

Wisconsin Supreme Court Overturns Gov Evers Safer At Home Order What does this mean for the City of Portage?

The Wisconsin Supreme Court issued a decision on May 13, 2020 to effectively nullify Emergency Order No. 28 or the extended Safer At Home order that was in effect until May 26, 2020. The Safer At Home order, put in place to prevent widespread exposure to the COVID-19 outbreak, imposed restrictions and conditions on citizens and businesses that limited their ability to operate, travel or congregate. Local units of government, like the City of Portage were directed to enforce these restrictions and in turn, closed most of our buildings and facilities to the general public. These restrictions did have a positive impact on limiting the spread of COVID-19 as there is still no cure or no vaccine for this virus. Therefore we strongly encourage everyone to continue practicing the following precautions:

- ~Maintain 6' distances when interacting with others,
- ~wash hands frequently and avoid touching your face
- ~avoid congregations of 10 or more persons,
- ~avoid unnecessary travel
- ~if you experience any symptoms such as fever, coughing, shortness of breath, stay at home and seek medical guidance.

While the State Supreme Court's decision does allow any business or organization to open without restriction, each business or organization can make their own decision as to when or how to open. The City strongly recommends continued adherence to safe business practices as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, the State Department of Health Services and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). For re-opening guidance specific to your business, the WEDC has issued guidelines to assist businesses in re-opening safely. These guidelines can be found on the WEDC website <https://wedc.org/reopen-guidelines/>

Until further notice, the City of Portage will continue to keep our public buildings and facilities closed to the public until we develop and implement re-opening plans that protect the safety of people and our employees at these facilities. Public meetings shall continue to be held via phone conference or online meeting platforms. The City has been developing re-opening plans with the goal of providing a gradual increase in access by the public to our buildings, facilities and programs over the next several weeks. However, due to limited City resources, some of our public facilities or programs may remain closed indefinitely.

While businesses and organizations in Portage may open, we strongly encourage you review and implement the safety precautions listed in the WEDC guidelines to protect your employees and customers. Please continue to check our website at www.portagewi.gov or Facebook page for updates and latest information on access to City buildings and facilities.