Legislature fails to provide tax relief to those on Unemployment**

Yesterday during the session of the State Senate, a bill was brought before us that would, in part, provide a tax exemption for the income that some businesses received through loans granted through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). This program was created by the federal CARES Act in order to help businesses hurt by the pandemic sustain their operations. The bill also allowed those businesses to claim a tax deduction on expenses that were covered using these tax-free loans.

I produced an amendment to this bill that would offer a similar consideration for the Wisconsinites who have lost work through no fault of their own, and have applied for the unemployment programs offered through the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development in order to make ends meet during these devastating economic circumstances. It was rejected by the Majority party 19 votes to 13, with only one Republican, Senator Rob Cowles (R-Green Bay), voting to keep this amendment from being killed.

View my full [press release](#).

View the [full proceedings of the Senate Session](#).

## **Census Delays and Redistricting Lawyers**

Due to the changes in procedures necessary to collect and complete the 2020 U.S. Census, delivery of redistricting data will be delayed until September 30th, 6 months after the original deadline of March 31st.

Experts familiar with the redistricting process have explained that the later in September that the data is provided, the more likely it is that states will need to scramble to finish drawing their new districts for the elections in 2022.

Wisconsin is among the 13 states whose state constitution requires that redistricting be completed in the year after the census, meaning that the later that information is provided, the more compressed our state's timeline becomes.

One redistricting expert, Kathay Feng of Common Cause, believes that time crunches such as this could create a recipe for gerrymandering:

*"There is a quiet conversation going on in legislatures right now about whether the delay actually might be a helpful game changer to allow them to pass midnight bills and do the dirty work outside of the scrutiny of the public,"* Feng told WPR.

[Read more.](#)

Meanwhile, the Republican leaders of the State Senate and Assembly have agreed to contracts with redistricting attorneys in preparation for the likely legal battles surrounding our state's redistricting process.

Assembly Speaker Robin Vos and Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu have agreed to spend as much as \$965,000 in taxpayer money for attorneys who have also represented former President Donald Trump and the RNC. Taxpayers might also be on the hook for additional costs of appeals.

[Read more.](#)

## **Governor's Address and President's Town Hall**

In case you missed it yesterday evening, Governor Evers issued his second [State Budget Address](#).

And President Biden held his first official visit as President of the United States to Milwaukee for a [town hall](#).

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