

Resolution 2020-06

Town of Washington State of Emergency and Declaration of COVID-19 Health Emergency

WHEREAS, the spread of the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19 is a pandemic, affecting more than 177 countries and territories around the world, including the United States of America, and the State of Wisconsin;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a potentially deadly virus, having infected over 240,000 individuals worldwide, caused 9,982 deaths, including 171, so far, in the United States;

WHEREAS, 155 confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Wisconsin, 2 of which have been in Brown County;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is transmitted by personal contact between humans, and by human contact with objects touched by a person carrying the virus;

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America, declared a national emergency;

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services has declared a public health emergency in response to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020, the State of Wisconsin declared the existence of a “public health emergency”, pursuant to Section 323.02(16), Wisconsin Statutes, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020 Door County, Wisconsin declared a State of Emergency “as conditions have arisen by reason of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has great potential to impair transportation, food or fuel supplies, medical care, fire, health or police protection or other vital facilities or services of the County.”;

WHEREAS, the Town of Washington is situated on an Island of the same name lying three miles off the shore of Door County, Wisconsin;

WHEREAS, the only ways to reach Washington Island are by personal aircraft, personal watercraft, emergency helicopter, or waterborne transportation operated by either Island Clipper or Washington Island Ferry Line;

WHEREAS, Door County Memorial Hospital operates a medical facility known as the Washington Island Clinic;

WHEREAS, the Washington Island Clinic is staffed on a rotating basis by a licensed MD and Nurse Practitioner;

WHEREAS, over 40% of the Island's population would be classified within the "high risk" category for COVID-19;

WHEREAS, up to 20% of individuals infected with COVID-19 experience no symptoms;

WHEREAS, patients with serious emergency medical conditions, including patients with COVID-19 requiring hospitalization, must be transported to a mainland emergency medical facility by ambulance on the Washington Island Ferry Line, or emergency helicopter;

WHEREAS, the Town has limited supply of medical equipment, and personal protective equipment, and is unable to treat patients with acute COVID-19 symptoms;

WHEREAS, Mann's Grocery Store is the Island's only grocery store, serving the entire Island;

WHEREAS, Washington Island Ferry Line has a limited number of certified captains, and crew to operate its ferries;

WHEREAS, the Town Board has considered the above factors, including the limited availability of people, equipment, and supplies needed to support the Island's population, and believes it needs to take steps to minimize the impact for the people who live on the Island from the effects of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, Section 323.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes provides that "The governing body of any local government may declare, by ordinance or resolution, an emergency existing within the local unit of government whenever conditions arise by reason of a riot or civil commotion, a disaster, or an imminent threat of a disaster, that impairs transportation, food or fuel supplies, medical care, fire, health or police protections, or other critical systems of the local unit of government. The period of the emergency shall be limited by the ordinance or resolution to the time during which the emergency condition exists or are likely to exist." Please note that the term "local unit of government" includes a county, city, village or town [s. 323.02 (15), Stats.];

WHEREAS, Section 323.14 of the Statutes describes the duties and powers of a local government during an emergency declaration. Specifically, "The emergency power of the governing body conferred under s. 232.11 includes the general authority to order, by

ordinance or resolution, whatever is necessary and expedient for the health, safety, protection, and welfare of persons and property within the local unit of government in the emergency and includes the power to bar, restrict, remove all unnecessary traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian, from highways, notwithstanding any provisions of chs. 341 to 349;

WHEREAS, Section 252.03 (2) of the Statutes provides that “Local health officers may do whatever is reasonable and necessary for the prevention and suppression of disease; may forbid public gatherings when deemed necessary to control outbreaks or epidemics and shall advise the department of measures taken.”;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, in order to best protect the people of the Town of Washington from the spread of the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19, the Town Board hereby declares a State of Emergency;

FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Richard Tobey, as Township Chairman, is hereby authorized to undertake and direct the activities outlined herein on behalf of the Town of Washington;

FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the period of this emergency declaration shall be limited to the time during which the emergency conditions exist, or are likely to exist;

FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Town Board counsels that:

1. All travel to the Island shall be limited to travel for “essential purposes”, as defined below;
2. People who do not reside on the Island fulltime should avoid travel to the Island due to the significant increase in risk associated with the transmission of COVID-19;
3. Contractors who work on the Island but do not live on the Island should restrict their travel to the Island due to the significant increase in risk associated with the transmission of COVID-19;
4. Travel for “essential purposes” shall mean to receive or provide medical care, to provide direct caregiving to people who reside on the Island; to resupply bulk food items, fuel, and other products required for human consumption, habitation, and wellbeing; to conduct law enforcement activities, to fulfill Door County, State or Federal obligations and to perform duties related to those obligations; and travel for other similar purposes associated with lifesaving, firefighting, and other activities related to the emergency care of persons or property;

5. For the duration of the emergency, “essential travel” shall also include travel to the mainland and back to Washington Island for the purpose of obtaining groceries and other essential items;
6. For the duration of the emergency, “essential travel” shall also include delivery of supplies and materials needed for Island residents to perform their jobs;
7. All people on the Island shall avoid close human contact (e.g. “social distancing”) with people other than their families or others with whom they reside;
8. People on the Island shall not meet in groups larger than ten persons, unless a family gathering would include more than ten persons;
9. The Town of Washington Office will be closed to visitors, but the staff will remain at work during regular work hours to assist customers by telephone, online, or by appointment only. For the upcoming election, voter registration and absentee ballot requests may be performed by appointment with the Town Office. The deadline for registration and absentee ballots requests ends Thursday, April 2nd at 5:00 pm local time. For the general election on April 7th, polls will be open at 7:00 am and close 8:pm;
10. People who have returned to the Island from areas with CDC reported active cases of COVID-19 (e.g. While off the Island they have visited a Country/Territory, State/Province, County and City with CDC reported active cases) shall remain off the Island or be quarantined in their homes for 14 days after potential exposure. Furthermore, those living within their household upon their return, shall be quarantined as well. They may contact the Washington Island Clinic (920) 847-2424 for medical advice and care in the interim. If necessary, they may also contact WICHP (920) 847-2108 so that arrangements can be made to deliver food and supplies as needed during their 14-day quarantine period;
11. People who believe they may have come into close contact with a person who has COVID-19 shall not enter the Washington Island Clinic. They may call (920) 746-3700 between 8 am and 4:30 pm, or (877) 746-0003 after hours to be evaluated/scheduled for a COVID-19 screen. If they schedule you for a screen, go to the back door of the Clinic (Red Awning/Tent), and they will screen you there;
12. If you board the Washington Island Ferry Line ferry in a vehicle, remain in the vehicle while aboard the ferry. If travelling as a walk-on passenger, or need arises to exit your vehicle, follow CDC guidelines for personal conduct, limit contact with any surface, and maintain social distancing of 6 feet or more at all times;

13. Practice safe handling of your tickets when passing to crew members. Maintain social distancing with employees on vessels, docks, and facilities. Maintain arm's length distance when transacting with employees is necessary;
14. To avoid/reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, Mann's Store may choose to restrict and/or modify hours of operation and/or who may enter the store by time (e.g. hours restricted to high risk individuals). They may also restrict the number of customers within the store at any one time. Further, to reduce the risk of shortages and/or 'hoarding', Mann's may restrict the quantity of goods any customer or family unit may purchase.

ADOPTED: __March 20th, 2020_____

Richard Tobey, Town Chairman

Attest: Valerie Carpenter, Town Clerk

ROLL CALL VOTE	AYE	NAY
Richard Tobey	__X__	_____
Bill Jorgenson	__X__	_____
Martin Andersen	__X__	_____
Kirby Foss	__X__	_____
Hans Lux (Excused)	_____	_____