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From: Ashland Chamber of Commerce <info@visitashland.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 4:50 PM
To: officemgr@visitashland.com
Subject: Business Updates 3-18-2020



The Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce has a mission to Sell Ashland. In our mission, we want to sell the amazing assets of our community to travelers and entrepreneurs. Our priorities are three categories; Tourism, Membership, and Downtown. Our priority is our business community and we feel it is important to keep you updated with information regarding the latest events that affect us socially and economically. We will update our business community daily with information about COVID/19 that we are receiving from our state and local partners in a daily eblast.

Today there were several Webinars. Two hosted by the Wisconsin Manufacturer's & Commerce and one hosted by Destination Development a tourism company that focuses on travel and downtowns. Unfortunately, the technical difficulties made it impossible to communicate at times so they are all putting their presentations together and this may take a day or two. I'll post the links on our daily eblast to you. In the meantime, the last webinar of the day was with Wisconsin Manufacturer's & Commerce, Governor Evers, Secretary Caleb Frostman from Workforce Development, Executive Director Missy Hughes from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and Deputy Secretary Julie Willems Van Duk from Wisconsin Department of Health

Services

These topics that were discussed today, are so important to our small businesses. Following are some of the key points made in today's briefing with the state.

Governor Evers initiated his Executive Orders to slowdown the pace of the COVID/19 virus which could overwhelm our state healthcare system. He feels the Social Distancing promoted by the CDC is the most important task at hand and is optimistic that this will slow down the spread of the virus. Using minimal interaction with each other has shown a significant slowdown in the spread of the disease. Deputy Secretary Julie Van Duk echoed the Governor's explanation stating that just 10 days ago there was only 1 case in Wisconsin, and that individual recovered. 30 minutes ago, they have now documented 106 cases that tested positive and 1577 that were negative. Three counties; Dane, Kenosha, and Milwaukee all are instances of person to person contact meaning they are community spread. She said, "There is no treatment, no vaccine, and the rapid spread of this virus will overwhelm our healthcare system". The answer right now is to minimize contact and interaction with social distancing. She said if an employee tests positive for COVID/19, the employer will be contacted by a Public Health Department official and be questioned on "kinds of contacts on a regular basis". Deputy Secretary Willems Van Duk said that just because an employee tested positive it doesn't always mean a company must shut down. They complete a very thorough investigation with the employer looking at close and regular contacts. The Governor is also very concerned about the economic wellbeing of our Small Businesses in the State. The Hospitality businesses are extremely important and very vulnerable. Missy Hughes from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation announced that they are following the lead of the federal government as the feds announced around 50 Billion dollars in economic injury loans to Small Businesses. The SBA will be finalizing plans in the next 48 hours for SBA resources that will be available to small businesses in the form of long-term loans to businesses under 500 employees. Director Hughes announced that WEDC is creating a program known as SB 2020 which will grant small very

vulnerable businesses with under 20 employees, the capability of low interest loans for a maximum of \$20,00.00 to cover expenses and wages up to two months. This could hold a business until the new Federal Economic Recovery packages are finalized. They will also reach out to community banks and credit unions for assistance in loaning to small businesses that are extremely vulnerable. Administration is also considering the idea of waving penalties for late sales tax and income tax filing and Department of Revenue Secretary Peter Barca is meeting with the Governor frequently as they try and figure out a plan for income tax and sales tax filings.

Caleb Frostman from the Department of Workforce Development gave information on the Frequently Asked Questions for Unemployment Insurance. He suggested going to their website. <https://www.dwd.wisconsin.gov/covid19/> These are the FAQ's for unemployment

<https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/covid19/public/ui.htm>

You can also find out information about Family Medical, COBRA insurance and Secretary Frostman highly recommended looking at "Workshare" programs where employees may collect some unemployment but are still able to collect their benefits. Here is the link to this program

<https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uitax/workshare.htm>

I thought these were very important topics from the webinar today that was presented to over 2000 people from statewide businesses and organizations.

We will continue to pass on information that is pertinent to our businesses and organizations in the Ashland community. In addition, we will continue to update closings, cancellations and events that may be postponed. Please continue to reach out to us with any changes in your business operations. And, we would love to share positive stories of random acts of kindness or best practices you have witnessed. We will get through this but only by working together and encouraging each other through these uncertain times. Thank you for your support and commitment to the Ashland and Chequamegon Bay Region!

Tomorrow morning, March 19, at 9:05am on 101.3FM Community Cafe will be hosting a professional from MMC to speak on the COVID-19. Please tune in.

Mary McPhetridge

**From: Sara Meaney-Secretary-designee
Department Tourism
COVID-19 latest guidance and resources**

Industry partner,

As promised, I will continue to send you timely updates on the impact COVID-19 will have upon our industry. I'm happy to report that state agencies are rapidly updating processes and information that could be relevant to you and your staff. I've included the latest below and will continue to update you as more resources come online.

Public Gatherings

Recent guidelines from the [Department of Health Services \(DHS\)](#) recommend cancelling or postponing gatherings of 10 people or more to help protect Wisconsinites from the spread of COVID-19.

This is a rapidly evolving situation and we encourage you and the public to frequently monitor the [DHS website for updates](#), and to follow @DHSWI on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), or dhs.wi on [Instagram](#). Additional information can be found on the [CDC website](#).

Unemployment Information

During this uncertain time for both employers and workers, the Department of Workforce Development produced this helpful [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document. We encourage you to share this link with your local partners. The situation is developing rapidly, and DWD will update this site with relevant information as it becomes available.

Small Business Assistance

We know that the outbreak of COVID-19 is causing considerable uncertainty for

businesses not only in Wisconsin but throughout the world. I want you to know the most updated information possible so that you can plan.

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation is working with the Wisconsin Economic Development Association to address the concerns of Wisconsin stakeholders and will be able to provide more details shortly.

Additionally, WEDC is working closely with Wisconsin Emergency Management and the US Small Business Administration to unlock federal relief funds. The SBA is offering designated states and territories low-interest federal disaster loans for working capital to small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of the COVID-19. SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loans offer up to \$2 million per business in assistance and can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing.

WEDC is working to ensure Wisconsin is a designated state and can access these loan funds. Once the loan funding is unlocked, Wisconsin businesses will be able to access an online portal to apply for Economic Injury Disaster Loans of up to \$2 million per business.

How to stay updated

I know it can be difficult keeping up with the fast-changing response to COVID-19.

- State agencies are developing [guidance and resources](#) for Wisconsinites to stay healthy and make informed choices for themselves and their families during this time. These agencies will continue to update their websites with the most up-to-date information on COVID-19.
- Department of Tourism industry social media will be updated frequently. You can find us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Forward together,
Sara Meaney, Secretary-designee

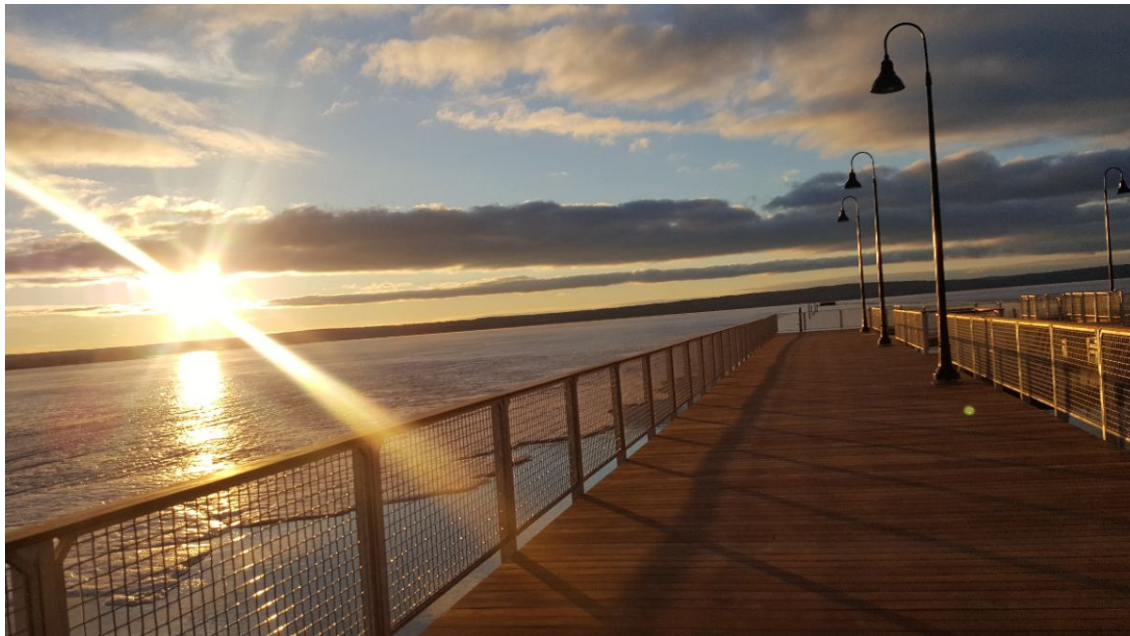
Dear Chamber Members,

With the ever changing days we are in right now, we are trying to keep everyone updated on cancellations, postponements and business hours. This to help the consumer, and to help support the businesses in our area.

Please email us at info@visitashland.com if your event or events have been canceled, postponed or if your business hours or business motto have changed.

We have [dedicated a page](#) on our website where we will list business changes and will update our calendar accordingly. [Latest News and Updates](#)

Thank you and together we can make it through this crazy time! Our office is open, so please if you have any concerns please give us a call 715-682-2500. Thank you!!





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