



# COUNTY OF KENOSHA

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News release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Kenosha County withdraws local order on Safer-at-Home**

In response to differing and updated legal guidance, Kenosha County is immediately withdrawing its local action that continued the provisions of the state's Safer-at-Home Order, Health Officer Dr. Jen Freiheit announced tonight.

This move allows businesses in Kenosha County to reopen without risk of penalty or prosecution, although Freiheit and other local officials strongly urge people to continue observing the public health guidelines outlined in Safer-at-Home.

Kenosha County and several other localities across the state issued local orders Wednesday night continuing Safer-at-Home until its May 26 sunset, after the Wisconsin Supreme Court overturned the state order late that afternoon.

Kenosha County Corporation Counsel Joseph Cardamone said guidance received from the Wisconsin Counties Association's legal arm late today suggested that the provision struck down by the State Supreme Court also applied to local health officers.

“The Supreme Court's order caused a great deal of confusion and uncertainty last night that left us and others across the state struggling to determine how to abide by the ruling while continuing to protect the public's safety amid the COVID-19 pandemic,” Cardamone said. “Tonight, with varying guidance from the Wisconsin Counties Association and more time to review best practices moving forward, together we've determined that we will withdraw our order and instead view Safer-at Home as a series of best practices, rather than requirements.”

Earlier Thursday, local government and business leaders convened to begin the review of the Kenosha County Kickstart plan — a strategic, phased-in approach to restart the local economy consistent with the gating criteria in the state's Badger Bounce Back plan. That process will continue, with an eye toward providing businesses and organizations with best practices to allow them to operate in the best interests of public health and safety.

“Sadly, Kenosha County remains far from being out of the woods with COVID-19,” Freiheit said. “It is our hope in the public health world that our community will continue to take the threat of the virus seriously and take precautions to slow its spread as we enter this next phase of reopening our economy.”

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