

# Urgent News Release #13

## Richland County Emergency Management

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## **RICHLAND COUNTY COMMUNITY PARTNERS RESPOND TO PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

*Richland Center, WI:* A virtual Emergency Operations Center meeting was held again this morning to share information between Richland County officials and community partners in a joint response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Public Health Manager/Local Health Officer Rose Kohout announced that as of 2:00pm Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup> the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) confirmed that in the state of Wisconsin there were 707 confirmed cases for COVID-19, 11,583 have tested negative, and there were 8 deaths related to COVID-19. There are 2 confirmed case of COVID-19 within Richland County at this time. Kohout reported that within 24 hours after receiving notification of a confirmed case in Richland County, Public Health staff will contact those individuals that may have also been exposed and recommend voluntary quarantine or isolation.

The Richland Hospital Administrator Bruce Roesler announced that their drive-thru testing services have been suspended and are recommending that patients call their Coronavirus Hotline at (608) 604-9953 BEFORE coming to the hospital. The Richland

Hospital Coronavirus Hotline is available 24 hours/day and hospital staff will walk through the best healthcare option for each patient; including telemedicine or being seen at one of their rural health clinics. The Richland Hospital continues to care for patients in the safest way possible and is no longer allowing patient visitors, but some exceptions do apply.

Richland County Health & Human Services Director Tracy Thorsen stated that, even though the office is closed to the public, citizens may still call 608-647-8821 to ask questions or request services Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm.

Richland County Administrator Clinton Langreck reported that at this time most Richland County offices continue to be closed to the public, and if possible, staff are transitioning to working from home while continuing to conduct business via phone, mail, and email when possible. Additional instructions on accessing county services and informational updates can be found on the Richland County COVID-19 website <https://covid.co.richland.wi.us>. Partners are also researching how to continue to conduct essential open meetings, such as County Board and School Board meetings, and the ability to allow for the public to access these meetings electronically.

All University of Wisconsin-Platteville/Richland, Southwest Wisconsin Technical College, Richland School District, and Ithaca School District buildings and playgrounds remain closed to the public until further notice.

All other community partners continue to work in groups of 10 or less people and practice social distancing of six feet between people. Many local restaurants and taverns are closed, but some continue to offer Take-Out or curbside delivery food ordering options. Small business owners are being cautioned to watch for predatory lending scams and the Greater Richland Area Chamber of Commerce office is offering more information on their website [www.gorcchamber.com](http://www.gorcchamber.com).

For the most up-to-date COVID-19 information, follow Richland County Health & Human Services on Facebook or consult the following websites:

- ❖ Richland County:  
<https://covid.co.richland.wi.us>
- ❖ Wisconsin Department of Health Services:  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19)
- ❖ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:  
[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/)

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