



JOINT INFORMATION RELEASE Joint Information Center (JIC)

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: April 18, 2020
EVENT: Kenosha County Emergency Management COVID-19 Virus
LOCATION: County of Kenosha

The Kenosha County Joint Information Center is back this week with more answers to the community's questions about COVID-19.

The Kenosha County Division of Health is accepting questions by email at COVID19@kenoshacounty.org. Those asked most frequently will be answered each week, in a news release from the Joint Information Center and in a video produced by the Kenosha Police Department.

This week's questions were fielded by Evan Gorr, Kenosha County public health nurse, and Kenosha County Medical Examiner Patrice Hall.

These weekly FAQ videos are available on YouTube at <http://bit.ly/KCCOVIDplaylist> and on the Kenosha County Government Facebook page, at www.facebook.com/kenoshacountygovt.

A written synopsis of the questions and answers follows, beginning with Gorr's answers to public health-related questions:

Q: Where does a resident get more current information beyond daily count of positives?

A: There is an online dashboard on the Kenosha County COVID-19 Response Hub website, at www.kenoshacounty.org/covid-19. By clicking the dashboard link (optimized for desktop or mobile) at the top of the hub page, you can find data on cases reported by age, gender, race and ethnicity, municipality and census tract.

Q: Does Kenosha have access to rapid testing such as the Abbott lab tests?

A: Yes. We have it at one of our hospital sites and are currently using it on a select group of people.

Q: To me, Kenosha numbers seem high compared to other counties and our rank per population.



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A: Kenosha County includes the state's fourth largest city and we also have the fourth largest number of positives. We are also on the border with Illinois, nearest to Chicago — which has a large number of cases — and Illinois residents work, shop and travel through Kenosha County. The Kenosha County Division of Health is monitoring all positive cases. These numbers are not the only thing to look at because testing levels and collection kits are still varying widely throughout the state and country.

Q: What city officials can we get more involved to spread the word daily via multiple media about our current situation and plead for Kenosha to step up more than we currently are?

A: The health officer is working daily with multiple city officials and providing County Board with updates weekly; these updates will now be moving from Tuesday nights to Wednesdays. The mayor does radio spots on Mondays and Thursdays. The Joint Information Center is sharing resources through the various organizations' Facebook pages, the Friday FAQs, various press releases each week and the Kenosha County COVID-19 Hub website updated daily.

Q: Please share information regarding blood donations.

A: According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), there have been no reported or suspected cases of transfusion-transmitted COVID-19. Individuals are not at risk of contracting COVID-19 through the blood donation process or via a blood transfusion, since respiratory viruses are generally not known to be transmitted by donation or transfusion.

Plasma donation information for those who have recovered from COVID-19 is available from the Versiti Blood Center of Wisconsin at this link: <https://www.versiti.org/home/convalescent-plasma-donations>.

Versiti is seeking plasma donations from community members who have recovered from COVID-19 to help patients with severe COVID-19 symptoms. Recovered patients have antibodies in their plasma that can attack the virus and potentially help our sickest patients.

Q: What do we know about anti-body testing and community testing?

A: The FDA Commissioner has stated that antibody tests being reviewed by the agency "may not be as accurate as we'd like them to be."



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Most tests on the market have not gone through an FDA scientific review and we do not know the accuracy rate of these tests. Testing the entire community may create a false sense of safety and put some in danger of exposure with false positive or false negative results.

We want to be sure that if we tell a member of the public that they are immune, we are confident in that test.

Q: What is contact tracing and why is it important to do this?

A: A good visual is if you line up a row of matches touching one another and light one end, if you remove a match, anywhere in the line you have a chance to save all the matches thereafter from burning up.

Contact tracing takes the person who tested positive and allows us to follow and find people with whom that positive case may have been in contact. We then reach out to those people who had contact with a positive case and provide them with information and hopefully prevent them from potentially exposing others to the virus.

A video illustrating the matchstick principle is available here: <https://youtu.be/sICXqvupZJE>

Q: When we hear that an employee at our workplace has tested positive, what can our workplace do to prevent further spread?

A: Our Division of Health staff have been working with the employers in Kenosha County in order to keep employees safe by providing education and directions. Employers are urged to follow CDC guidelines for social distancing and cleaning procedures to prevent further spread.

Here are links to the CDC guidelines DHS guidelines for workplaces:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/employers.htm>

Q: I am interested in volunteering to make face coverings for those who need them. How can I help?

A: The Kenosha County Division of Health is still in need of cloth masks that are being dropped off to residents who are testing positive and their close contacts. If you or a group you belong to can make these masks, please send an email to COVID-19@kenoshacounty.org, and we will collect them for distribution.



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Sadly, as of April 17, our community has lost five lives to COVID-19. This has raised some questions about what happens when there is a death caused by the virus. Kenosha County Medical Examiner Patrice Hall fielded the following questions:

Q: Will the Kenosha County Medical Examiner's Office perform COVID-19 testing on every person who dies in Kenosha County?

A: COVID-19 testing will not be performed on every person who dies in Kenosha County. Each death is individually investigated and triaged. There are certain criteria that must be met before a decedent undergoes COVID-19 testing by our office.

Q: Can I catch COVID-19 from a person who has died of COVID-19?

A: It is believed that the COVID-19 virus can survive up to three days after a person has died. Our investigators wear full PPEs when performing an investigation and when handling a decedent, to help mitigate the risk of transmission.

Q: Will a person undergo an autopsy if they have died of COVID-19?

A: If a person dies of confirmed COVID-19 or is suspected to have died of COVID-19 in Kenosha County, the death is reportable to the Kenosha County Medical Examiner's Office.

The death will be investigated, and our office will make the determination as to whether further testing or an autopsy will need to be performed. We work with the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office, which performs requested autopsies on the behalf of our office.

For any person who dies of COVID-19 in Kenosha County, the Kenosha County Medical Examiner's Office will be signing the death certificate.

Joint Information Center disclaimers:

The Joint Information Center will not provide medical diagnoses or legal advice.

If you have a question regarding the welfare of a person you are unable to check on yourself, please contact your local law enforcement agency. The COVID19@kenoshacounty.org email address is not monitored 24/7, and is not intended to replace the traditional request for law enforcement or emergency service.

Those seeking immediate answers to questions regarding COVID-19 are encouraged to dial 2-1-1 or visit the 2-1-1 website, [https:// 211wisconsin.communityos.org](https://211wisconsin.communityos.org).



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More information about COVID-19 is also available at:

<https://www.kenoshacounty.org/covid-19>

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/covid-19.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov>

Together, we can and will slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

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