



Wisconsin Historical Society: Collecting COVID-19 Impact Overview

The Wisconsin Historical Society and statewide local history organizations share a common mission to collect, preserve, and share Wisconsin's local, regional, and state history – in good times and in bad. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact daily life, the Society and many local organizations are actively documenting the impact of the virus on the state by collecting materials and stories from their communities.

To fully represent the diversity of people and experiences in Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Historical Society collects materials from individuals and organizations representing all 72 Wisconsin counties and serves as the official state archives. As an affiliate or community partner of the Society, your organization is uniquely positioned to help us collect experiences and reflections of people from all areas of the state, both urban and rural; from every age group; and from diverse communities and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Whether on behalf of your own organization or on behalf of the Wisconsin Historical Society, we encourage you to invite community members to document history as it happens. **It is individuals' documentation of their experiences living during the COVID-19 pandemic and quarantine that will allow the Society to share history with people living 100 years from now.** The stories that we collect together will serve as a record of what it was like to live in Wisconsin during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020.

We invite everyone to participate in the COVID-19 Journal Project. **Every story is important.** The Society is seeking individuals and organizations from all walks of life, backgrounds, and cultures. Perspectives from a retired couple or school-aged child are just as important as those from frontline healthcare workers. Teachers or supervisors could also make this an engaging group project. Our tradition of balancing the collection of artifacts and materials with personal experiences is a critical part of this process. The Society will also utilize the journals to reach out to participants across Wisconsin, inviting them to donate artifacts emblematic of their experiences during the pandemic.

Once the COVID-19 Journal Project and collection effort is complete, we will use our resources to provide access to the collected journals through the archives reading room at our headquarters in Madison, through our network of statewide Area Research Centers, and digitally through the Society's website. The Society also intends to seek grant funding for a digital project that we hope will bring together the Society's COVID-19 Journal Project with materials collected by other historical institutions around the state to tell an even larger story.

More information about the COVID-19 Journal Project can be found on our website at <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/journalproject>.

Questions about the project can be sent to Jonathan Nelson at jonathanr.nelson@wisconsinhistory.org.

Collecting, Preserving and Sharing Stories Since 1846

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