



Memorandum

Date: April 15, 2020
To: Wisconsin Fire Departments
From: Dawn B. Crim, Secretary-designee
RE: Emergency Order 22

The COVID-19 crisis is forcing changes throughout our lives. Yet even in this public health emergency, there are some constants. We know we can count on our fire departments to respond to calls and protect our communities regardless of what is going on in the world around us.

However, we know that COVID-19 has forced fire departments to reprioritize some routine non-emergency services, such as public fire prevention education and fire inspections, in order to adapt operations to minimize the COVID-19 infection risk that first responders face. That is why Governor Evers included in [Emergency Order 22](#) some provisions that give fire departments more discretion over non-emergency services and administrative responsibilities during the public health emergency.

First, the order delays the deadline for the 2% Fire Dues program self-certification until June 1, 2020. This will afford fire departments more time to adapt to the new DPS platform for submitting necessary documents and information. It will also enable departments to focus more on preparing staff to respond to calls in the new COVID-19 environment.

The order also gives departments the discretion to postpone fire prevention inspections until after the public health emergency declaration is lifted. They can also suspend in-person educational programming until it is safe to resume. In the meantime, departments are encouraged to maintain phone and online educational programming and resources, to the greatest extent possible. While fire prevention efforts are important functions that provide the foundation for public safety, fire departments currently need the latitude to assess and prioritize community needs based on local circumstances.