

Saturday, April 11, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

State Actions in Today's Report:

- Daily Case Update (Link in sidebar)
- Gov., LG Give Update, Visit Battelle Mask Decon System in Somerville
- Spanish Language Unemployment Application
- Grocery Worker Priority Testing Starts Today
- Update on Cases in Long Term Care Facilities & Testing Program
- Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes



Governor Baker, Lt. Governor Polito visit new PPE decontamination system and update the media in Somerville today. (Details below)

Helpful Links:

- [Mass.Gov/covid19](https://www.mass.gov/covid19)
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [Unemployment & COVID-19](#)
- [Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal](#)
- [Emergency Childcare Site](#)
- [MBTA.com/covid19](https://www.mbta.com/covid19)
- [COVID-19 Cost Eligibility and Tracking Guidance](#)
- [Complete List of Emergency Orders & Guidance](#)

Background on the Command Center

The COVID Command Center, under the leadership of Secretary Marylou Sudders and reporting to Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, is the Commonwealth's single point of strategic decision making and coordination for the Administration's comprehensive COVID-19 response.



Situation in Numbers

Massachusetts **current as of 4/11**

22,860 Total Cases (click for more information)

686 Deaths

108,776 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States **current as of 4/11**

Case numbers are updated regularly at noon. Saturday/Sunday reports are preliminary and have not been confirmed with state/territorial health departments.

Total Cases Reported to CDC:

492,416 Total Cases

18,559 Deaths

55 Jurisdictions Reporting Cases (50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Marianas, and US V.I.)

Social Distancing Basics:

- ✓ Call/Facetime/online chat with friends and loved ones.

If you go out:

- ✓ Avoid crowds
- ✓ Stay 6 feet away from others
- ✓ Don't shake hands or hug

State Actions Today

Today, Governor Charlie Baker participated in an interview with El Mundo Boston. In addition, Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito joined Somerville Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone, Chris Coburn from Partners HealthCare, and Dr. Paul Biddinger from Mass. General Hospital to visit a Battelle N95 decontamination site, and provide the daily update. ([Watch the Daily Update](#))

- [The Battelle system](#) uses FDA-approved N95 decontamination technology. It will be the fourth site operational in the U.S. The Battelle owned and operated system will be hosted by Partners HealthCare at the currently vacant Somerville K-Mart.
- The system can decontaminate up to 80,000 N95 masks per day.
- The principal benefit of their system is that it is fully staffed, industry grade, and brings a level of QA that will allow hospital teams to concentrate on other priorities.



Spanish Language Unemployment Application ([News Release](#))

The Baker-Polito Administration today launched a Spanish language online, mobile-friendly, unemployment benefits application for those who need to apply.

The new, secure application for Spanish speakers is available through mass.gov/desempleo, the Spanish language website for unemployment in Massachusetts.

The Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) will make language applications available in Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Chinese, Vietnamese and additional languages in the coming days.

The new Spanish language UI form is the latest effort from the Commonwealth to deliver crucial COVID-19 information to non-English speakers, including:

- Yesterday, the Administration announced that its [COVID-19 text message alert system is available in Spanish](#)
- All of [Mass.Gov](#) (including [Mass.Gov/COVID19](#)) is available in 13 different languages
- The Commonwealth's non-emergency help line for COVID-19, [2-1-1 is available in over 150 languages](#)
- Several agencies, including the [Department of Public Health](#), offer additional fact sheets available in multiple languages

The Department of Unemployment Assistance is focused on supporting workers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and continues to process claims as quickly as possible. The new Spanish mobile-friendly application is among several efforts to reach and assist all individuals who are eligible for unemployment benefits and provide the financial assistance they need. Other efforts include:

- Rapidly updating the DUA website with the latest information that claimants and employers need to know, what the latest federal legislation means for them, and a step-by-step guide to filing a claim available in multiple languages.
- The unemployment contact form to reach a DUA agent is also available in multiple languages.

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- Hosting daily town halls in both English and Spanish, which have been attended by over 100,000 constituents. Individuals can sign up to attend a virtual town hall at mass.gov/unemployment/townhall or at mass.gov/desempleo.
- Deploying over 600 new remote employees to keep pace with the increased volume of unemployment insurance claims, and adding language capacities in the call center to better serve residents across the state.
- Legislation proposed and signed by Governor Baker waiving the one-week waiting period to collect an unemployment claim payment.

Grocery Store Worker Priority Testing ([News Release](#))

The Baker-Polito Administration and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security have expanded access to the free, priority COVID-19 testing sites for first responders to include grocery store and supermarket workers.

Beginning today, Saturday April 11, the men and women who provide critical access to food and other necessities may schedule an appointment to receive COVID-19 testing at the sites located at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro and the Big E fairgrounds in West Springfield. All appointments must be made in advance by the worker's supervisor or manager, and personnel do not need to be symptomatic to be eligible.

Other Important Updates

Known Cases in Long Term Care Facilities (as of 4/11 at 12:30 p.m.)

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	2645
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	190
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	306

[Click here for the source](#)

Update on Mobile Testing Program for Long Term Care and Assisted Living Facilities

On March 31, the Commonwealth implemented a project that allows for safe, on-site testing of symptomatic residents of nursing and rest homes with a quick turnaround. The program is operating under the auspices of the Massachusetts National Guard in partnership with the Department of Public Health and Broad Institute of Cambridge. Since launching the initiative, more than **3,400** tests have been collected at **209 facilities**. Facilities with appropriately trained clinical staff can now conduct their own testing with test kits ordered through the mobile testing program; as of Saturday afternoon, **27 facilities** had requested more than **3,200** test kits had been ordered. See a summary below of tests completed so far.

Date	Tests Completed	Facilities Visited
3/31	225	1
4/1	55	1
4/2	145	10
4/3	193	18
4/4	310	21
4/5	309	18
4/6	124	11
4/7	308	23
4/8	362	19

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Date	Tests Completed	Facilities Visited
4/9	723	26
4/10	291	25
4/11	419	36
Total	3,464	209

Kits		
Date	Requested	Count of Facility
4/9/20	136	2
4/10/20	2967	23
4/11/20	103	2
Grand Total	3,206	27

Update on Holyoke & Chelsea Soldiers' Home

The Commonwealth continues to make every resource available to the clinical command centers at the Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes as they work to care for the veteran residents and staff, including deploying additional staff, supplies, and support for veteran residents, families, and employees as they navigate the challenges of this public health emergency. Below are updates for 4/11:

Holyoke Soldiers' Home

- We continue to move our veterans within the building to semi and private rooms, encouraging social distancing.
- Continued partnership with Holyoke Medical Center and Baystate Health for 24-hour turnaround on tests.
 - Secondary testing of veteran residents continues as they are monitored for symptoms.
 - 3 additional veteran residents have been transferred to the satellite unit at Holyoke Medical Center for monitoring and care for a total of 44 transfers in the last week.
- Friday afternoon, the Massachusetts National Guard hosted a staff appreciation lunch to recognize them for their hard work and dedication. HHS Deputy Secretary Dan Tsai attended the lunch and addressed the staff.
- With strong staff to resident ratios achieved, thanks in large part to the presence of the Massachusetts National Guard trained medical and operational staff, the clinical command structure continues to refine staffing plans, including working to bring on new nursing leadership and clinical staff.
 - The clinical command structure has identified and is implementing new staffing patterns developed for all units that ensure their operations are aligned with industry standards.
 - Assuring we are following our infection control policies; we are monitoring infection control protocols and re-educating staff at the point of noticing lapses in protocol.
 - Staff testing was completed this week, and staff that are off site for medical leave have been contacted and offered testing.
- Leveling grounds to bring in 3 storage containers to store hospital property in order to facilitate improvements to our veterans living quarters in preparation for their return.
- The Holyoke Soldiers' Home is regularly communicating with veteran residents' health care proxies and is scheduling regular updates for families.
 - This is being done with the support of the additional clinical case management nursing staff that was brought onboard this week from Behavioral Health Network and Riverside Community Care.

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- Families can call the Family Hotline at 413-552-4764 Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., and Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.; Families can also request updates via email at CommunicationsMailbox-HLY@Mass.gov.
- Please note the Soldiers' Home can only share medical information about a resident with the authorized health care proxy on file. If a family member requests an update and is **not** the health care proxy, the name of the health care proxy will be shared and it will be suggested that the health care proxy should call and request the update.
- The Holyoke Soldiers' Home clinical command continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and outbreak at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home.
 - Holyoke continues to implement the guidance issued from CDC, DPH, CMS, and the VA.
 - The clinical command is enforcing quarantine zones for COVID-19 positive residents, and continues to distribute and require use of PPE, restricting visitors, increased personal hygiene measures, and increased disinfection protocols.
 - The personal protective equipment (PPE) supply is monitored daily and additional supplies are being delivered as needed to keep staff and residents safe.
 - Additional contracted housekeeping staff brought onsite for ongoing terminal cleaning to ensure that infection control measures are adhered to.
- **The total numbers at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home as of Saturday:**
 - 37 veteran resident deaths (31 positive tests, 6 negative)
 - 76 veteran residents have tested positive
 - 99 veteran residents have tested negative
 - 17 veteran residents have pending tests
 - 78 employees have tested positive (43 positives from recent onsite testing)
 - 221 employees have tested negative (215 negatives from recent onsite testing)

Chelsea Soldiers' Home

- Testing of Veteran residents continues to come back largely negative. In the case of positive results, the veterans are appropriately isolated, their health status is closely monitored, and many residents are being proactively moved to the VA Health Care System for further monitoring and treatment.
- Gave 24-hour notice to dorm residents on new curfew: no one off campus (unless being taken to medical appointment) and no one to leave dorm building from 10PM – 5AM.
- Results of staff testing show an increased number of positives. Staff testing positive are quarantining and staying away from work in accordance with CDC and DPH guidance.
 - There will be a make-up employee testing session early next week for those who were out of office this week, and staff that are currently on medical leave are being screened via drive through testing in the parking lot.
- Established contracts with six agencies to fill open slots with contract staff to address ongoing staff challenges.
- Continuing to leverage clinical case management staff and social workers for resident communications, including use of recently delivered iPads for virtual communications
 - Families can also request updates on their loved ones by contacting the Home at CSH@mass.gov.
 - Please note the Soldiers' Home can only share medical information about a resident with the authorized health care proxy on file.

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- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home clinical command has standing meetings to proactively prepare and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic:
 - The Chelsea Soldiers' Home has and continues to implement the guidance issued from CDC, DPH, CMS, and the VA.
 - The personal protective equipment (PPE) supply is monitored daily.
 - Strictly enforcing isolation rooms and quarantine zones for COVID-19 positive residents, increased use of PPE, restricting visitors, increased personal hygiene measures, and increased disinfection protocols.
 - Deep cleaning has been and is continuing to be conducted throughout the facility per CDC guidelines and Chelsea has contracted with a cleaning vendor to augment staff housekeeping efforts.
 - The team continues to manage staffing to provide safe care for residents - and is putting in place per diem contracts with NP, RN, LPNs for immediate starts.
- **The total numbers at Chelsea Soldiers' Home as of Saturday:**
 - 8 veteran resident deaths (6 tested positive, 2 test negative)
 - 25 veteran residents who have tested positive
 - 218 veteran residents who have tested negative
 - 41 staff tested positive (25 positives from onsite testing)
 - 144 staff tested negative (133 negatives from onsite testing)

How to Help Out

- [Donate](#) to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund.
- Volunteer opportunities for health professionals: [Please click here.](#)
- Volunteer for the new Community Tracing Collaborative by visiting the [PIH Ma-Response](#) page [Or DIRECT link](#) to recruiter web.
- Donate or sell personal protective equipment: [Please click here.](#)
- Health care facilities can learn more about [requesting personal protective equipment here.](#)
- Apply for Jobs at COVID-19 Temporary Care Sites [\(Details Here\).](#)

Give Blood:

As you are aware, the COVID-19 virus has caused the cancellation of blood drives across the Commonwealth. There is an urgent need ***now***. The Governor has deemed "Blood and plasma donors and the employees of the organizations that operate and manage related activities" as an essential service. Your support is needed to communicate to your residents that the need is urgent, and donating is a necessity to supply the hospitals with the blood our neighbors require. Donating blood is safe and people should not hesitate to give. In addition, there is a need for community blood drive sites in the eastern part of the state. Identifying donation sites is vital to meet the demand as we go forward. Your local knowledge, suggestions of sites, and potential partners are crucial to meeting the needs of our neighbors who need blood and blood products. To schedule a new blood drive contact Bill Forsyth at (617) 699-3808 or at email William.Forsyth@redcross.org.

Those who are healthy, feeling well and eligible to give blood or platelets, are urged to make an appointment to donate as soon as possible by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Stay Informed

- Get information from trusted sources. Visit <https://www.mass.gov/covid19> for the latest news, case counts, and lab testing results. Call 2-1-1 with questions. Text the keyword **COVIDMA** to **888-777** to receive notifications to your phone. To receive these notifications in Spanish, text **COVIDMAESP** to **888-777**
- Take care of your emotional health and help others do the same. If you need emotional support during these stressful times:
 - Call 2-1-1 and choose the “CALL2TALK” option.
 - Samaritans is continuing operations 24/7, as always. During this unprecedented time, it can feel overwhelming to receive constant messages about COVID-19. Call or text their 24/7 helpline any time at 877-870-4673.
 - The Disaster Distress Helpline, 1-800-985-5990, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster, including disease outbreaks like COVID-19. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories.

Please share our Communications Resources

Infographics

- [Stop the Spread of Germs](#)
- Social distancing: for [youth](#) for [general audience](#)
- [Coping](#) with stress or fear
- What to do [if you are sick](#)
- 10 tips for at-home [quarantine or self-monitoring](#)

Short videos:

[Stop the Spread of Germs like Seasonal Flu and COVID-19](#) (:30)

[Help Prevent COVID-19 with Social Distancing](#) (:30)

[How Young People Can Help Prevent COVID-19 with Social Distancing](#) (:30)

[Coping with Stress and Fear from COVID-19](#) (:30)

[Stay Home - Save Lives](#) (:06)

10 Tips for at home quarantine or self-monitoring -- coming soon.

Spanish Radio Spots (available on request):

- Prevent the Spread of Germs
- Social Distancing
- Stay Home. Stay Safe. Save Lives.

Social media – please continue to follow and re-tweet DPH on Twitter @MassDPH, updated several times per day.

Requests for Red Cross Emergency Response

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross (ARC) of Massachusetts is committed to fulfilling our Mission of providing emergency relief to our neighbors following a home fire or other disaster. In order to maintain our commitment to assisting to those affected while balancing our volunteer workforce safety, we have implemented the below temporary changes to our response protocols. ARC we will be responding to your requests for service with a virtual response and ask your assistance in sharing this information with your Incident Commanders and Dispatch Center personnel.

Notification: Continue to request a response by contacting our long-standing emergency line **800-564-1234**.

When calling: Please have contact information for the head of household for each displaced family unit. A point of contact from the Fire Department or Emergency Management on-scene that we can coordinate with if needed. Quick assessment as to extent of damage.

What we will do:

- Contact each head of household by phone or video chat. Open a virtual case for each affected family.
- Arrange for lodging if needed.
- Deliver a Client Assistance Card (financial assistance) to hotel, family member's home, etc.
- Provide Recovery guidance and assistance in the days following the incident.

If a virtual response is not possible, we will send a minimal number of Red Cross volunteers to the scene to orchestrate the virtual intake process. We value our partnership with your department and encourage you to contact us with any questions.