



To protect, nurture, and advance
the health of our community

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oneida County Health Department Partners with Local Chambers in Fight Against COVID-19

Requesting some customer info will help keep Northwoods open and thriving

As the number of COVID-19 cases continues to grow throughout the state, the Oneida County Health Department is proactively looking to partner with local businesses to assist with contact tracing efforts.

The health department is asking businesses like bars and restaurants, where patrons may have prolonged exposure to employees and one another, to collect at least one name and phone number per customer party as a way of helping identify individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19, should a case be diagnosed.

“Our chambers have strong relationships with our county businesses, and are able to get this process started quickly,” said Linda Conlon, Oneida County Health Department Director/Health Officer. “We know our business owners want to keep the community safe, so we look forward to working together to help fight this virus and keep our local economy strong.”

Chamber offices will assist businesses to implement the contact tracing requests, but businesses are also welcome to contact the health department with any questions or to discuss ways to make their business lower risk for transmission.

“This one small effort by businesses helps us immensely,” said Conlon. “The more easily we can get into contact with people who may have been exposed, the faster we can shut down the spread from that encounter. In the long run, it not only protects our residents and visitors, but also the economy here in the Northwoods, because our businesses can continue to operate successfully.”

The health department has also launched a dedicated COVID-19 webpage to notify the public of locations where they may have come into close contact with the virus. (See the webpage here: <https://publichealth.co.oneida.wi.us/services/communicable-disease/covid-19-outbreaks-and-investigations/>) It includes locations categorized as low and high risk; a measure determined based on the chance you came into contact with the virus and the ability of the health department to identify and notify potential contacts. Businesses who participate in collecting patron info would be listed in the low risk category in the event of an exposure.

OCHD will work together with places identified as high risk before they are added to the list to provide guidance about reducing future risk to staff and customers. We will make two attempts to contact, and

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then will leave a voice message prior to addition on the Outbreak and Investigation page. For low risk businesses, OCHD will just post to the webpage as all businesses have been given information on appropriate precautions. Current guidance is available on the Onward Oneida County Page.

Locations will remain on the list for 14 days after the last known positive case was there. The page will be updated frequently as information becomes available. Those who may have been at a high risk location will be asked to complete the self-screening tool at www.wihealthconnect.com/.

The Oneida County Health Department encourages everyone to stay home as much as possible, practice physical distancing, good hand hygiene, enhanced cleaning practices and utilize cloth face coverings when physical distancing is difficult to do.

If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive, please contact your medical provider to be tested.

This is a rapidly evolving situation and information may change. To read the latest information about COVID-19 check the Oneida County Health Department website (oneidacountypublichealth.org) or Facebook page ([facebook.com/OneidaCountyHealthDepartment/](https://www.facebook.com/OneidaCountyHealthDepartment/)), the Department of Health Services (DHS) website (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>).

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