Thursday, July 30, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

***Note:* Next week, the Command Center Situation Report will begin a new weekly publishing schedule on Thursdays. The next situation report will be issued on Thursday, 8/6.**

State Actions in Today's Report:

- $50 Million Allocated to Schools & Colleges Across Commonwealth
- Public Health Data: Daily Dashboard
- DPH Updates Guidance for Allowing Non-Essential Personnel into Long-Term Care Facilities
- Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery Updates
- Update on Mobile Testing & Surveillance Testing in Long-Term Care
- Situation Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes

Helpful Links:

- Mass.gov/findfoodhelp
- Stop the Spread
- Reopening Massachusetts
- Mass.Gov/covid19
- Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
- Unemployment & COVID-19
- Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal
- FrontlineMA.org
- Emergency Childcare Site
- COVID-19 Cost Eligibility and Tracking 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 7/30

109,400 Total Confirmed Cases (click here for more information)

8,375 Deaths among confirmed cases

1,161,454 individuals tested for the virus to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States Last Updated 7/30

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:

4,405,932 Total Cases

150,283 Deaths

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

Social Distancing Basics:

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

If you go out for essential needs:

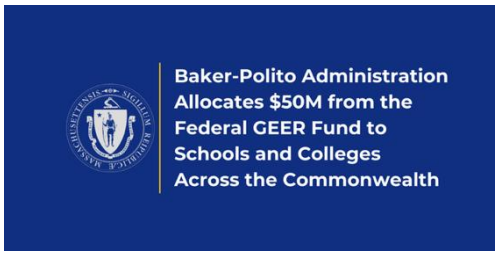
- ✓ Avoid crowds
- ✓ Stay 6 feet away from others
- ✓ Don't shake hands or hug
- ✓ Wear a face covering or mask if physical distancing is not possible.

State Actions

Today, Governor Charlie Baker, and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, joined Pfizer Andover Site Leader Jon Tucker, and Pfizer VP of Worldwide Research & Development Dr. Meg Ruesch for a briefing on Pfizer's COVID vaccine program. (See video here).

Baker-Polito Administration Allocates $50 Million from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund to Schools and Colleges Across the Commonwealth (News Release)

The Baker-Polito Administration announced today it will allocate more than $50 million in federal CARES Act funds to benefit education in elementary and secondary schools, as well as colleges and universities. The funding from the federal Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund will improve early literacy, expand remote learning opportunities, and cover costs associated with reopening certain schools and colleges, as well as boost financial aid for college students in greater need of financial assistance.



As part of the federal CARES Act, governors in each state were granted a share of discretionary dollars to ensure continuity of educational services during the COVID-19 crisis. The Baker-Polito Administration previously allocated nearly $1 billion in federal funds to help municipalities, school districts, and colleges and universities in the Commonwealth address COVID-related expenses.

The funding announced today will support the following initiatives:

- Up to $10 million for early literacy programs that provide extra help to students through Grade 3, aimed at remediating learning loss children may have experienced since schools closed in March, as well as accelerate reading skills of children in high-need communities;
- Up to $7.5 million to expand access to online courses, including advanced placement, early college or dual enrollment courses;
- Up to $25 million to cover COVID-related expenses associated with reopening colleges and universities, as well as certain non-public elementary and secondary schools. Funds will be allocated based on the number and percentage of low-income students these schools enroll;
- Up to $2.5 million in financial aid for low-income college students attending public colleges to ensure they can cover emergency expenses to continue their education;
- And up to $5 million set aside in an emergency reserve fund.

"Our administration is committed to supporting every student in our schools as districts and universities prepare for the start of the school year**," said Governor Charlie Baker.** "This $50 million investment represents flexible funding that can be used for a variety of critical resources for schools and colleges as they begin to reopen and bring kids back into the classroom, especially in our most vulnerable communities."

"These additional resources will help us target funding to support schools and colleges recover from effects of the pandemic," **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito.** "Our administration looks forward to our continued collaboration with school officials statewide on how to best support the safe return to classrooms this fall."

"Besides supporting financial stability and continuity of service in both K-12 and higher education, this plan will give more students access to high-quality online learning opportunities," **said Education Secretary James Peyser.**

"We know districts will need more funding this year than in a typical school year, and I am pleased to see this money added to the financial support that is already on its way to districts," **said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley.**

"At a time of great uncertainty for those of us in higher education, this investment in our public colleges and universities and most especially, in our underserved students, will help ease the financial burdens associated with COVID-19 and lay the groundwork for a productive fall semester," **said Carlos E. Santiago, Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education.**

Funding announced today builds on the nearly $1 billion previously allocated to schools, childcare programs, colleges, and universities.

- In June, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the allocation of approximately $200 million from the Commonwealth's federal Coronavirus Relief Fund for costs related to reopening public schools.

- Other funding sources to support school reopening include:

  - $500 million from the Coronavirus Relief Fund previously allocated to cities and towns.
  - $194 million in federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund grants.
  - $45 million to support the reopening of childcare programs serving low-income children.
  - $19 million for special education residential schools.
  - $25 million in federal funds for a matching grant program to help school districts and charter schools close technology gaps that inhibit remote learning.

COVID-19 Public Health Update

***Testing Update**:*
Today, more than **12,224** new individuals tested by molecular (viral) tests were reported in Massachusetts with **304** newly reported confirmed positive cases. The number of new cases reported today appears higher because a hospital group had a technical issue that caused a delay in their reporting to DPH. However, these positive test results have been assigned retrospectively to the appropriate date of test. Yesterday, more than **15,556** new individuals tested were reported to DPH. The total molecular tests administered to date is more than **1,507,320**.

***Hospitalizations & Capacity Update**:*
As of today, **367** people are hospitalized, with **55** reported to be in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Key indicators from today's Daily Dashboard are below.

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
DAILY SITUATION REPORT

Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard - Thursday, July 30, 2020

Dashboard of Public Health Indicators

Newly Reported Confirmed Cases Today*	Total Confirmed Cases	Newly Reported Deaths among Confirmed Today	Total Deaths among Confirmed Cases
304	109,400	15	8,375

New Individuals Tested by Molecular Tests	Total Individuals Tested by Molecular Tests
12,224	1,161,454

Total Molecular Tests Administered
1,507,320

Legend
- Positive trend
- In progress
- Negative trend

Below is the status as of June 5, 2020:

Measure	Status
COVID-19 positive test rate	Positive trend
Number of individuals who died from COVID-19	In progress
Number of patients with COVID-19 in hospitals	Positive trend
Healthcare system readiness	In progress
Testing capacity	Positive trend
Contact tracing capabilities	In progress

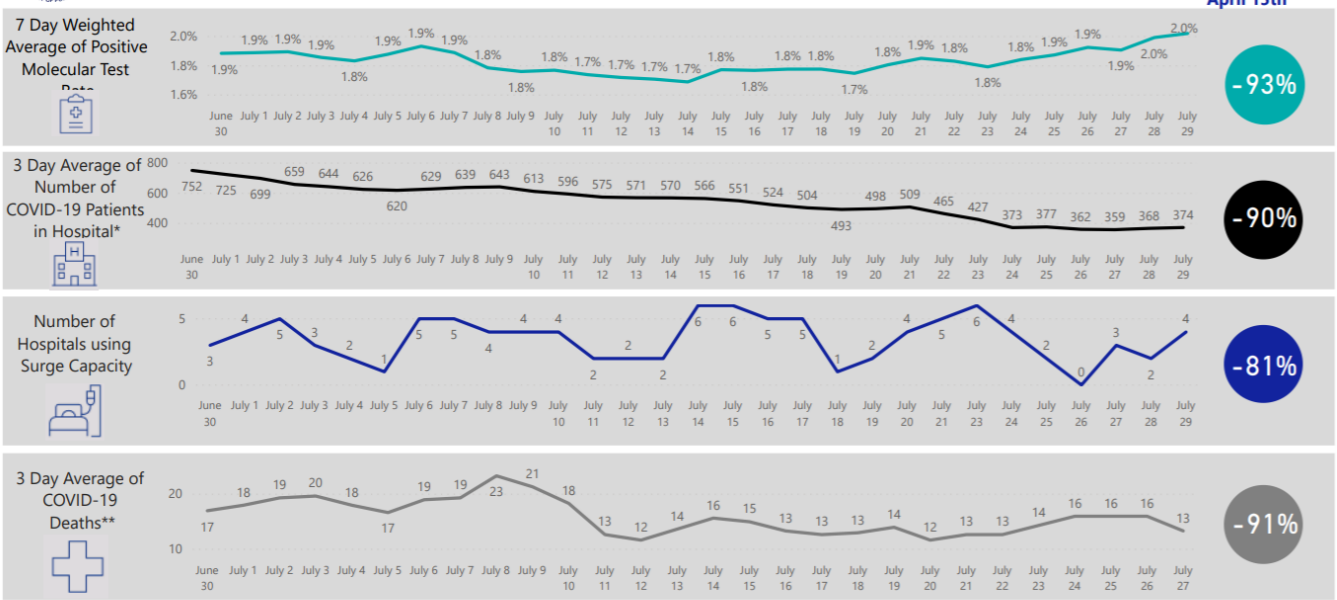
***PLEASE NOTE: A technical reporting error by a hospital group caused a delay in its laboratory test results being reported to DPH. These newly reported test results have been included in today's dashboard report and are reflected in today's case totals. However, these positive test results have been assigned retrospectively to the appropriate date of test.**

The front page of the dashboard has been reformatted. Probable case and death information can be found on page 21. Antibody tests (individual and total numbers) can be found on page 7. For more information on the COVID-19 case definition, see https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cste.org/resource/resmgr/2020ps/Interim-20-ID-01_COVID-19.pdf

Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard - Thursday, July 30, 2020

Dashboard of Public Health Indicators

Percent Change Since April 15th



*Includes both confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19; **Includes deaths in only confirmed cases of COVID-19

Note: Hospital-reported data included here reflects a transition to new federal reporting standards imposed as of 7/22. The third graph (number of hospitals using surge) does not include data from July 22 due to this transition. As a result,

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
DAILY SITUATION REPORT

Important Updates

DPH Updates its Guidance for Allowing Non-Essential Personnel into Long-Term Care Facilities

Long-term care facilities may begin allowing non-essential personnel to enter their facility so long as the facility meets the safety, care, and infection control measures outlined in a memorandum released today from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's (DPH) Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality. Non-essential personnel include, but are not limited to, the following individuals: barbers, hair stylists, volunteers, maintenance contractors and vendors performing cosmetic work (e.g. painting) as long as such work is **not** being performed in a resident's room, individuals working in facility gift shops, etc.

Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery Updates:

Mass Care

- 2 state contracted quarantine/isolation hotels in the communities of Northampton and Everett continue to receive client placements.
    - Currently 25 residents are housed in these hotels (change of +9 since last Thursday)
    - These hotels will continue to operate into August to support the "Stop the Spread" testing initiative.
- A total of 127,624 meals have been distributed to date through state contracted hotel sites and distributions of food boxes and meal bags.
- Tent operations supporting homeless individuals continue in Haverhill.

Logistics (including Personal Protective Equipment and Supplies)

- MEMA continues to transition distribution operations from Marlborough to the new MEMA warehouse in Franklin. This will be ongoing for the next few weeks.
- The warehouse has supported 4,558 missions since opening in early March, and has processed 35 orders over the last two days.
- DPH - There are 14 deliveries (9 PPE/6 testing supplies – 1 facility requesting both PPE and testing supplies) scheduled for Friday 7/31. The next deliveries will be scheduled on Tuesday, 8/4.

Disaster Recovery

On March 27, the President declared a Major Disaster Declaration for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts related to the COVID-19 pandemic response. Through this declaration, federal aid will be made available to cities and towns, state agencies, and certain non-profits in all Massachusetts counties to help pay for emergency protective measures (response costs) related to the COVID-19 pandemic. MEMA's Recovery Unit has developed a webpage with information and guidance on, but not limited to, disaster declaration, eligibility criteria, and the application process. Highlights from the Disaster Recovery process include the following:

- Massachusetts Crisis Counseling Program, MassSupport, is now accessible at: https://masssupport.org
- Additional applicant trainings have been added to the Recovery webpage.
- Total FEMA RPA Applicants: **541** (+3)
- Total # Obligated Projects: 17 / $7,446,530.25 (+1 / +$97,928.31)
- Total # of Payments Disbursed: 2 / $444,131.50 (no change)
- Online Applicant Technical Assistant Requests: **417** (+4)
- Continuing to provide technical assistance to project applicants.

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
DAILY SITUATION REPORT

Update on Mobile Testing Numbers for Long Term Care, Assisted Living Residences and EOHHS Sites

Note: The Family Resource Line is available Monday-Friday, from 9 am to 5 pm.

Final MANG Onsite Testing: Long Term Care

Date	Number of Tests Completed	Unique Facilities Visited
Total (as of 6/15)	**57,058**	**493**

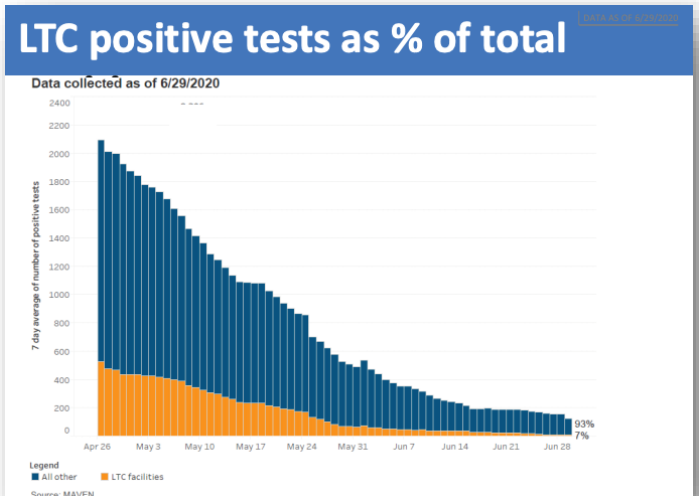
COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities (as of 7/30)	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	**24,144**
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	**376**
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	**5,477**

Mobile Testing at EOHHS Group Homes & Care Sites (as of 7/28 by Fallon Ambulance Service)

DDS, DMH, DCF and DPH Facilities	
Clients	12,895
Staff	18,291
Total Tests	**31,186**
Number of Locations	**2,082**

Update on COVID-19 Testing in Long-Term Care Facilities

As part of a comprehensive response to outbreaks of COVID-19 in nursing facilities and other long-term care and congregate settings, the Command Center launched a first-in-the-nation Mobile Testing Program to provide safe, on-site testing for both residents and staff of these facilities. The program, which was launched on March 31, operated under the auspices of the Massachusetts National Guard in partnership with the Department of Public Health and Broad Institute of Cambridge, with support from Fallon Ambulance Service. Over the course of 2.5 months, National Guard teams visited **493** unique long-term care facilities, completing more than **57,000 tests** of residents and staff at nursing facilities, rest homes and assisted living residences. In addition, Fallon Ambulance has performed more than **31,000** tests at more than **2,000** EOHHS group homes and care sites throughout the Commonwealth. The Mobile Testing program has made a critical contribution to helping guide response activities, and stabilize



A comprehensive testing strategy has been, and will continue to by, a central focus of protecting residents and staff of long-term care facilities. (Source for graphic, DPH)

long-term care facilities in Massachusetts. The Mobile Testing Program will continue to respond to emergency testing for outbreaks as needed.

Surveillance Testing
On June 30, the Command Center issued evidence-based surveillance testing guidance for long-term care facilities that started with a new round of baseline testing of staff members. Based on the results of that testing, facilities will follow strict guidelines for further testing if positive cases are identified, or ongoing surveillance testing if no new positive cases are identified during the new round of baseline testing. Compliance with the testing program is required in nursing facilities and rest homes, and is recommended for assisted living residences. This strategy will continue through the end of September, at which point the results will be assessed based on public health metrics. Facilities are expected to organize their own testing of staff through qualified testing providers, and the Commonwealth is funding the initiative in nursing facilities and rest homes through September.

As of July 28, 95% of long-term care facilities (407 of 429 facilities) completed the required baseline testing of at least 90% of staff. Ten facilities did not meet minimum testing threshold, and 12 facilities did not report their testing data. You can find a list of facilities and their compliance status beginning on **page 32 of the weekly Public Health Report**.

Soldiers' Homes Update:

Note: The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke is continuing regular reporting on the status of COVID-19 cases at the facility, and has moved to weekly reporting each Tuesday, and will be reporting only deaths of individuals who are active COVID-19 cases, beginning this week.

Holyoke Soldiers' Home Update as of July 27:

- On Monday, a veteran resident of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke who was clinically recovered from COVID-19 (following CDC guidance) experienced COVID-like symptoms, and was proactively transferred to a hospital for treatment and tested positive, but has since tested negative at the hospital. The Home has been implementing protocols for clinically recovered individuals including residing on a unit with other clinically recovered veterans. The Home has immediately taken necessary precautions and is performing full-house testing with support from the Massachusetts National Guard.
    - The resident lived on a unit dedicated for clinically recovered individuals. All residents on that unit are quarantined. Individuals are determined recovered according to CDC guidance.
- Regular onsite testing is being conducted every two weeks. Monday and Tuesday of this week (July 27 & July 28) full-house onsite testing for residents and staff is being conducted with support from the Massachusetts National Guard.
    - Residents are closely monitored and if there is any sign of COVID-like symptoms, they are immediately retested.
- Visitation has been temporarily suspended to protect the health and safety of veteran residents and loved ones, as the outdoor visitation plan is contingent on the continued stability of infection control and public health metrics, which are monitored daily and coordinated with state and local health officials.
    - Families were notified that in-person outdoor visitation has been suspended, and will be notified when it resumes in the future. Video visits between veteran residents and their loved ones is continuing this week, and the Family Hotline is available for ad hoc updates with support from social work and clinical staff.

  - Families can call the Family Hotline at 413-552-4764 Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 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.
- In June, the Baker-Polito Administration released the independent report ordered by Governor Baker to investigate the COVID-19 outbreak at Holyoke Soldiers' Home, and announced a series of reforms to strengthen its governance and oversight of the Home, improving staffing processes, providing quality care for our Veterans, and planning for significant capital improvements.
- The Soldiers' Home leadership is committed to ensuring the safety of the Veteran residents and restoring the Home to its rightful place that treats them with dignity, honor and respect. The Soldiers' Home leadership is moving into the Transition & Rebuilding Phase that is focused on rebuilding staff leadership and team and positioning the facility to move forward safely.
- Phase 1 of the refresh project, which involved updating the interiors of the 3rd floor units for enhanced infection control, is nearing completion this month.
- Holyoke's Clinical Command continues to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, monitoring staffing levels, while bringing on additional management staff for nursing, facilities, and administration. The Holyoke Soldiers' Home has been intently focused on following infection control procedures and maintaining best practices for the safety of veteran residents and staff, and to support the recovery of veterans as the health status of many stabilizes. All veteran residents' health is being monitored and retesting is being conducted for veterans both on- and off-site as clinically appropriate.

- **The current status as of July 27 is as follows:**
  - The current status of all residents:
    - 1 veteran has tested positive across the Home and Holyoke Medical Center
    - 20 veterans are negative
    - 21 veterans have recovered, meaning they previously tested positive and are now clinically recovered
    - 101 veterans have pending test results
    - 2 veterans have refused testing
  - Resident locations:
    - 117 veterans are onsite
    - 28 veterans are offsite
      - 25 veterans are at a dedicated skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center
      - 3 veterans are receiving acute care offsite
  - Since March 1, there have been 101 veteran deaths (76 deaths of veterans who tested positive, 20 veterans who tested negative, 1 veteran whose status was unknown, 4 veterans were clinically recovered)
  - All employees had been determined clinically recovered, and employees are being retested Monday and Tuesday of this week.

Chelsea Soldiers' Home Update as of July 27:

- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home continues to welcome visitors for outdoor visitation between veterans and loved ones and at the start of this week there had been more than 220 visits. Following visitation guidance, the Home has protocols that prioritize the health and safety of our Veterans and staff with continued focus on infection control. Ongoing plans are contingent on the continued stability of infection controls and public health metrics, which we continue to monitor daily and coordinate with state and local health officials.

    - Outdoor visitation is occurring in addition to continued video visits between veteran residents and their loved ones. Families can also request updates on their loved ones by contacting the Home at CSH@mass.gov and through phone and video conversations. Medical information can only be shared with an authorized health care proxy.
- The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea is reporting the recovery of residents based on clinical determinations following the retesting of all veterans, and 43 residents who had previously tested positive have been determined clinically recovered.
- This week the Soldiers' Home Recreation Department is hosting mini ice cream socials parties for Long Term Care Veterans on each ward.
- The Home has eased restrictions for Dorm residents, who can now order food delivery from area restaurants, and drive in their personal vehicles off-site to medical appointments. The curfew has been extended, now from 11pm - 5am.
- The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea monitors the PPE supply, and continues to receive shipments of PPE including gloves, masks, eye protection, gowns, and shoe covers. The Incident Command team at the Chelsea Soldiers' Home continues to enforce staff use of personal protective equipment (PPE), as well as source PPE to ensure that residents and staff have access to critical safety equipment. The team continues to coordinate closely with the VA Health Care System.

- **The current status as of July 27 is as follows:**
    - Residents
        - 0 veteran residents are positive
        - 152 veteran residents have tested negative
        - 43 residents have recovered, meaning they previously tested positive and are now clinically recovered
        - 43 veteran resident deaths (31 tested positive, 11 tested negative, 1 clinically recovered)
        - Note: there is 1 fewer resident at the Home today because a family chose to move a long-term care resident on hospice closer to the family home
    - Employees:
        - All employees have been retested and have been determined clinically recovered
        - 2 employees have pending tests
        - 61 employees have been determined clinically recovered

Resources

Red Cross Virtual Family Assistance Center

In order to provide support to families and communities who have suffered loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Red Cross has developed a Virtual Family Assistance Center (VFAC), staffed by a team of specially trained mental health, spiritual care, and health services volunteers who are:

- Connecting with families over the phone to offer condolences, emotional and spiritual support, and access to available resources
- Providing support for virtual memorial services for families, including connecting with local faith-based community partners
- Hosting online classes to foster resilience and facilitate coping skills
- Assisting families with access to national, state or local resources such as grief counseling, legal resources, funeral information, financial information services, or veterans' assistance
- Additional state- and local-specific resources are available.

People can visit: https://www.redcross.org/virtual-family-assistance-center/ma-family-assistance-center.html to access this resource with special virtual programs, information, referrals and services to support families in need. People without internet access can **call toll-free 833-492-0094** for help. All Family Assistance Center support will be provided virtually and is completely confidential and free.

COVID-19 Public Resources Map

MEMA, together with MA VOAD and other partners, has developed a COVID-19 Public Resources Map showing the location of resources available to the public, such as food banks, houses of worship, and Project Bread site locations. Please note that this map is not inclusive of all resources and is only as accurate as the information that has been provided to MEMA.

Massachusetts COVID-19 Response Dashboard

MEMA has developed and maintains a public-facing COVID-19 ArcGIS Online dashboard, available here. This dashboard is continuously updated and captures information about current COVID 19 case counts, cases by age, cases by county, hospital status, hospital bed status, death tolls, and deaths by age. Users should refresh the dashboard on a daily basis as enhancements are continuously being added.

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:
- 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.

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:

Overview of COVID-19 Testing	Importance of COVID-19 Testing	How to Safely Cover Your Face Outside of Home
• English • Spanish • Portuguese • Simplified Chinese • Traditional Chinese • Vietnamese • Haitian Creole	• English • Spanish • Portuguese • Simplified Chinese • Traditional Chinese • Vietnamese • Haitian Creole	• Spanish • Portuguese • Simplified Chinese • Traditional Chinese • Haitian Creole • Vietnamese

- 10 Tips for at home quarantine or self-monitoring
- 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)

Spanish Radio Spots (available on request):

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

How to Help Out

- Donate to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund.
- Volunteer opportunities for health professionals: **Please click here**.
- Health care facilities can learn more about **requesting personal protective equipment here**.

The Need for Blood Donations Continues, and Recovered COVID-19 Donors Can Help Save Lives

In coordination with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Red Cross is seeking people who are fully recovered from the new coronavirus to sign up to donate plasma to help current COVID-19 patients. People who have fully recovered from COVID-19 have antibodies in their plasma that can attack the virus. This convalescent plasma is being evaluated as treatment for patients with serious or immediately life-threatening COVID-19 infections, or those judged by a healthcare provider to be at high risk of progression to severe or life-threatening condition. Interested individuals can visit RedCrossBlood.org/plasma4covid to learn more. The Red Cross follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and volunteer donors are the only source of blood for those in need. To make an appointment to donate, please visit www.RedCrossBlood.org