

Monday, March 23, 2020

COVID-19 Response Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

On March 10, 2020, Governor Charlie Baker declared a State of Emergency to support the Commonwealth's response to coronavirus. On March 14, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the creation of a new COVID-19 Response Command Center. Secretary Marylou Sudders is leading the cross-secretariat response to the outbreak.

The Command Center is the Commonwealth's single point of strategic decision making and coordination for the Administration's comprehensive COVID-19 response.

In support of the Command Center, the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Framingham has activated to Level 2 (Partial Activation). In addition, MEMA's Regional EOCs in Tewksbury, New Bedford, and Agawam have also been partially activated to support local communities. Agencies present at the SEOC today include:

Important protective measures to be aware of:

- All residents are advised to stay home and avoid unnecessary travel and other unnecessary activities. Residents over 70 years of age or with underlying health conditions, who are considered at high risk when exposed to COVID-19, should limit social interactions with other people as much as possible.
- All businesses and organizations not providing "COVID-19 Essential Services" [have been ordered](#) to close their physical workplaces and facilities to workers, customers and the public as of noon on **March 24th at noon until noon on April 7th**. These businesses are encouraged to continue operations remotely.
- [Gatherings of over 10 people are prohibited](#) until noon on April 7th.
- On-premises consumption of food and drink at bars and restaurants is prohibited until noon on April 7th.
- Elementary and Secondary Schools are closed until April 6th.
- Colleges and universities, both public and private, are urged to reduce the need for students to be on campus.
- Some government offices are closed, you should check the website or call ahead, to confirm hours of operation.
- MBTA trains and buses are running a [reduced service schedule](#).
- Public & Private daycare providers will be closed effective today. [Exempt Emergency Child Care Programs](#) have been established to provide priority access for families of emergency personnel, medical staff, and others critical to confronting COVID-19.
- Professional Licenses for individuals in good standing will be extended for 90-days after the end of the public health emergency.

See a list of all [Public Health Orders & Guidance](#) Issued During the State of Emergency



Situation in Numbers

Massachusetts *current as of 3/23*
777 Total Cases

9 Deaths

8,922 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States *current as of 3/23*
Case numbers are updated regularly at noon Mondays through Fridays.

Total Cases Reported to CDC*:

*CDC updates national numbers Mon.-Fri. by 4pm. Includes Confirmed & Presumptive Positive

33,404 Total Cases (+18,185)
449 Travel-Related (+112)
539 Close Contact (+218)
32,416 Under Investigation (+17,855)

400 Deaths (+199)

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

Social Distancing Basics:

If you go out:

- ✓ Avoid crowds
- ✓ Stay 6 feet away from others
- ✓ Don't shake hands or hug
- ✓ Call/Facetime/online chat with friends and loved ones.

State Actions Today

Non-Essential Businesses to Cease In-Person Operations; Stay at Home Advisory Issued ([News Release](#))

At a 10:00am press conference, Governor Baker, Lt. Governor Polito, Secretary Sudders, and Commissioner Bharel announced an emergency order requiring all businesses and organizations that do not provide “COVID-19 Essential Services” to close their physical workplaces and facilities to workers, customers and the public as of March 24th at noon until April 7th at noon. These businesses are encouraged to continue operations remotely.

- The Baker-Polito Administration issued [a list of designated businesses and other organizations](#) that provide essential services and workforces related to COVID-19 that shall continue to operate brick and mortar facilities during this two-week time period. This list is based on federal guidance and amended to reflect the needs of Massachusetts’ unique economy. While these businesses are designated as essential, they are urged to follow social distancing protocols for workers in accordance with guidance from the Department of Public Health.
- Businesses and organizations not on the list of essential services are encouraged to continue operations through remote means that do not require workers, customers, or the public to enter or appear at the brick-and-mortar premises closed by the order.
- Restaurants, bars, and other establishments that sell food and beverage products to the public are encouraged to continue to offer food for take-out and by delivery if they follow the social distancing protocols set forth in Department of Public Health guidance. On-premises consumption of food or drink is prohibited.
- Due to evolving spread of COVID-19 in Massachusetts, Governor Baker has directed the Department of Public Health to issue a stay at home advisory outlining self-isolation and social distancing protocols. Residents are advised to stay home and avoid unnecessary travel and other unnecessary activities during this two-week time period. Residents over 70 years of age or with underlying health conditions, who are considered at high risk when exposed to COVID-19, should limit social interactions with other people as much as possible.
- The Order also limits gatherings to 10 people during the state of emergency, a reduction from the 25 person limit established in an earlier order. This includes community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based events, and any similar event or activity that brings together more than 10 persons in any confined indoor or outdoor space. The Order does not prohibit gatherings of more than 10 people in an outdoor space, like a park or athletic field.

[Click here](#) for the full list of categories of “COVID-19 Essential Services”

[Click here](#) for a copy of the Emergency Order

[Click here](#) for a copy of the Guidance of Assemblages

Additional COVID-19 Deaths Announced: ([News Release](#))

This afternoon, DPH announce the deaths of 4 residents of the Commonwealth, bringing the total to 9.

- Two females, both in their 70s and from Essex and Worcester counties, and two men - one in his 60s from Suffolk County and the other in his 80s from Norfolk County - have died from COVID-19-related illness, bringing the total number of deaths from the novel coronavirus in Massachusetts to nine. All four were hospitalized and had underlying health conditions.

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER DAILY SITUATION REPORT

Expanded Daily Dashboard:

- The DPH Daily Case and Testing Dashboard now provides additional data categories to provide the public more information on the outbreak in Massachusetts.
- In addition to County, Sex, and Exposure of confirmed cases, DPH is now providing an Age Group breakdown.
- As testing across the Commonwealth ramps up, DPH is also now providing more robust information about all the labs submitting test data, including total number of patients tested and total positive results. [Click Here](#) to See the expanded dashboard report.

New Guidance Issued on Prioritization and Optimization of PPE:

- The Command Center, in partnership with MEMA, has developed new guidance on prioritizing and optimizing Personal Protective Equipment during COVID-19 Response. ([See The Guidance](#))
- The Command Center is aggressively pursuing every legitimate supply chain opportunity both internationally and nationally and is placing orders.
 - This includes coordinating with MassBio and MEMA to collect donated supplies through the [Massachusetts Life Sciences Emergency Supply Hub](#).

P.A.A.R.I. Survival Kit Program

The Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (P.A.A.R.I.) has partnered with the Office Based Addiction Treatment Program at Boston Medical Center, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and three Massachusetts Sheriff's Departments [to launch a Survival Kit program](#) to reduce the risk of overdose for those released from the Essex, Middlesex and Suffolk County House of Correction facilities in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Survival Kits are being delivered to the Essex, Middlesex and Suffolk County Sheriffs as early as tomorrow (3/24) for their correctional facilities. The kits include:

- 4mg nasal naloxone (NARCAN)
- Localized resources to facilitate referrals to detox, harm reduction services, medication for opioid use disorder, and recovery supports, with a focus on telephonic and virtual support
- Information to connect with Boston Medical Center's Office Based Addiction Treatment Program telemedicine and prescribing hotline and local pharmacy partners
- COVID-19 safety information
- Fentanyl safety information and, in some cases, fentanyl test strips

American Red Cross Facing Severe Blood Shortage:

The American Red Cross is facing a severe blood shortage due to an unprecedented number of blood drive cancellations during the COVID-19 outbreak. There is an urgent blood donation need now for patients with chronic conditions and trauma, as well as for ensuring an adequate blood and blood product supply going forward. The Governor has deemed "Blood and plasma donors and the employees of the organizations that operate and manage related activities" as an essential service. 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.

To schedule a new blood drive: contact Bill Forsyth at (617) 699-3808 or email William.Forsyth@redcross.org.

Those who are healthy, feeling well, and eligible to give blood or platelets are urged to make an appointment 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

Key Public Health Messages for All Residents:

- Avoid unnecessary travel and other unnecessary activities.
- Protect yourself by following public health advice about keeping your hands clean and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Stay home if you are sick. If you need to consult a health care provider, call ahead first or use telehealth services.
- Protect others who are most at risk of COVID-19 by keeping your distance from people (at least 6 feet away from others), especially those who are older, and people living with chronic health conditions.
- If you are outside, avoid crowds.
- Don't shake hands or hug.
- Stay connected to friends and loved ones by phone or through other technology.
- Get information from trusted sources. Visit <https://www.mass.gov/covid19> for the latest news, case counts, and lab testing results.
- 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

Communications Resources:

- New Social Distancing ([youth](#) and [general](#)) infographic released on website.
- Social Distancing messages are now on billboards and will soon be available on public transit. They are also now translated into multiple languages.
- There is [a new video on Social Distancing](#) specifically targeted specifically at youth.

COVID-2019 infographic for posting in all public places: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/stop-the-spread-of-germs-respiratory-diseases-like-flu-and-covid-19/download>

A short video for social media, waiting rooms, and other locations: <https://youtu.be/HhUpkGxyjS4>

Social media – follow and retweet DPH on Twitter @MassDPH, updated several times per day.

Massachusetts 2-1-1 - Massachusetts residents are urged to use 2-1-1 for information, resources, and referrals regarding COVID-19. Operators are staffing this hotline 24/7 and translators are available in multiple languages. Residents with questions can dial 2-1-1 from any landline or cellphone or use the live chat option on the [Mass 2-1-1 website](#).

- Mass 2-1-1 answered over 1,300 calls on 3/22, bringing the total number of calls to **15,740** since activation.