



Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

March 31, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Through: Regional Administrator James K. Joseph
FEMA Region V
536 South Clark Street, 6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60605-1521

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, I request that you declare a Major Disaster for the State of Wisconsin to include: Public Assistance, Direct Assistance, Hazard Mitigation (statewide), and certain programs under Individual Assistance, including Crisis Counseling, Community Disaster Loans, and the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Program. This Major Disaster Declaration is needed as a result of COVID-19 Response for the Incident Period beginning January 20, 2020, for all 72 counties in Wisconsin. This request is timely under 44 CFR § 206.36(a). FEMA Form 010-0-13 is included with this request.

On March 12, 2020, I issued Executive Order #72 declaring a public health emergency due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak and directing the Wisconsin Department of Health and other state agencies to take all necessary and appropriate actions. On March 14, 2020, I directed Wisconsin Emergency Management to activate the State Emergency Operations Center to provide additional coordination and response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

On March 13, 2020, you declared the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant an Emergency Declaration for all states, tribes, territories, and the District of Columbia pursuant to section 501(b) of the Stafford Act. In accordance with the Emergency Declaration for COVID-19, eligible emergency protective measures taken to respond to the COVID-19 emergency at the direction or guidance of public health officials may be reimbursed under Category B of the agency's Public Assistance Program. Reimbursable activities typically include emergency protective measures, such as the activation of State Emergency Operations Center, National Guard costs, law enforcement, and other measures necessary to protect public health and safety. FEMA assistance will be

provided at 75-percent Federal cost share.

At this time, I am requesting that you include Public Assistance, Direct Assistance, Hazard Mitigation (statewide), and the following Individual Assistance Programs in your Declaration: Crisis Counseling, Community Disaster Loans, and the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Program. The foregoing analysis supports the inclusion of these Individual Assistance Programs in a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Wisconsin.

Factors for the Individual Assistance Program

Per 44 CFR § 206.48(b), the factors FEMA will consider in order to measure the severity, magnitude, an impact of the disaster and to evaluate the need for assistance to individuals under the Stafford Act include the following:

1. State Fiscal Capacity and Resources Availability;
2. Uninsured Home and Personal Property Losses;
3. Disaster Impacted Population Profile;
4. Impact to Community Infrastructure;
5. Casualties; and
6. Disaster-Related Unemployment.

Given the nature of this event and constantly changing information, the State of Wisconsin offers the following to support its request and to make a showing of the presence of the above factors.

1. State Fiscal Capacity and Resources Availability

The State has currently allocated all available resources to the effort to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and is in direct support of response efforts, while experiencing significant impact to the economy of Wisconsin. Current projected State coordination and response actions total more than \$8 million in materials and supplies alone, not including personnel costs, services, and direct expenses of local political subdivisions or supporting private entities. Resources of local governments and supporting private entities are strained, and financial resources that were reasonably expected to be at the State's disposal to respond are being affected by the impact to the economy of the State. Business revenue and tax receipts are suffering and without supplemental federal assistance, the State's ability to sufficiently respond to and recover from this event will be severely impacted.

On March 18, 2020, I requested a Small Business Administration (SBA) Declaration authorizing the Economic Injury Damage Loan program to supplement the State's efforts to address the financial impact on businesses from COVID-19. This request was granted on March 20, 2020. The SBA determined this was necessary and appropriate given the showing of substantial economic damage to Wisconsin's businesses.

2. Uninsured Home and Personal Property Losses

The State is not requesting the activation of the Individuals and Households Program; therefore, the requested Home and Personal Property Loss data is not applicable.

3. Disaster Impacted Population Profile

	Percent Below Poverty Level (Poverty status in the Past 12 Months)	Per Capita Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2018 inflation adjusted dollars)	Percent of Population Youth (Under 18 Years)	Percent of Population Elderly (Aged 65 years or older)	Percent of Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population with a Disability	Percent Household Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	Pre-Disaster Unemployment Rate
National Average	14.10%	\$32,621.00	22.8%	15.20%	12.60%	12.20%	3.7%
State Average	11%	\$32,018	21.9%	17%	8.2%	11%	3.5%*

*American Communities Survey: 2018, available at data.census.gov

* U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (bls.gov/regions/Midwest/Wisconsin.htm)

4. Impact to Community Infrastructure

COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, a drastic effect on community infrastructure. Hospitals, medical facilities, and first responders are facing challenges rarely experienced before. The process of triaging and isolating potentially affected individuals is significantly disrupting lifesaving and life-sustaining services. Additionally, the insufficient medical resources and capacities of medical facilities, and the already limited number of qualified medical personnel will only continue to rapidly deplete as the impacts of COVID-19 continue to spread.

5. Fatalities

According to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Wisconsin has had 14 fatalities as a direct result of the COVID-19 virus as of March 30, 2020. While the State is doing everything in its power to prevent further fatalities, more fatalities are expected.

6. Disaster-Related Unemployment.

Businesses reported that employees have been laid off due to the negative impact that COVID-19 has had on its business. Wisconsin's pre-disaster unemployment rate was 3.5% (February 2020), See <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/news/2020/unemployment/200326-february-state.pdf> for more information.

During this unprecedented time, the State is experiencing a high and unprecedented volume of calls and applications for unemployment assistance, and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is seeing historic increases in filings.

As of March 25, 2020, the increase in initial claims for the week was led by increases in claims from Food Preparation and Serving Related occupations (4,670% increase) and Personal Care and Service occupations (7,750%) from the prior week.

Recent initial and weekly claim data:

	Week Ending 3/14/20	Week Ending 3/21/20	Week Ending 3/28/20
Initial Claims	5,698	69,342	116,129
Weekly Claims*	43,226	47,417	111,237

Note: The counts are raw totals of claims filed and they are not equivalent to the USDOL reportable claims. Instead, it is a measure of UI workload.

Call Volume:

Standard Mid-January Busy Week vs Week of March 23 to March 27	Number of Inbound Calls Completed	Number of Outbound Calls Completed	Number of Inbound Calls Attempted	Number of Outbound Calls Attempted
Weekly Percentage Increase	1,524%	319%	6,208%	625%
Weekly Increase Total	367,365	30,889	1,519,802	61,936

For these reasons, I ask that you include Crisis Counseling, Community Disaster Loans, and the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Program in a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Wisconsin.

Public Assistance

In accordance with 44 C.F.R. §206.48(a), there are several factors to consider for Public Assistance:

As previously mentioned, COVID-19 has rapidly made its way throughout the State of Wisconsin. To be proactive, Wisconsin executed its Emergency Operations Plan on March 12, 2020. A nationwide Presidential Emergency Declaration was authorized the next day and the federal government began providing Direct Federal Assistance.

Wisconsin began staffing the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) on March 14, 2020, and the SEOC elevated to Level 1 (the highest level) on a 24/7 basis in response to the COVID-19 outbreak on March 16, 2020.

For fourteen full days, Federal, State, and local resources have been fully activated to combat the public health emergency that has been caused by spread of COVID-19 throughout the State and Nation. These resources will remain fully activated during this major disaster. This extended activation has led to elevated costs associated with emergency protective measures.

(1) Estimated Cost of Assistance

State and local officials are still implementing protective measures, with life safety as their top priority. Considering the rapid spread of COVID-19, I expect our emergency managers to remain in the response phase of incident management until we have flattened the curve. Due to the on-going nature of this event, anticipated actions and costs are still being compiled at this time.

(2) Localized Impact

COVID-19 has only served to overcome the State of Wisconsin's resources and has further stretched local resources beyond our capability to adequately address all recovery needs of the counties and tribes affected by this disaster. Local communities are overwhelmed with school and business closures. The closure of businesses is resulting in a significant loss in revenue. Parts of the State can largely be described as rural and local resources are simply not enough for the impacted areas to effectively recover from this disaster.

Milwaukee and Dane counties lead the state in the number of confirmed cases. Local law enforcement and the National Guard have been deployed and will be needed to maintain public health and safety. Additional healthcare staffing and use of healthcare supplies have increased significantly to help with this global pandemic.

Hospital capacity in the State of Wisconsin is another major concern. For example, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services predicts that the State's hospital capacity could be exceeded sometime in April.

Below you will find graphic representations of the current impacts to Wisconsin's population from COVID-19. The current growth rates of this outbreak indicate this will be a prolonged response far beyond the capabilities of State and local resources.

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COVID-19 Cases by Wisconsin County:

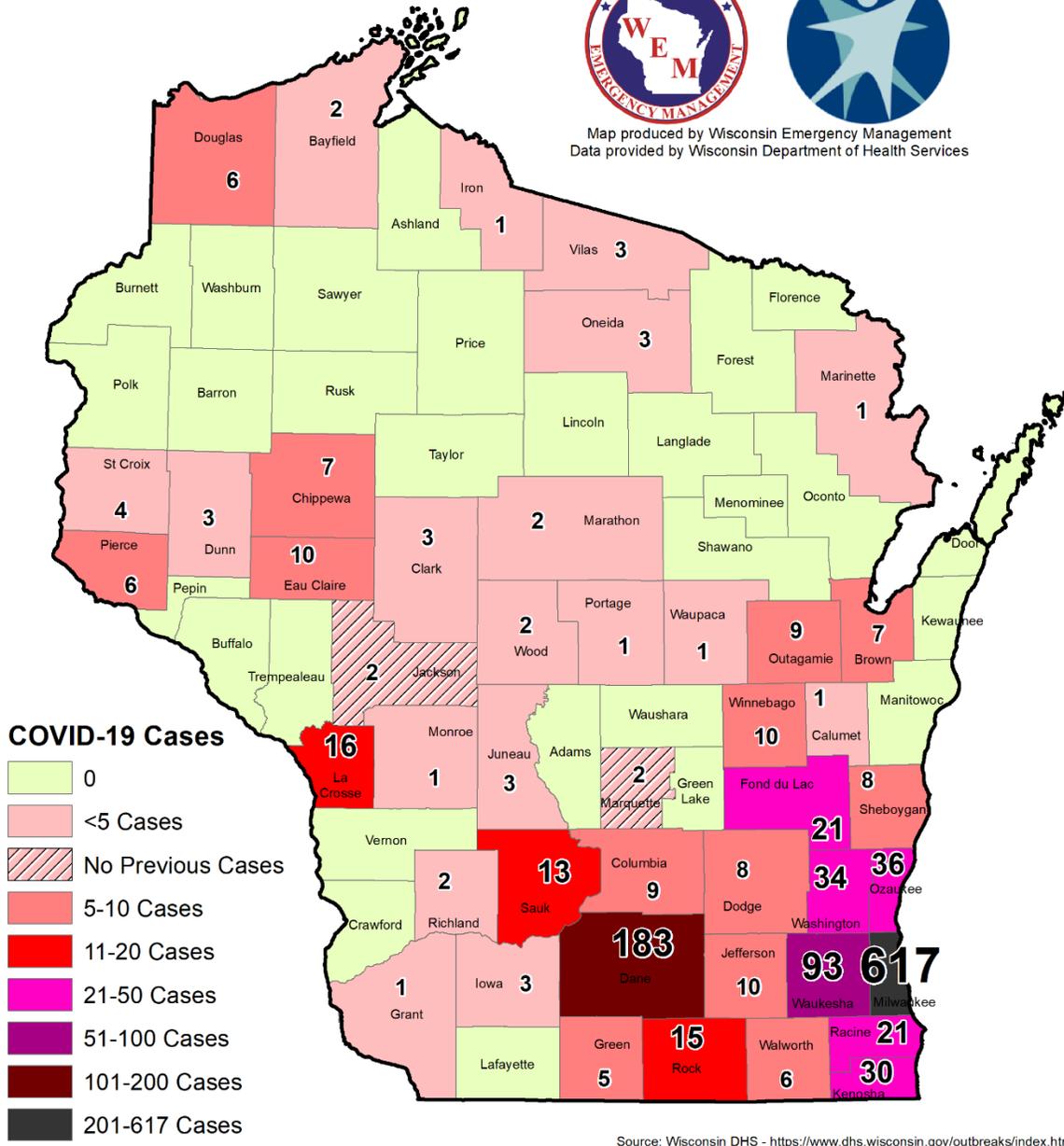
Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

As of 2 PM CDT 3/30/20

1221 Positive Cases



Map produced by Wisconsin Emergency Management
Data provided by Wisconsin Department of Health Services



Source: Wisconsin DHS - <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/outbreaks/index.htm>

Number of Positive Results by County

Wisconsin County	Total Cases as of 3/30/2020	Total Deaths as of 3/30/2020
Bayfield	2	0
Brown	7	0
Calumet	1	0
Chippewa	7	0
Clark	3	0
Columbia	9	0
Dane	183	1
Dodge	8	0
Douglas	6	0
Dunn	3	0
Eau Claire	10	0
Fond du Lac	21	2
Grant	1	0
Green	5	0
Iowa	3	0
Iron	1	1
Jackson	2	0
Jefferson	10	0
Juneau	3	0
Kenosha	30	0
La Crosse	16	0

Wisconsin County	Total Cases as of 3/30/2020	Total Deaths as of 3/30/2020
Marathon	2	0
Marinette	1	0
Marquette	2	0
Milwaukee	617	5
Monroe	1	0
Oneida	3	0
Outagamie	9	0
Ozaukee	36	3
Pierce	6	0
Portage	1	0
Racine	21	0
Richland	2	0
Rock	15	0
Sauk	13	1
Sheboygan	8	0
St. Croix	4	0
Vilas	3	0
Walworth	6	0
Washington	34	0
Waukesha	93	0
Waupaca	1	1
Winnebago	10	0

Wisconsin County	Total Cases as of 3/30/2020	Total Deaths as of 3/30/2020
Wood	2	0
Total	1221	14

Last updated: March 30, 2020

(3) Insurance Coverage in Force

No estimated eligible Category B Public Assistance expenses are expected to qualify for insurance coverage.

(4) Event History from Past 24 Months

Unfortunately, this is not the only recent event to draw on the resources and capacity of the State and its counties. In the previous 24 months, the State of Wisconsin has been impacted by several events that have required response by resources from the State and one or more counties.

On Friday, June 15, 2018, multiple rounds of severe thunderstorms impacted much of Wisconsin, hitting northwest and west central Wisconsin particularly hard. A line of thunderstorms moved through parts of the region during the late afternoon and evening of June 15, 2018, producing large hail, damaging winds, and torrential rain over northwest Wisconsin. A second line of thunderstorms hit the northern half of the state during the day on Saturday, June 16, 2018, and overnight into Sunday, June 17, 2018, producing additional flooding in the northwest portion of the state. Record crests occurred on some rivers in Wisconsin, including: the Nemadji River at Superior (31.06'), Whittlesy Creek at Ashland (7.52'), the White River at Ashland (9.91'), and the St. Croix River at Danbury (11.66'). The Town of Drummond in Bayfield County received 15.04 inches of rain over those three days. Wisconsin's previous governor requested, and Wisconsin received, a Public Assistance Federal Disaster Declaration, DR-4383, for six counties in west central and northern Wisconsin.

On Friday, August 17, 2018, a noted change in weather patterns occurred which marked the beginning of multiple rounds of severe weather and flooding across Wisconsin. Until mid-August, Wisconsin had seen normal to below-normal precipitation for the summer months. Starting on Friday, August 17, 2018, a very warm and moist air-mass set up across much of Wisconsin and then persisted through the first week in September. A series of storm systems moving through this pattern cause multiple rounds of severe weather and flooding across portions of Wisconsin and followed it with longer-term river flooding as well. The first of these systems moved through southern Wisconsin on Friday, August 17, 2018, and the system put down a large swath of heavy rainfall. Each event where heavy rain fell helped to set conditions for additional flooding to occur. The most widespread severe weather day was August 28, 2018, when 19 tornadoes and widespread damaging winds of 90-110 mph occurred from central Wisconsin through east central Wisconsin. The last of the series of storm systems came through on Wednesday, September 5, 2018, and the last river in southern Wisconsin to recede below major flood stage did so on Friday, September 14, 2018. Record crests occurred on some rivers in Wisconsin, including: the Baraboo River

at La Valle (25.2') and Reedsburg (21.85'); and the Kickapoo River at Viola (25.7'), Readstown (23.7'), Gays Mills (22.31'), and Steuben (20.5'). Wisconsin's previous governor requested, and Wisconsin received, a Public Assistance Federal Disaster Declaration, DR-4402, for 14 counties in east central, southeast, southwest, and west central regions in Wisconsin. The previous governor also requested and received an Individual Assistance Federal Disaster Declaration, DR-4402, for 10 counties in east central, south east, southwest, and west central regions in Wisconsin.

A warm, humid air mass, combined with a frontal boundary created prime conditions for two-and-a-half days of extremely severe weather in Wisconsin from Thursday, July 18, 2019, through Saturday, July 20, 2019. During this time, the northern half of the state was impacted by an intense weather system which produced three lines of severe storms in succession. These storms resulted in 17 confirmed tornadoes, severe straight-line winds, large hail, and heavy rains.

From the evening of July 18, 2019, through the morning hours of July 19, 2019, severe storms developed across parts of southeast Minnesota and western Wisconsin. The slow-moving storms produced at least one tornado in Vernon County and torrential rain. Flash flooding, with four to six inches of rain falling across La Crosse, Vernon, and Monroe counties, led to mudslides, damaged roads, and rapid rises in area rivers. Because of the warm, humid air in place across Wisconsin following the initial line of storms, additional storm lines followed, developing over western Wisconsin.

Only hours later in the evening of July 19, 2019, a line of severe thunderstorms producing several embedded tornadoes moved across much of central, north central, and eastern Wisconsin. The worst damage was associated with a macroburst from Oneida County toward the southeast, through Langlade and Oconto counties. This large downburst of straight-line winds and the associated storm system caused widespread tree and power line damage from central Wisconsin to the Lake Michigan shore. Straight-line winds of at least 100 miles per hour snapped or uprooted hundreds of thousands of trees, resulting in extensive damages to homes and cottages in the region.

Another line of severe thunderstorms moved across the central and east-central portions of Wisconsin again during the late morning and early afternoon hours of July 20, 2019. Rain, straight-line winds, and six tornadoes uprooted and snapped additional trees. Widespread damages were reported from Wood and Portage counties into the Fox Valley and Lake Michigan shore. With the massive amount of tree debris, the most prevalent damages were to power lines and structures.

I requested and Wisconsin Received a Public Assistance Federal Disaster Declaration, DR-4459, for 18 counties and 2 tribes in east central, northeast, northwest, southwest, and west central regions in Wisconsin.

A large, powerful storm system worked its way across the central part of the US on the weekend of January 10 and 11, 2020. In anticipation of this storm, the National Weather Service (NWS) Milwaukee/Sullivan Office issued a winter storm advisory consisting of a wintry mix of snow, sleet, and freezing rain with the possibility of snow totals from five to ten inches in parts of Wisconsin on Saturday, January 11, 2020. The threat for flooding and possible damage increased early Saturday morning through Saturday night along the Lake Michigan shoreline from Sheboygan County in the north to Kenosha County in the

south. On the afternoon of January 10, 2020, the NWS Milwaukee/Sullivan Office issued a Lakeshore Flood Advisory for Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine counties, among others.

This system brought severe thunderstorms and heavy rains across the southern Midwest down to the Gulf Coast, while it brought two rounds of winter weather across southern Wisconsin. In addition to the wintry weather, strong northeasterly onshore winds developed across the area Saturday, January 11, 2020. These strong winds with gusts over 50 mph combined with the record high Lake Michigan water levels and lack of ice coverage on the lake, brought large, battering waves into shoreline areas resulting in significant lakeshore flooding, especially for areas from Milwaukee south to Kenosha. The lakeshore flooding was so extreme because of the strength and duration of the north to northeast winds, which were oriented along the maximum fetch of the lake.

I requested and Wisconsin received a Public Assistance Federal Disaster Declaration, DR-4477, for three counties in southeast Wisconsin.

In the past year alone, local applicants reached the federal fiscal year 2019 damage indicator of \$3.78 or the federal fiscal year 2020 damage indicator of \$3.84 per capita on 11 separate occasions, making them eligible to receive assistance from the Wisconsin Disaster Fund to include:

- Flooding in Adams, Brown, Calumet, Chippewa, Columbia, Dodge, Dunn, Fond du Lac, Grant, Green, Iowa, Kewaunee, La Crosse, Lafayette, Manitowoc, Marathon, Ozaukee, Polk, Portage, Sauk, Trempealeau, Waupaca, and Waushara counties starting on March 13, 2019;
- Flooding in Clark, Dunn, Grant, Marathon, Marinette, and Portage counties starting on April 16, 2019;
- Flash flooding in Grant County on June 30, 2019;
- Tornado in Polk County on July 28, 2019;
- Flooding in Clark County on August 5, 2019;
- Flooding in Crawford, Grant, Lafayette, Rock, and Walworth counties on September 11, 2019;
- Flooding in Grant County on September 19, 2019;
- Severe weather and tornadoes in Chippewa, Dunn, and Vilas counties on September 24, 2019;
- Flooding in Columbia, Douglas, Fond du Lac, Grant, Iowa, Jefferson, and Sawyer counties on September 28, 2019;
- Lakeshore flooding in Door County on November 27, 2019; and
- Lakeshore flooding in Oconto County on December 30, 2019.

In those events, the State will be assisting county and local governments in recouping some of their costs through the Wisconsin Disaster Fund and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Disaster Damage Aids program. Current eligible damage requests for the Wisconsin Disaster Fund total close to \$3.1 million, without including the damages from this event. This illustrates the State's commitment to helping those in need, but without the assistance of the federal government it will be very difficult for the citizens of the state to recover and move forward.

State Hazard Mitigation Plan

The State of Wisconsin's Hazard Mitigation Plan was approved by FEMA on December 2, 2016, and it is expected to expire on December 1, 2021. It is an "enhanced" plan. The hazard mitigation plans for the affected Counties and Tribes have been approved and adopted or are under development. This disaster provides an opportunity to implement hazard mitigation projects that will reduce the impact of future disasters. Therefore, I am requesting Hazard Mitigation assistance statewide.

Additional Assistance Requested

In addition to the FEMA Public Assistance, Hazard Mitigation, and Individual Assistance Programs referenced above (Crisis Counseling, Community Disaster Loans and the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Program), the State requests the following of FEMA:

- Increase the federal cost share for EM-3454 to 100% federally funded.
- Increase the small project threshold for FEMA Public Assistance to \$250,000 and authorize the ability to amend outside of the limited circumstance outlined in the Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide as needed.
- Extend the application deadline for an additional 90 days for the Homeland Security Grant Program, Non-Profit Security Grant Program, and the Emergency Management Grant Program as state and local partners are fully dedicated to the current mission of responding to the COVID-19 impacts.
- Suspend appeal deadlines for the FEMA Public Assistance Program for 90 days to allow for resources that are currently dedicated to responding to COVID-19 to remain engaged in that task without negatively impacting their appeal opportunities. This includes suspending appeal decisions concerning timeliness of appeals for both Recipient and Subrecipients.
- Suspend deadlines for all pending and current Requests for Information (RFI) for the FEMA Public Assistance Program to allow for resources that are currently dedicated to responding to COVID-19 to remain engaged in that task without negatively impacting their ability to respond timely.
- Suspend the issuance of new determination memos for the FEMA Public Assistance Program for failure to respond to any RFIs or submit any other documentation as requested due to response efforts for COVID-19. This request also includes suspending issuances of determination memos finding costs or Applicants ineligible for FEMA Public Assistance funding.
- Extend periods of performance, to include time extensions, for the completion of all projects and disasters under the FEMA Public Assistance Program.

Conclusion

The State is requesting the activation of the following FEMA programs: *Public Assistance, Direct Assistance, Hazard Mitigation, Crisis Counseling, Community Disaster Loans and the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Program*, and relief from regulatory burdens outlined in the bullets above. For administrative processing purposes, all information that would be included in required Enclosure A (Individual Assistance) has been incorporated into the cover letter. Further, I have designated Dr. Darrell L. Williams, Administrator of Wisconsin Emergency Management, as the State Coordinating Officer for this emergency. He is authorized to provide further information, assurances, requests, or justification on my behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Evers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "T".

Tony Evers
Governor

Attached: OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13