



March 30, 2020

Dear DSPS Credential Holder,

We are in unprecedented times dealing with something—a pandemic and public health emergency—that most of us have never experienced. This crisis is affecting our lives in profound ways, many of which are yet to be realized or addressed.

At the Department of Safety and Professional Services, we are working diligently and rapidly to respond. A few examples:

- We mobilized the vast majority of our staff to work remotely to protect them and our customers.
- We are adjusting our operations so that we can continue offering essential services without compromising health and safety. For example, we have quickly adopted a remote video inspection protocol that enables our team to use video technology to conduct inspections.
- We are acting proactively to identify steps we can take and recommendations we can make to enable the state to better respond to the anticipated demands on our healthcare system. We worked closely with the governor on [Emergency Order 16](#), which will make it easier to quickly expand our health system and give it greater flexibility to respond to the crisis. We have also shared the actions of the Pharmacy Examining Board, which issued an [order to address PPE shortages](#) and [another](#) that positioned pharmacists to work in mobile clinics or hospitals, should those be needed.
- We are looking at potential deadline extensions and other waivers that enable our licensed workers to keep working despite the challenges, such as cancelled continuing education programming or certification exams, they may face to meet credentialing requirements.
- We have cancelled certain tests and events, such as our regular trades exams, because offering them would be in violation of the governor’s emergency orders that limit the number of people who can gather, and the amount of distance individuals must maintain between each other.

We know many of you have questions about what to do right now, and what all of this means for you in the future. For now, please read the governor’s [Safer at Home order](#), which the Department of Health Services issued to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The governor’s office also issued an [FAQ document](#) to answer questions you may have about how to comply with social distancing, how to determine which businesses and functions are essential, where to go with concerns, and more.

I want to take this time to note that although our agency has “safety” in our name, we have no enforcement authority under these orders. That means that we are not equipped or authorized to respond to reports of violations of the order. Local law enforcement is tasked with enforcement, and violations should be reported to the police or sheriff. However, I do want to point out that we are all collectively responsible for enforcement, and we do that by complying with the order and by encouraging our colleagues, friends and families to comply. Personal compliance is truly the most effective enforcement mechanism we have.

Other concerns relate to whether a business is essential or not. Our agency, again, does not have the authority to make those determinations. However, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation has prepared this [page](#) to help.

Finally, we know that there is growing interest in information about unemployment insurance. The Department of Workforce Development has prepared this [page](#) to help applicants and employers find answers to COVID-19-related issues.

As you know, this situation is continuously evolving, and we will make decisions and further adjustments as new information is available. To the best of our ability, we will continue to communicate with various stakeholders (healthcare professionals should expect more communication soon) and update our [website](#). In the meantime, we appreciate your patience and understanding as we prioritize those efforts that will best protect health and wellbeing of the public right now and in the coming days, weeks and months.

Finally, thank you to everyone engaged in efforts to keep Wisconsin safe and healthy. We all play a role, and I have been humbled by the genuine concern and commitment I have witnessed among my colleagues, my friends, and our constituents as this crisis has unfolded. Yet I also want to acknowledge, in particular, the healthcare providers who are or will be confronting COVID-19 head-on. You are shouldering the worries we all are suddenly carrying along with your responsibilities at work, and I cannot thank you enough for your dedication, service and sacrifice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dawn B. Crim". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Dawn B. Crim  
Secretary-designee