



## **COVID-19 Public Health Rules and Enforcement**

### **Marathon County Law Enforcement and Marathon County District Attorney**

#### **Press Release**

The goal of the Marathon County Law Enforcement and the District Attorney is to foster voluntary compliance with public health actions and in turn mitigate against the spread of COVID-19/Coronavirus. Local law enforcement and the District Attorney's Office are committed to supporting the recommendations of our public health officials.

On March 24, 2020, at the direction of Governor Tony Evers, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services issued Emergency Order #12 Safer at Home Order, which requires all individuals present in the State of Wisconsin to stay at home or at their place of residence with the exceptions of essential activities and travel, government functions, operations of essential businesses, and other extraordinary situations. Order #12 was made in addition to the previously ordered Order #72, which declared a public health emergency. The Orders were made for the safety and best interests of the public in order to mitigate against the spread of COVID-19/Coronavirus so that the health care system will not be more overwhelmed. The declaration of a public health emergency authorizes local law enforcement to enforce the laws of the Governor's Executive Order #72, Emergency Order #12 and all subsequent directives.

Wisconsin Statutes section §252.25 provides that any person who willfully violates or obstructs the execution of any state statute or rule, county, city, or village ordinance or department order under this chapter and relating to the public health, for which no other penalty is prescribed, shall be imprisoned for not more than 30 days or fined not more than \$500 or both. The Public Health Officer may decide to quarantine the offender and officers may detain violators of health orders with the approval of a Chief or designee.

We hope that everyone in our community will voluntarily follow the Public Health Orders and enforcement will not be required. If local law enforcement is presented with a violation by a business or an individual, law enforcement's evaluation of the necessity of arrest or prosecution will be guided by the recommendations of public health officials and the risk to the public by virtue of the offender's actions.

Marathon County law enforcement and the Marathon County District Attorney's Office stand ready to assist our community as we work together to minimize the spread of this virus.