

# Opportunities for Employers to Lead during COVID-19

## Message Guide and Resources

*These documents are in draft form and we are currently looking for feedback. If you have thoughts, edits, suggestions, you can email [klanderson23@wisc.edu](mailto:klanderson23@wisc.edu)  
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### Introduction

This document was developed by the Community Resilience and Response Task Force of the state COVID-19 Response in collaboration with employers and stakeholders. This resource is meant to support employers and other community leaders to align with broader statewide COVID-19 messaging.

This pandemic has shown us that no matter where you live in Wisconsin, our struggles are interconnected. Employers are looked to as critical leaders and influential messengers in local communities who deeply understand the direct impacts of COVID-19 on local economies and families. Not only can employers make changes inside their workplaces to keep their employees safe and healthy - employers can also help to amplify public health best practice outside the workplace, encouraging their employees and the broader community to do what they can to stop the spread of COVID-19. We can stand together in support of solutions that will improve everyone's health and well-being. When we act for the safety of our neighbors, it benefits our entire community. Employers have a unique opportunity to model healthy practices and lead their local communities in banding together to get through COVID-19 safely. This pandemic has not only reminded us of how much we need each other, but also how much we can accomplish together.

***In Wisconsin, we take care of each other. Our well-being is bound to each other, and we refuse to leave anyone behind. It is our collective responsibility to cultivate strong, healthy communities.***

## Possible Messages for Use by Employers

Objective	Key Message	Talking Points
<p><b>Encourage the public to engage in public health best practices to reduce spread of COVID-19.</b></p> <p>Additional resources and talking points can be found here:  <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing-comms.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing-comms.html</a></p>	<p><b>COVID-19 is real and it is serious. As a new virus, the recommendations from the scientific community will and should change as we learn more.</b></p> <p><b>Engaging in public health best practices protects our loved ones.</b></p> <p><b>Using public health best practices, such as wearing a mask, is one way that we take care of our neighbors, support our local businesses and protect our critical workforces.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We know that COVID-19 can spread even when a person isn't showing symptoms.</li> <li>● We don't think twice about lending a hand to a neighbor in need. Wearing a mask and practicing physical distancing is just another way we take care of each other and take responsibility for the health of our community. It is an acknowledgement that we're at our best when everyone chips in to do their part.</li> <li>● Masks work! We know that COVID-19 can spread even when a person isn't showing symptoms. Wearing a mask protects your neighbors, employees, customers, and local economy. The fewer people who get sick, the more local businesses can stay open and the more freedom we have to go out.</li> <li>● We're all in this together. When a community chooses to take these steps together, it makes a big difference:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mask up, physically distance by 6 feet, wash hands, sanitize surfaces, avoid touching your face, stay home when possible, keep gatherings small, keep your circle small</li> </ul> </li> <li>● When public health and employers stand together, they can better support their local communities in stopping the spread of COVID-19.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage your employees to limit the spread by staying home: If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, stay at home away from others for 14 days after you were last around this person.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Self-quarantining means staying home, monitoring your health, and maintaining physical distance from others at all times.</li> <li>○ If you need to be around other people or animals in or outside the home, wear a mask. This will protect the people around you.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Uplift the fact that COVID-19 response and recovery efforts support the economy.</b></p>	<p><b>We do not have to choose between our health and the economy. Our response to COVID-19 can support both.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We do not have to choose between our health and the economy. In fact, we can't have one without the other.</li> <li>● The pandemic has had very real economic impacts on businesses and families. We can find solutions that support our economy <i>and</i> our health.</li> <li>● We know the value of hard work and taking on challenges is a way of life for us. We can find solutions that support our economy while keeping us healthy and safe.</li> <li>● When you wear a mask and physically distance, you're supporting our local businesses. If we each do our part to limit the spread of disease, businesses are more likely to stay open and kids are more likely to be able to return to school.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Lift the spirits of the public and foster resiliency.</b></p> <p><b>Acknowledge and address the most pressing concerns of the public in regards to COVID-19 and its collateral impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Anxiety</li> <li>● Job losses</li> <li>● Loneliness</li> <li>● Grief and loss</li> <li>● Desire for “normalcy”</li> <li>● Education</li> </ul>	<p><b>Innovative COVID-19 response efforts and solutions have improved lives.</b></p> <p><b>There is hope for a brighter future and a better “normal” than we had before.</b></p> <p><b>While pandemic will not last forever, that does not make the situation easier - we need to do what we can to support each other to get through.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In Wisconsin, we take care of each other and support our neighbors. This moment makes it clear that every person’s health is intertwined with those of our community members and fellow Wisconsinites. We all do better when we all do better.</li> <li>● The small ways we act now can have big, positive outcomes for our future.</li> <li>● There’s no doubt that we are living in difficult times; acknowledging that for ourselves and others is important.</li> <li>● As we continue to move through this pandemic - “taking care” looks different for everyone and there is no right or wrong way to attend to our needs.</li> <li>● It’s never been more important that we take care of ourselves and our loved ones.</li> <li>● Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns, how you are feeling, or how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting you.</li> <li>● It’s important to know that COVID-19 has impacted everyone in one way or another. Feeling mild, moderate, or extreme symptoms of stress is understandable. Help is available. If you do not know who to call, start with Wisconsin 211.</li> <li>● If we work together, we will come out on the other side of this stronger than ever.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Encourage your peers to lead with public health best practice in mind.</b></p>	<p><b>People are looking to us to lead.</b></p> <p><b>As employers - we have a responsibility to do what we can to protect the health and safety of our workers and our communities.</b></p> <p><b>If we're going to get through this pandemic - we can't pit our health against our economy.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As employers - we have a responsibility and opportunity to do and model what we can to protect the health and safety of our workers and our communities.</li> <li>● Businesses are woven into the fabric of our local communities - we take care of each other and support our neighbors. This moment makes clear that the health of our community relies on each of us.</li> <li>● We all do better when we all do better. We do not have to choose between our health and the economy. In fact, we can't have one without the other. We can find solutions that support our economy <i>and</i> our health.</li> <li>● People are looking to us to lead and we can make a difference. There are policies we can put into place at our worksites that help make public health best practice easy to follow (such as providing flexible paid time off for workers when they're feeling sick).</li> <li>● Our leadership extends beyond the walls of the workplace. It's important that neighbors in our community see and hear us amplifying public health best practices.</li> </ul>
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## Key Resources

- **Supports for Community-level Drivers of Stress**

- [ACCESS - State of Wisconsin benefits and programs](#) - State of Wisconsin
- [Income Maintenance and Tribal Agency Contact Information](#) - Wisconsin Department of Health Services
- [DWD Getting Help in Wisconsin](#)
- [Aging and Disability Resource Centers](#)
- [Wisconsin Community Program, Social Service, and Human Service Agencies](#)
- For multiple needs, including unemployment and rental assistance, calling 211 or visiting <https://211wisconsin.communityos.org/> may be the quickest way to get connected to resources
- **Economic supports**
  - [Managing your personal finances in tough times](#) (UW Extension)
  - [Emergency Assistance](#). You can apply for Emergency Assistance through your [local W-2 agency](#).
  - [Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program \(WHEAP\)](#)
  - [Unemployment Unemployment Insurance](#)
    - Links to apply for benefits, including [regular unemployment](#) and [pandemic unemployment assistance \(PUA\)](#).
    - Information about [COVID-19 and unemployment benefits](#)
    - An explanation of [Which Unemployment Program is for You](#)
- **Family supports**
  - [FoodShare](#)
  - [Women, Infants and Children \(WIC\) Nutrition Program](#)
  - [Elder Nutrition Program](#). For information on participating in a program that provides meals to adults aged 60 and older, contact your [County or Tribal Nutrition Program](#).

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- Commodity Supplemental Food Program. CSFP offers free, nutritious foods to low-income seniors aged 60 years and older. Monthly income limits are \$1,354 for a single person or \$1,832 for a family of two (for larger families add \$479 for each additional member).
- 211 Wisconsin Food Pantries
- Wisconsin Shares
- Child care availability map
- COVID-19 Child Care Request for Workforce Families
- **Resources for immigrant and linguistically diverse families**
  - Covering Wisconsin
    - Covering Wisconsin has flyers in Spanish on using ForwardHealth (Wisconsin Medicaid) insurance, making appointments, and where to go when you're sick:
      - Cómo comenzar a usar el Seguro
      - Cómo pedir una Cita
      - A donde ir cuando Estoy Enfermo
  - Thawj Nplooj HmongHealth.org has a variety of health information and resources.
- **Mental and behavioral health strategies/resources**
  - Social, Mental and Behavioral Health Supports Resource (Spanish version)
  - Wisconsin Addiction Recovery Helpline: Available 24/7 Call: 211 or 833-944-4673 or Text your zip code to 898211
  - HOPELINE Text Service: Available 24/7 Text HOPELINE to 741741
  - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Available 24/7 Call: 1-800-273-8255
  - Resilient Wisconsin
  - Naloxone information

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- **Violence Prevention Strategies**

- [End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin](#)
- American Indians Against Abuse Wisconsin: Call: 715-634-9980
- [Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault](#)
- [Milwaukee Blueprint for Peace](#)

- **Resources to support families who have experienced a death**

- [Suicide Loss Support and Resources](#)
- [Financial resources](#)
- [Preplanning for the Loss of a Loved One](#)
- [Checklist: Following the Death of a Loved One](#)
- [10 Practical Ways to Help Your Friend Through The Death of a Loved One](#)
- Grief supports
  - [National Alliance for Grieving Children](#)
  - [Agrace Grief Resources](#)
  - [Hopes House](#)
  - [Center for Grieving Children](#) (Fox Valley)

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