



NORTH SHORE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Dear North Shore residents and community leaders:

The North Shore Health Department's response to COVID-19 is reaching the one-year milestone. In this time, we have investigated and supported almost 5,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19. We certainly recognize the toll this response has taken on everyone as we grow weary of the messages to wear masks, stay physically distant, and not engage in large gatherings.

Over the last month COVID-19 cases in the North Shore have been steadily declining. The two-week case rate was 163 new cases per 100,000 for the weeks of 1/29/21-2/11/21. This rate is down from a high of 1,183 cases per 100,000 in mid-November. Milwaukee County data are also showing positive trends. In reviewing [Gating Criteria for Milwaukee County](#), four of the five indicators are yellow, including *Cases, Testing, PPE, and Tracing*. The *Care* indicator is current Green, indicating less than 10% of hospitalized patients are COVID-19 positive.

The North Shore Health Department has been vaccinating hundreds of residents each week. While the distribution of vaccine is slower than we had hoped, initial data show a little over 8% of Milwaukee County residents have been vaccinated.

While the data show promising trends, new genetic variants of the COVID-19 virus and being largely indoors through the remaining weeks of winter could quickly reverse these trends. NSHD continues to recommend individuals and the community follow the guidance of wearing face masks, staying at least 6 feet apart, avoiding crowds, washing hands, and getting tested for COVID-19 if you are feeling sick.

NSHD is moving from our Phased Reopening Model to a longer-term plan of Safe Practices Guidelines. These guidelines align with other suburban municipalities in Milwaukee County, along with the elements outlined in the [City of Milwaukee's Business COVID Safety Plan](#) for restaurant and bars. The purpose of the realignment was to provide businesses with tools and information on how to reduce risk rather than general occupancy guidelines. Further details on the Safe Practice Guidelines are available on [NSHD's website](#). Key aspects of NSHD's **Safe Practice Guidelines** include:

- Public gatherings limited to 50 people;
- Occupancy limits for restaurants and bars at a capacity where the number of individuals allows for maintenance of physical distancing and protective measures; and
- Occupancy limits for retail establishments, salons and spa services, and gyms and places of amusement where the number of individuals allows for maintenance of physical distancing and protective measures.

The health and safety of those in seven municipalities in the North Shore is our priority. We thank you for your continued patience and cooperation in this unprecedented public health crisis. For additional information you can view the websites for the [North Shore Health Department](#), the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#), and the [Centers for Disease Control](#) or call the North Shore Health Department at 414-371-2980.

Sincerely,

Ann Christiansen, Health Director/Officer