

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

Note: The Command Center Situation Report will be published on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday Schedule.

State Actions in Today's Report:

- Baker-Polito Administration Releases Holyoke Soldiers' Home Report
- Public Health Data: Dashboard Indicators & Weekly Report
- Administration Announces Crisis Counseling Assistance Program
- Grants to Support, Expand Local Public Health Announced
- Update on Mobile Testing Numbers
- Situation Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes



[Click here to read the report](#)

Helpful Links:

- [Reopening Massachusetts](#)
- [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 6/24*

107,611 Total Cases ([click here for more information](#))

7,938 Deaths (See dashboard below for key daily public health indicators)

790,223 patients tested for the virus to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States *Last Updated 6/24*

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:

2,336,615 Total Cases

121,117 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.

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State Actions

Today, Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, joined by Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders, held a media availability to address the report on the independent investigation into the COVID-19 outbreak at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. ([See video here](#)).

Today, the Administration released the [independent report](#) ordered by Governor Baker to investigate the COVID-19 outbreak at Holyoke Soldiers' Home. On April 1st, Governor Charlie Baker retained Attorney Mark Pearlstein, a former federal prosecutor, to investigate the causes of the tragic events that occurred at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. The investigation and report were completed independently from the Baker-Polito Administration.

"I called for an independent and thorough investigation into the tragic events that occurred at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home to get to the bottom of what happened and take immediate action," **said Governor Baker**. "This report lays out in heartbreaking detail the terrible failures that unfolded at the facility, and the tragic outcomes that followed. Our emergency response to the COVID-19 outbreak stabilized conditions for residents and staff, and we now have an accurate picture of what went wrong and will take immediate action to deliver the level of care that our veterans deserve."

Testing Update:

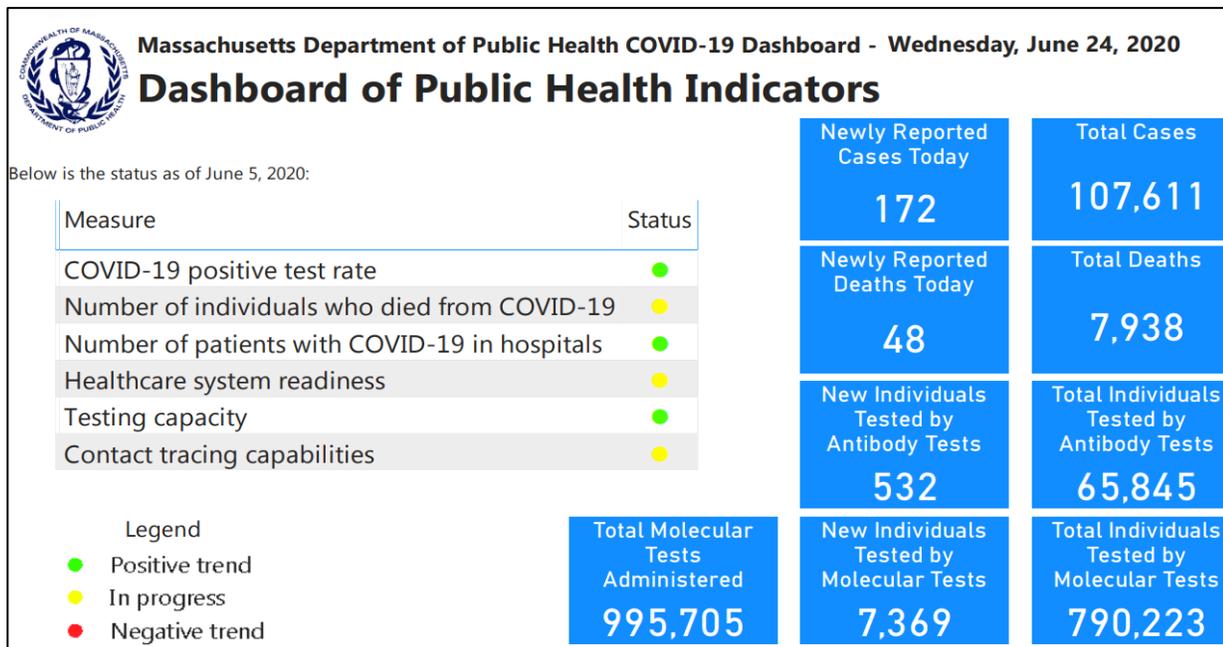
Yesterday (June 23rd) 7,532 new tests were reported in Massachusetts with 229 confirmed positive. Around 782,854 individuals have been tested to date. The 7-day weighted average positive viral test rate was **1.9%**.

Hospitalizations & Capacity Update:

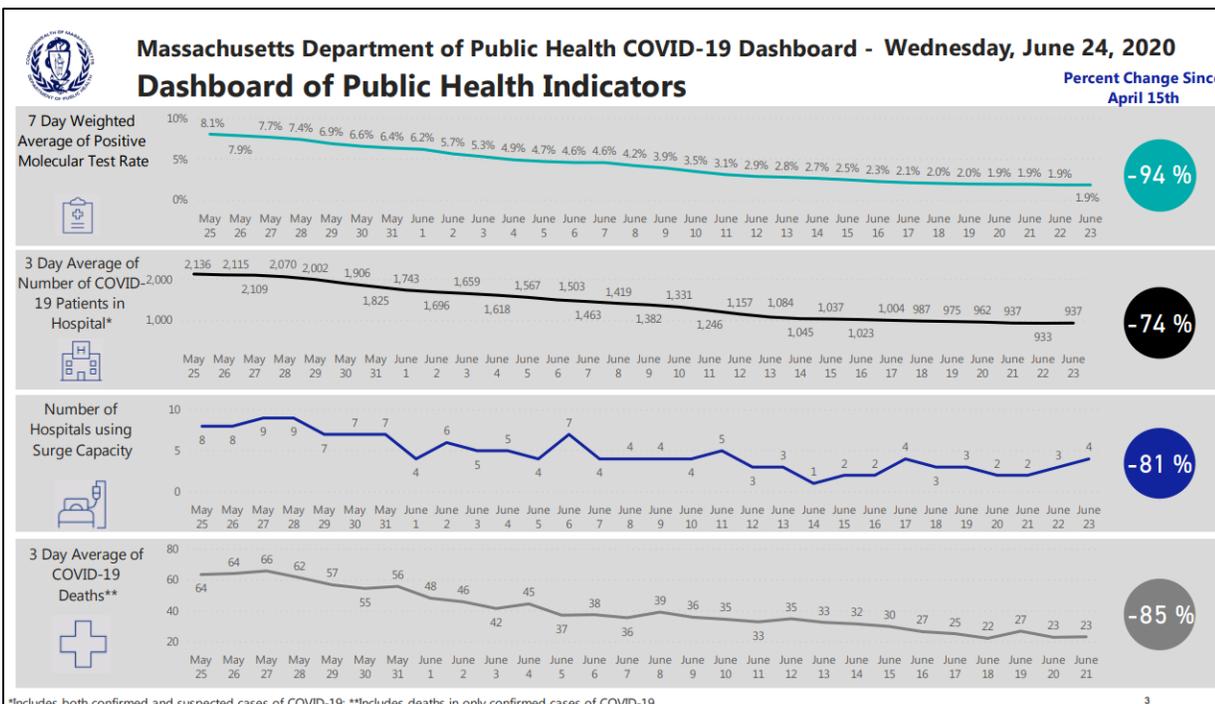
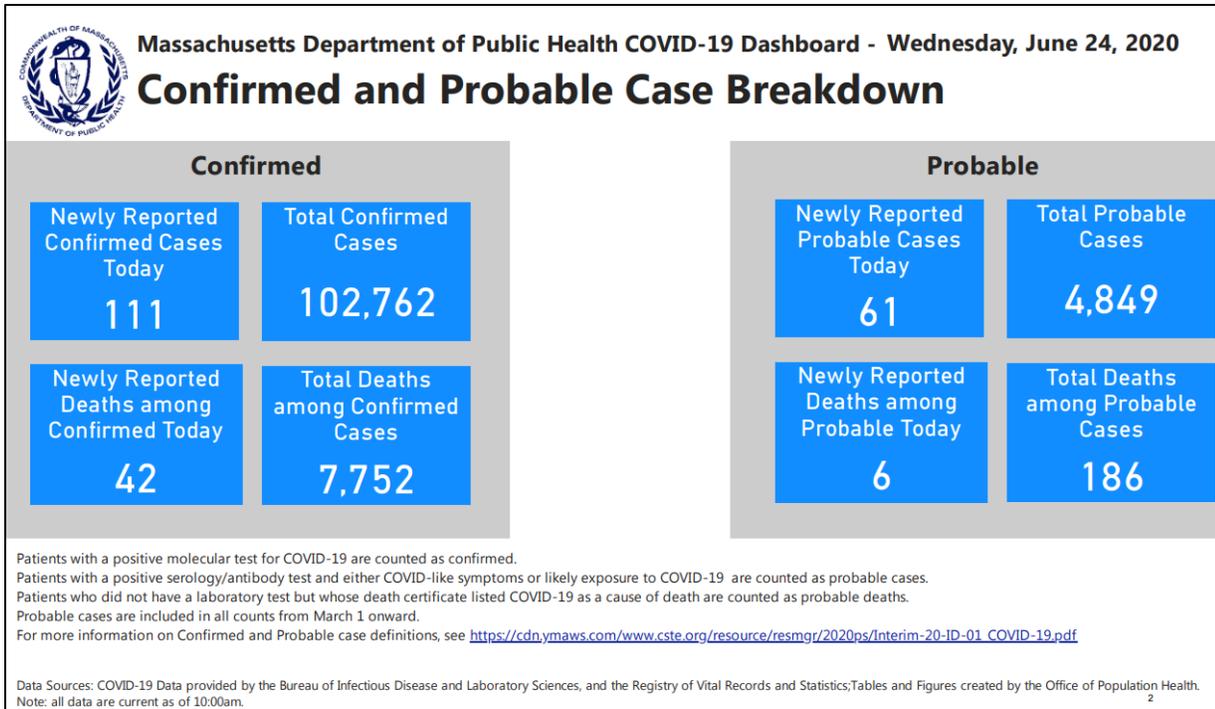
As of June 23rd, 953 people have been hospitalized, with 181 in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

COVID-19 Public Health Data

Key data reflected in the June 24th Daily Dashboard is provided below:



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New Weekly Public Health Data Posted

The Command Center released the comprehensive Weekly COVID-19 Public Health Report today, which is posted each Wednesday. The Weekly COVID-19 Public Health Report includes town-by-town case and testing information, data on recoveries, along with detailed case and death data related to long term care facilities. The report also includes information on nursing facility audits and more. You can find all the data reports, and raw data files, by visiting the [COVID-19 Response Reporting page](#).

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Important Updates

Administration Announces Crisis Counseling Assistance Program

As part of its efforts to support the behavioral health needs of Massachusetts residents during the COVID-19 pandemic, yesterday, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the availability of a new crisis counseling assistance program. The new program, MassSupport, is funded through a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) made available through the federal disaster declaration. Riverside Community Care is providing the crisis counseling under contract with the Department of Mental Health.

Riverside Trauma Center will deploy its trauma response and crisis intervention expertise in a statewide initiative to bring behavioral health resources, information, and referrals directly to individuals and communities. To reach MassSupport, anyone in the state can call 888-215-4920 to be connected with local support. Counseling is available in English and Spanish.

At the outset of the program, MassSupport will both support the Mass 2-1-1 call center and will deploy outreach counselors and clinicians to provide Psychological First Aid in the form of basic education and counseling around issues related to the pandemic, and assess high-risk individuals for mental health referrals. Future expansions include the provision of more crisis counseling for the lasting effects of the pandemic, community education on coping with ongoing stress and building emotional resilience, and assistance for people applying for services to relieve crisis-related burdens

To tailor assistance to the wide variety of needs representing diverse communities throughout Massachusetts, Riverside responders will gather input from local community and public health leaders, school personnel, and first responders; work with mental health providers to create networks and streamline referrals; and disseminate targeted information via outreach efforts and social media.

For additional information on the MassSupport program, please call 888-215-4920, or email masssupport@riversidecc.org. Visit the web site at www.masssupport.org.

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Grants to Support, Expand Local Public Health

The Baker-Polito Administration has announced an additional \$156,756 for a total of \$500,000 annually to strengthen local public health services under a Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) program launched in January 2020. Created in response to recommendations of the Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health, the State Action for Public Health Excellence (SAPHE) Grant Program awards funds to four additional groups representing twenty cities and towns to plan for or to expand the sharing of staff and resources in a more efficient and effective manner.

With this new award, the SAPHE Grant Program strengthens local health services to residents in over 75 cities and towns. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, local health departments and boards of health have made critical contributions to the Commonwealth's efforts and initiatives to keep people safe and save lives. Their tireless work—enforcement of orders, contact tracing, and public education to mitigate the spread of the disease and support for people with the disease—highlights the essential role of the local public health workforce in every city and town in promoting health and preventing disease.

“This public health grant program underscores our administration’s continuing commitment to being an effective partner with municipal governments, especially as they continue to confront ongoing public health challenges,” **said Governor Charlie Baker.** “By committing these resources for local health departments and

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boards of health, we are supporting communities' efforts to promote public health during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond."

"Supporting the Commonwealth's cities and towns has been a hallmark of our Administration, and the awarding of these SAPHE grants will help us support important public health priorities in our municipalities" **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito**. "We are proud to announce further support for Massachusetts communities through this public health initiative that will contribute to the ability of local health departments and boards of health to provide stronger and more effective public health protections through shared services."

The grants support local officials to develop plans to share public health staff and services such as public health nursing, animal control, vector-borne disease management, and housing and restaurant inspections. These four groups join six programs funded earlier this year.

"Our boards of health are the backbone of local public health across the Commonwealth," **said Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders**. "They have been at the front lines of the COVID-19 response. These funds allow these twenty communities to further build their capacity by forging new collaboration and municipal coordination."

The four planning grants include:

- North Suffolk Public Health Collaborative: Revere (lead municipality) with Chelsea and Winthrop
- Norfolk County – 8 Local Public Health Coalition: Norwood (lead municipality) with Canton, Dedham, Milton, Needham, Wellesley, Walpole, Westwood
- Martha's Vineyard Public Health Environmental District: Oak Bluffs, Chilmark, Tisbury, West Tisbury, Aquinnah and Edgartown
- Mansfield, Foxborough, and Norton

The shared services programs begin in July 2020.

"This is an important next step in advancing the recommendations of the Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health," **said Public Health Commissioner Monica Bharel, MD, MPH**. "With these state resources, we will strengthen the scope and quality of local public health services and help cities and towns take advantage of the benefits of working together to protect the public and prevent injury and disease."

These four programs join six others who were previously awarded:

- Framingham Health Department for shared public health nursing services with Ashland, Hudson, and Holliston (in partnership with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council).
- Peabody Department of Health and Human Services and nine other municipalities for the North Shore Mother Home Visiting Program (in partnership with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council).
- East Longmeadow-Longmeadow Health Departments for shared public health services.
- Newburyport Health Department with Amesbury, Salisbury, Newbury, and West Newbury for regional animal control services
- Cooperative Public Health Service (Franklin Regional Council of Governments) to address distressed and abandoned housing in 14 Franklin County towns and to provide training for members of local boards of health.
- Berkshire Public Health Alliance (Berkshire Regional Planning Council) to develop a more efficient system of online permitting and inspection scheduling among the 24 Berkshire County municipalities.

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To learn more about the Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health and the work of Massachusetts Department of Public Health with local boards of health, visit the MDPH Office of Local and Regional Health web site at www.mass.gov/dph/olrh.

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

Note: The hours of operation for the Nursing Home/Long Term Care Family Resource Line have changed. **The Family Resource Line is now available Monday-Friday, from 9 am to 5 pm.**

Onsite Testing

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 6/24)	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	23,297
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	369
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	5,007

Mobile Testing at EOHHS Group Homes & Care Sites (as of 6/24 by Fallon Ambulance Service)

DDS, DMH, DCF and DPH Facilities	
Clients	11,314
Staff	17,444
Total Tests	28,758
Number of Locations	1,970



**NURSING HOME
FAMILY RESOURCE LINE
617-660-5399**



CALL US MONDAY THRU FRIDAY FROM 9AM-5PM

Holyoke Soldiers' Home Update

- Today, the Baker-Polito Administration released the independent [report](#) ordered by Governor Baker to investigate the COVID-19 outbreak at Holyoke Soldiers' Home.
- The Administration announced that tomorrow it will outline reforms for the Home 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.
- All veteran residents of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke who had previously tested positive have been determined clinically recovered, following full-house retesting. Residents are actively continuing their recovery, and the health status of veterans has seen marked improvement.
- The Home is continuing recreational activities for Veterans, respecting social distancing, and veterans continue to go outside with nursing and recreation staff.
- The Home resumed outdoor visitation last week and is offering visits Tuesday through Saturday with 20 slots each day for veterans to visit with their loved ones. Families and loved ones are able to schedule visits with veterans in advance using the Family Line.

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- The Soldiers' Home is following [visitation guidance](#), and is using outdoor visitation protocols that prioritize the health and safety of our Veterans and staff with continued focus on infection control. This plan will be 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 in addition to continued video visits for regular family communication through video chat, 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](tel: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. 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 current status as of June 24 is as follows:**
 - The current status of all residents:
 - 0 veterans are positive across the Home and those at Holyoke Medical Center
 - 64 veterans tested negative (meaning that they have always tested negative)
 - 83 veterans have recovered, meaning they previously tested positive and are now clinically recovered
 - 1 veteran resident has a pending test
 - 1 veteran has refused testing
 - Resident locations:
 - 119 veterans are onsite
 - 30 veterans are offsite
 - 26 veterans are at a dedicated skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center
 - 4 veterans are receiving acute care offsite
 - Since March 1, there have been 97 veteran deaths (76 deaths of veterans who tested positive, 18 veterans who tested negative, 1 veteran whose status was unknown, 2 veterans were clinically recovered)
 - Employees at the Home have been retested and all are clinically recovered.

Chelsea Soldiers' Home Update

- The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea is averaging 7 outdoors visits each day from families and loved ones after resuming outdoor visitation last week. 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.

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- Outdoor visitation will occur 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 began reporting the recovery of residents based on clinical determinations following the retesting of all veterans, and 29 residents who had previously tested positive have been determined clinically recovered.
- The Incident Command team at the Chelsea Soldiers' Home continues to monitor and 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 June 24 is as follows:**
- Residents
 - 7 veteran residents are positive
 - 177 veteran residents have tested negative
 - 29 residents have recovered, meaning they previously tested positive and are now clinically recovered
 - 42 veteran resident deaths (31 tested positive, 11 tested negative)
- Employees:
 - Employees have been retested, and there 36 employees are positive

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.

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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.

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](#)

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- What to do [if you are sick](#)
- 10 tips for at-home [quarantine or self-monitoring](#)

Short videos:

[Overview of COVID-19 Testing](#)

- [Spanish](#)
- [Portuguese](#)

[Importance of COVID-19 Testing](#)

- [Spanish](#)
- [Portuguese](#)

[How to Safely Cover Your Face Outside of Home](#)

- [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
- 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

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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. 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