

# Thursday, May 21, 2020

## COVID-19 Command Center

### Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

## Situation Update

The Command Center Situation Report is issued Monday-Friday.

### State Actions in Today's Report:

- Daily Case Update (link in sidebar)
- Governor Baker Calls in to WGBH Boston Public Radio
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation
- Grants Announced for PPE and Critical Material
- USDA Approves MA Plan to Join Online Grocery Purchase Pilot Program
- Virtual Memorial Day Observances Begin
- Update on Mobile Testing Numbers
- Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes



Several Days of Virtual Memorial Day Observances Kicked-Off Today with Live Streamed Ceremonies at The Chelsea Soldiers' Home. See below details below.

### Helpful Links:

- [Jobs Available to Assist Long Term Care Facilities](#)
- [Get Involved: Community Contact Tracing Collaborative](#)
- [Mass.Gov/covid19](#)
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [Unemployment & COVID-19](#)
- [Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal](#)
- [FrontlineMA.org](#)
- [Emergency Childcare Site](#)
- [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 5/21**

90,084 Total Cases ([click here for more information](#))

6,148 Deaths

501,486 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States **Last Updated 5/21**

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:

1,551,095 Total Cases

93,061 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

Today, Governor Charlie Baker called in to WGBH's Boston Public Radio to discuss the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in Massachusetts. During his call, the Governor discussed testing capacity and how it relates to supply chain management for materials and transportation. He also discussed how the State has done a great job at manufacturing PPE and the amount of effort put in to search around the world for additional PPE.

[\(Listen to the Interview\)](#)

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*The state needs to “make sure we have domestic ability to manufacture and distribute” personal protective equipment and testing materials” – [Governor Baker on BPR 5/21/20](#)*

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### **Daily Update on Testing, Hospitalizations, and PPE Distribution**

#### **Testing:**

- Yesterday (May 20<sup>th</sup>) approximately 13,000 new tests were reported in Massachusetts. Over 489,000 total tests have been completed to date.
  - Yesterday's 7-day weighted average of positive test rate was 9.3%. Positive test rates have been around 10% for the past week.

#### **Hospitalizations and Capacity:**

- As of May 20<sup>th</sup>, the number of hospitalizations continues to trend downward.
- Approximately 2,500 individuals are reported hospitalized.

#### **Personal Protective Equipment:**

- To date, the Commonwealth has delivered over 11.8 million pieces of PPE; this includes masks, gloves, gowns, and ventilators distributed to health care workers, first responders and others.
- The Command Center continues to aggressively pursue all supply chain avenues.

### **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation**

The Baker-Polito Administration announced today that Massachusetts residents who are eligible for the federal CARES Act and qualify for having exhausted their regular unemployment compensation may now receive the new Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC). The launch of this program marks the third and final benefit available for the Commonwealth through the CARES Act.

PEUC provides up to 13 additional weeks of benefits to an individual who has exhausted all rights to any regular unemployment compensation and who meets other eligibility requirements of the CARES Act. PEUC will automatically begin for individuals who have been receiving regular standard unemployment benefits on an active claim and those benefits are exhausted, and those individuals do not have to take any further action.

If an individual's standard unemployment claim has expired, they must file a new standard claim. If the individual is monetarily eligible on the new standard claim, regardless of the benefit rate amount, they will receive benefits from that new claim. Otherwise, the individual will be eligible for PEUC on the prior claim and it will be automatically implemented.



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Individuals who exhausted their standard benefits but were receiving benefits through Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) must apply to claim weekly benefits. Residents should apply through the standard [unemployment benefits portal available here](#).


Those receiving PEUC will also receive \$600 weekly through the week ending July 25, 2020, provided by the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) program established by the CARES Act.

The CARES Act signed into law on March 27, 2020, established the PEUC, PUA and FPUC public benefit programs that expanded unemployment eligibility, temporarily increases weekly benefits for all claimants and allows additional categories of people to claim unemployment benefits. This is the largest expansion of assistance for the Commonwealth’s workforce since the Great Depression.

More information about Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation can be found at [www.mass.gov/peuc](http://www.mass.gov/peuc).

## COVID-19 Public Health Data

The COVID-19 Command Center will include in the DPH daily Dashboard 6 key public health indicators and trend data. Before and during reopening, these metrics must continue to show progress. The Department of Public Health continues to make available the underlying data for download. **City and town case data are published weekly each Wednesday.** ([Find the Data Files Here](#)). Key data reflected in today’s report is provided below:



**Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard - Thursday, May 21, 2020**

### Dashboard of Public Health Indicators

Starting on May 18, the COVID-19 Command Center will give updates on six key public health indicators. Before and during reopening, these metrics must continue to show progress.

Below is the status as of May 18, 2020 Status will be updated as metrics indicate.

Indicator	Measure	Status
1	COVID-19 positive test rate	●
2	Number of individuals who died from COVID-19	●
3	Number of patients with COVID-19 in hospitals	●
4	Healthcare system readiness	●
5	Testing capacity	●
6	Contact tracing capabilities	●

Legend

- Positive trend
- In progress
- Negative trend

Newly Reported Cases Today

1,114

Confirmed Cases

90,084

Newly Reported Deaths Today

82

Deaths of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

6,148

New Tests Reported Today

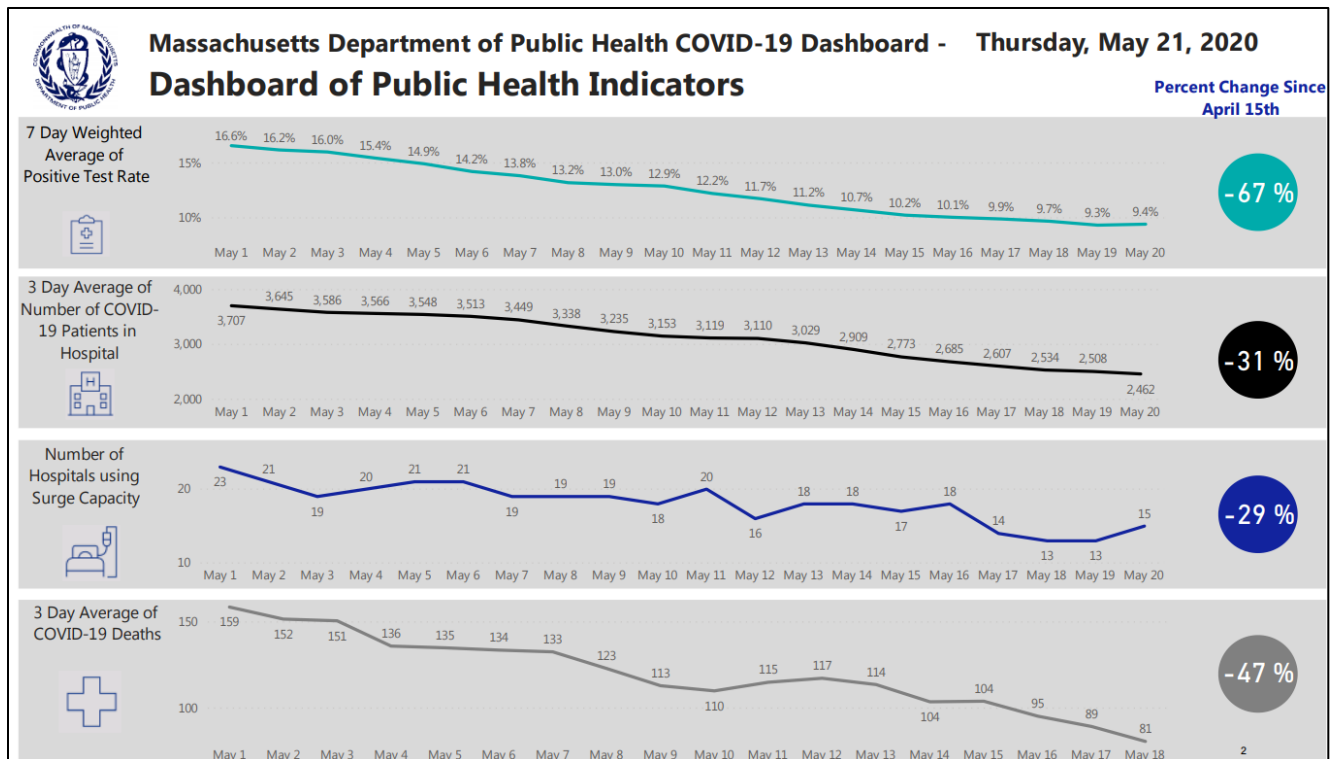
11,533

Total Tests Performed

501,486

1

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## Important Updates

### Personal Protective Equipment and Critical Material Grants

Today, the Baker-Polito Administration announced more than \$9.5 million in grants to boost production of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other critical materials needed to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Reopening Massachusetts plan. The new awards were made through the Manufacturing Emergency Response Team (M-ERT) to 15 grantees, including Massachusetts manufacturers, that are producing needed items such as masks, gowns, ventilators, swabs, and testing materials, and the capacity to test them.



Thirteen of the grant recipients are producing masks (surgical and N95), gowns, ventilators, swabs, and transport media, while the other two are involved with the testing of products produced by M-ERT partners and others to gain FDA approval. Funding was made available for equipment, working capital, materials and workforce development through a competitive application process. Grant applications continue to be considered on a rolling basis.

The M-ERT is a coordinated effort comprised of members from academia, industry, and government to address the urgent need for PPE to support healthcare workers on the front-lines of Massachusetts' COVID-19 response. Today's awards are part of [\\$10.6 million in funding announced last month](#), and are made possible [through a partnership](#) between the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED), Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MassTech), Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC), Commonwealth Corporation, and the Massachusetts Manufacturing Innovation Initiative (M2I2).

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[Managed by MassTech](#), the quasi-public economic development agency that oversees advanced manufacturing programs for the Commonwealth, the M-ERT was devised as an emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to assist manufacturers in targeted ways as the demand for PPE continues. The agency recently [launched a new website](#) that profiles nearly 20 Massachusetts manufacturers that have shifted operations.

Since the outbreak of the COVID -19 pandemic in Massachusetts, the M-ERT has been tasked with mobilizing, organizing, and operationalizing the critical path work streams necessary for the Commonwealth's manufacturers to pivot their operations to produce needed materials in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nearly 750 companies from around the world have submitted their interest to the M-ERT, including nearly 450 from Massachusetts. Of those, 27 companies have made it through the program, producing nearly 3.5 million items of PPE and other critical materials to date.

### **USDA Approves Mass. Plan to Join Online EBT Grocery Purchase Pilot**

The Baker-Polito Administration announced today that Massachusetts received approval from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to move forward on participation in a pilot program that, once established, will allow households who receive food assistance benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ([SNAP](#)) to purchase groceries online with electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards. Massachusetts applied to participate in this federal pilot program on April 24<sup>th</sup>.

"Innovative options like this alongside the Administration's investment of \$56 million to combat food insecurity based on the recommendations of the Commonwealth's Food Security Task Force will go a long way to meeting the basic needs of families and individuals during this public health emergency," **said COVID-19 Command Center Director and Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders**. "Federal SNAP benefits are a strong support for hundreds of thousands of people in the Commonwealth, and this pilot will expand safer grocery options for those individuals across the state."

"Online EBT grocery purchasing promotes equity and safety for our residents receiving SNAP benefits, allowing low-income households access to the same purchasing choices as other shoppers. This approval is a key first step in making this critical option available to the families and individuals we serve," **said Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) Commissioner Amy Kershaw**. "We look forward to working with our partners to implement this new functionality as soon as possible." ([DTA News Release](#))

### **Virtual Memorial Day Events Begin in Massachusetts**

The Baker-Polito Administration will recognize Memorial Day this year in a virtual format, enabling the Commonwealth to continue to honor members of the military who have sacrificed for our country.

The series of events will kick off with virtual observances at the Soldiers' Homes in Chelsea and Holyoke on Thursday, May 21 and Friday, May 22 respectively, [followed by a coordinated statewide lighting of buildings, bridges, flags and parks on Sunday, May 24](#), and concluding with a Memorial Day program that will air on Monday, May 25.



"We are deeply grateful to all service members past and present who bravely served our country, and as we mark Memorial Day, we pay special tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in their service to protect



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us and ensure our freedom,” **said Governor Charlie Baker.** “During this difficult time, it is important that we honor and remember them, and share our gratitude and deep respect for their courage.”

“This year we will honor the lives of the brave men and women who died while serving the country in a different, but equally special way,” **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito.** “These virtual remembrances ensure we pay tribute to the Commonwealth’s military community and our veterans, and we encourage all residents to participate as we honor their service and sacrifice.”

“Memorial Day is sacred for our fellow service members, veterans and families - in particular, Gold Star Families - as we collectively remember those we’ve lost. Freedom is not free, and the eternal valor of our fallen brothers and sisters allows us to live in peace,” **said Veterans’ Services Secretary Francisco Ureña.**

**Memorial Day Observances:** Schedule for viewing events at the Soldiers’ Homes in Chelsea and Holyoke. All are invited to view these special remembrances.

- ✓ **Thursday, May 21 - Chelsea Soldiers’ Home virtual observance was streamed on the [Home’s Facebook page at 5pm Thursday.](#)** The program is available on their Facebook page on demand now. <https://www.facebook.com/ChelseaSoldiersHome/>
- ✓ **Friday, May 22 - Holyoke Soldiers’ Home virtual observance will be streamed on the [Home’s Facebook page at 5pm Friday.](#)** The program will be available on their Facebook page on demand following the stream. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/HolyokeSoldiersHome/>

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

**Onsite Testing**

Date	Number of Tests Completed	Unique Facilities Visited
5/21	468	6
<b>Total (as of 5/21)</b>	<b>46,590</b>	<b>434</b>

<b>COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities (as of 5/21)</b>	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	<b>19,106</b>
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	<b>344</b>
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	<b>3,755</b>

**Mobile Testing at EOHHS Group Homes & Care Sites (as of 5/20 by Fallon Ambulance Service)**

<b>DDS, DMH, DCF and DPH Facilities</b>	
Clients	11,029
Staff	15,940
<b>Total Tests</b>	<b>26,969</b>
Number of Locations	<b>1,718</b>



**NURSING HOME  
FAMILY RESOURCE LINE**

**617-660-5399**

CALL ANY TIME 9AM-5PM, 7 DAYS A WEEK



### Holyoke Soldiers' Home Update

- Tomorrow evening, the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke will present a virtual Memorial Day service, as part of the state's efforts to hold Memorial Day events virtually this year to honor military who have sacrificed for our country, and veterans who have passed in the last year. The Soldiers' Home will stream a virtual observance on the [Home's Facebook page at 5pm](#). The program will be available on their [Facebook page](#) on demand following the stream.
- After thorough planning, this week, the work on the Third Floor Refresh Project, an important initiative to prepare the third floor with infection control measures for the return of veterans receiving skilled nursing care at the Holyoke Medical Center, is beginning. Staff working on the project have been thoroughly trained in PPE and the worksite will maintain social distancing.
- 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. As results are received, veteran residents are being cohorted and further monitored. Recovery units are being identified and readied for residents.
- This week, the Holyoke Soldiers' Home is distributing configured iPads - from the donated iPads generously provided by Brighton Marine -- for veterans at the Home and at the Holyoke Medical Center to use to communicate with families while in-person visits are not available.
  - Regular family communication continues from Holyoke Soldiers' Home staff through video chat, using donated iPads, 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](mailto: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 outbreak, monitoring staffing levels, while bringing on additional management staff for nursing, facilities, and administration staff to build capacity for resuming regular operations and moving to the recovery phase. Additionally, infection control staff is developing plans for dedicated recovery units.
- Governor Charlie Baker has advised flags be lowered to half-staff until the end of the public health emergency at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, Soldiers' Home in Chelsea, as well as the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Agawam and Winchendon due to the fact Military Honors are unavailable during this public health crisis.
- **The total numbers at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home as of Thursday May 26:**
  - 89 veteran resident deaths (74 positive, 14 negatives, 1 unknown)
  - Testing results of all residents:
    - 77 veteran residents have tested positive
    - 58 veteran residents have tested negative
    - 0 veteran residents have pending tests
  - Resident locations:
    - 104 residents are onsite
    - 31 residents are offsite

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- 30 residents are at a dedicated skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center
- 1 resident is receiving acute care offsite
- 84 employees have tested positive

**Chelsea Soldiers' Home Update**

- This evening the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea will present a virtual Memorial Day service, as part of the state's efforts to hold Memorial Day events virtually this year to honor military who have sacrificed for our country, and veterans who have passed in the last year. The Soldiers' Home will hold a virtual observance on the [Home's Facebook page at 5pm Thursday](#). The program will be available on their [Facebook page](#) on demand following the stream.
- Chelsea Clinical Command continues to monitor and enforce staff use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Staff have been provided PPE core competency training, the entire facility is rounded on daily for infection control quality assurance checks, all units have been provided with educational materials, and there are daily cleanings throughout the facility in addition to frequent terminal cleaning.
- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home clinical command continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including regular coordinating calls with the VA Health Care System. The Home continues to review its infection control and clinical operations with additional experts.
- Veteran residents' health is being monitored and retesting is being conducted for veterans both on- and off-site as clinically appropriate. As results are received, veteran residents are being cohorted and further monitored. Additional isolation space has been identified and is being readied.
- This week, the Soldiers' Home began distributing iPads to Veterans who live in the domiciliary - a dormitory independent living style residence. This gift was made possible through a generous donation by Brighton Marine, who donated a total of 200 iPads to keep Veterans connected during this pandemic. iPads have also been deployed throughout the Long Term Care facility.
  - Video visits between veteran residents and their loved ones are continuing with support from the Chelsea Soldiers' Home Social Work team and staff. Families can request updates on their loved ones by contacting the Home at [CSH@mass.gov](mailto:CSH@mass.gov) and through phone and video conversations. Medical information can only be shared with an authorized health care proxy.
- Governor Charlie Baker has advised flags be lowered to half-staff until the end of the public health emergency at the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea, Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, as well as the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Agawam and Winchendon due to the fact Military Honors are unavailable during this public health crisis.
- **The total numbers at the Chelsea Soldiers' Home as of Thursday May 21:**
  - 38 veteran resident deaths (30 tested positive, 8 tested negative)
  - 36 veteran residents who have tested positive
  - 178 veteran residents who have tested negative
  - 58 staff tested positive



## *Resources*

### **Homeless COVID-19 Isolation Sites**

The Commonwealth's COVID-19 Command Center and MEMA have stood up regional isolation and recovery sites located in hotels across the state ([click here for more information](#)). These locations are for individuals who:

- Are homeless (people who normally sleep at a shelter, on the street, for whom home is unsafe due to violence, or who do not have a permanent address) AND
- Who are COVID-19 positive OR have a medical provider's note recommending isolation and can safely isolate without medical supervision.

These sites are for individuals who have mild or moderate symptoms and do not need hospital level of care or nursing facility level of care. Medical treatment is not provided on site. As noted above, individuals must have a positive COVID-19 test or must have been seen by a medical provider and directed to isolate for them to be accepted. These locations cannot support individuals who need assistance with Activities of Daily Living or who need the level of care provided at a Skilled Nursing Facility.

For shelter providers located outside Boston, please call 617-367-5150 between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. The intake coordinator will determine eligibility, register an individual for the program, and have the guest placed and transported to the nearest Isolation and Recovery location that has availability.

For shelter providers located in Boston please call 617-534-5050 to access sites in Boston.

### **Disaster Recovery Information**

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.

### **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.

### **MA COVID-19 Test Site Locator**

MEMA, in coordination with the COVID-19 Command Center, has launched a [website](#) featuring an interactive map with information about COVID-19 test sites in Massachusetts, including contact information, address, hours

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of operation, website link, type of site, insurance coverage, and other important information. It also includes a downloadable full list of test sites.

All information is sourced from site operators and healthcare providers. Information continues to evolve quickly, so those looking to be tested are encouraged to contact sites prior to arrival. Many sites may also require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment.

## 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.

### Please share our Communications Resources

**NEW:** The DPH video “*How to Safely Cover Your Face Outside of Home*” is now available in Spanish, Portuguese, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Haitian Creole and Vietnamese. Please share! ([Find The Videos Here](#))



### 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:

- [How to Safely Cover Your Face Outside of Home](#)
- [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 \(:06\)](#)

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**Spanish Radio Spots (available on request):**

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

## *How to Help Out*

- [Donate](#) to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund.
- Volunteer opportunities for health professionals: [Please click here.](#)
- Get involved with the new Community Tracing Collaborative: [Please click here.](#)
- 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](#)).

### **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](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org/plasma4covid) to learn more, and if eligible, sign up to help.

We are also encouraging people who have not had COVID-19 to schedule and keep appointments to donate blood or platelets to ensure a stable blood supply during this pandemic. Donating blood products is essential to community health and the need for blood products is constant. As part of our nation's critical infrastructure, healthy individuals can still donate in areas that have issued shelter in place declarations. 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](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org)

## *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. We have implemented 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.

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- 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.