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NEWS RELEASE

To: Local Media
From: Michelle Bailey, Interim Health Officer
Date: March 2, 2021

Rock County Public Health Department Announces Move to Phase 2 of Reopening Plan

Rock County, WI – The Rock County Public Health Department announces a move to Phase 2 of the Rock County Reopening Phased Plan effective immediately. This move comes in response to multiple weeks of sustained improvements to COVID-19 spread in Rock County and the Southern Region of Wisconsin.

The Rock County Public Health Department is reporting 14 new cases per day over the last 7 days, which is the lowest 7-day average since the end of August 2020. The number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 infection has dropped significantly since the peak. Specifically, over the last two weeks Rock County has seen an average of 9 patients hospitalized due to COVID-19 infection compared to a high of 74 hospitalized patients in mid-November.

In response to these trends and in addition to other sustained improvements in metrics on the Rock County Reopening Dashboard

(<https://infogram.com/1pe2yrqyn232dxsm6kdj6dpnyzh19m92mr9?live>), the Rock County Public Health Department announces the recommendation to move to the next phase of the Reopening Phased Plan. The most significant change when moving to Phase 2 is the shift from 25% to up to 50% capacity in facilities and areas that have formal capacity limits. Capacity limits may be lower based on the ability to maintain social distancing measures. Further details on the specific changes can be found by visiting:

<https://www.co.rock.wi.us/publichealth-familycommunity/publichealth-communicabledisease/coronavirus-disease-2019/232-departments-category/health-department/coronavirus/2430-coronavirus-reopen>

While the move to the next phase of reopening signifies progress in the fight against the pandemic, the prevention of widespread COVID-19 infection is still important. Moving to Phase 2 recommendations does not impact the mask mandate, which is still in effect. Other recommended safety precautions are regular hand washing with soap and water, social distancing, covering your coughs and sneezes, staying home when you are sick and avoiding crowds. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19, please get a test.

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Rock County Public Health Department serves Rock County citizens by collaborating with partners to ensure a healthy, thriving Rock County. For the latest information about COVID-19 in Rock County, visit the Rock County Public Health Department website at www.co.rock.wi.us/publichealth and follow us on social media @rockcountyphd.

Please send all media inquiries to Media.PublicHealth@co.rock.wi.us.