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TO: Local Health Departments

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Guidance for Local Health Departments (LHDs)
What to do if someone breaks quarantine

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- When possible, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) recommends voluntary quarantine/isolation.
- If there is reason to believe that an individual may not voluntarily abide by quarantine/isolation recommendations, the LHD should evaluate the individual’s circumstances that make non-adherence likely, and provide linkages to available resources that can support quarantine at home. These may include:
  - Food delivery
  - Social support
  - Tele-health/information resources
  - Mental health resources, etc.
- If individuals demonstrate they are unwilling to voluntarily abide, the LHD may have to issue a quarantine/isolation order.
  - The quarantine/isolation order should be issued in writing.
- If the person fails to comply, the LHD may petition a court to order compliance.
  - The LHD must prove by clear and convincing evidence that the directive is the least restrictive measure that will protect the public’s health.
- The LHD may employ quarantine guards if intent to violate a quarantine order is shown. Typically, the LHD employs local law enforcement.
  - The quarantine guards have police powers to use all necessary means to enforce the quarantine.
  - The costs of the quarantine guards are the responsibility of the county or municipality.
  - During a state of emergency, if the person is quarantined outside his or her home, those costs may be reimbursable by the state.
- If necessary, the LHD can remove a person to a separate place for quarantine/isolation if removal would not endanger the person’s health.

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov
Anyone who enters a quarantine/isolation premises without authorization is subject to a fine not to exceed $10,000 or 9 months in jail, or both.

Anyone who willfully violates laws relating to public health may be subject to 30 days in jail or fined not more than $500, or both.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services has a toolkit of legal forms to assist LHDs with quarantine/isolation enforcement issues.

Sources of law: Wis. Stat. §§ 252.06 and 252.25; Wis. Admin. Code § 145.06.