

Tuesday, July 28, 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 7/30, and then on Thursday, 8/6 in accordance with the new schedule.

State Actions in Today's Report:

- New Travel Order Effective August 1st
- Expansion of Targeted Free COVID-19 Testing Sites
- Public Health Data: Daily Dashboard
- Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery Updates
- Update on Mobile Testing Numbers
- Situation Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes



Helpful Links:

- [Mass.gov/findfoodhelp](https://www.mass.gov/findfoodhelp)
- [Stop the Spread](#)
- [Reopening Massachusetts](#)
- [Mass.Gov/covid19](https://www.mass.gov/covid19)
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [Unemployment & COVID-19](#)
- [Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal](#)
- [FrontlineMA.org](https://www.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 7/28**

108,740 Total Confirmed Cases ([click here for more information](#))

8,331 Deaths among confirmed cases

1,133,674 individuals tested for the virus to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States **Last Updated 7/28**

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:

4,280,135 Total Cases

147,672 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

New Travel Order Effective August 1st ([Read Press Release Here](#))

Governor Charlie Baker announced that effective August 1st, all travelers entering the Commonwealth, including both out of state residents and Massachusetts residents returning home, will be required to comply with a new travel order. The travel order and other information is available at www.mass.gov/MATraveler.



Travel Order: Starting August 1, all visitors and Massachusetts residents returning home, including students returning to campuses for the fall semester, must fill out a “Massachusetts Travel Form” and quarantine for 14 days unless they are coming from a COVID-19 lower risk state or they can produce a negative COVID-19 test result administered no more than 72 hours prior to arriving in Massachusetts, or they are included in one of the other, limited exemptions.

Individuals who get a test must remain in quarantine until they receive their negative test results. Failure to comply may result in a \$500 fine per day.

Travelers are exempt from this requirement if they are coming [from a state that has been designated](#) by the Department of Public Health as a lower risk COVID-19 state or fall into another narrow exemption category.

Based on current public health data, those lower risk states will include: New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Maine, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire and Hawaii.

Traveler exemptions include people passing through the state, people commuting across state lines for work, people traveling to Massachusetts for medical treatment, people complying with military orders, or people traveling to work in federally designated critical infrastructure sectors (essential services).

Prior to travel, people should visit www.mass.gov/MATraveler to fill out the “Massachusetts Travel Form” or text “MATraveler” to 888-777.

The list of lower risk states is subject to change based on public health data, and states may be added or taken off the list at any time.

Read the Order [here](#).

The Administration also announced updates to the Commonwealth’s COVID-19 Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplaces to incorporate the requirements of the travel order. This included sector-specific updates for lodging, higher education, office spaces and other industry sectors.

Updated guidance: The Administration today updated guidance for lodging, offices, manufacturing, construction, labs, performance venues and indoor and outdoor events relative to the travel order. In addition, lodging operators are required to notify guests about this new travel order.

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Employers are strongly discouraged from allowing business-related travel to destinations other than those appearing on the list of COVID-19 lower risk states. Employers that permit employer-paid or -reimbursed travel to those states should take measures to ensure employees comply with this order. Employers are also urged to strongly discourage their employees from taking leisure travel to destinations not included on the list of COVID-19 lower-risk states.

To read the updated guidance, click [here](#).

All travelers and residents are required to continue to follow the Administration's order that requires face coverings, and practice good hygiene, social distancing and regular hand washing. People should not travel to Massachusetts if they have symptoms of COVID-19. Travelers will be informed of this order and new travel guidance by airlines, passenger rail corporations, bus companies and some major travel agents when booking trips and before arrival in Massachusetts.

For more information, please visit mass.gov/MATraveler or text "MATraveler" to 888-777.

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Expansion of Targeted Free COVID-19 Testing Sites

Yesterday, the Baker-Polito Administration announced an expansion of its "Stop the Spread" initiative, which provides free COVID-19 testing in targeted communities across the Commonwealth.

This expansion includes new testing sites in Agawam, Brockton, Methuen, Randolph, Revere, Springfield, Taunton and Worcester. The Administration previously launched free testing sites in Chelsea, Everett, Fall River, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Marlborough and New Bedford, bringing the total number of communities served, with yesterday's expansion, to 16.

The Stop the Spread initiative is a data-driven focused effort to reduce the prevalence of COVID-19 in communities that are above the state average in total cases, positive test rate, and have experienced a decline in testing levels since April. All residents of these 16 communities, including asymptomatic individuals, are urged to use these sites to get tested. While these sites are being launched in these communities, they are open to all residents of the Commonwealth.



The population of the new cities in which the free testing will be conducted – **Agawam, Brockton, Methuen, Randolph, Revere, Springfield, Taunton and Worcester** – make up approximately 10% of the Commonwealth's population. However, these communities have seen 15% of the Commonwealth's positive tests in the last two weeks. The statewide positive test rate over the past two weeks is approximately 1.7%, but in these 8 communities, the positivity rate is nearly 50% higher, at 2.3%.

Despite the continued elevated spread in these communities, total testing in these communities has declined over 20% since the end of April, while the statewide average has been flat over that time period. The total cases as a percentage of population for these communities is nearly double the state average.

Since launching Stop the Spread on July 10, 19,083 residents have been tested at these free testing sites. So far, the COVID-19 Command Center has received results back for 17,189 individuals, with a positivity rate just under 1.8%. The Command Center expects these numbers to change as additional testing results continue to come in.

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The Administration’s first expansion of testing in 8 communities – Chelsea, Everett, Fall River, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Marlborough and New Bedford – has successfully increased testing in those communities.

In the first week, testing in those 8 communities was up 48% over the week before those sites went live, and statewide, testing was up 24%.

Residents of the 16 communities can visit mass.gov/stophespread to find testing locations, which will be available through August 14.

Residents are reminded that if they test positive for COVID-19, please answer the call when they are contacted by the Community Tracing Collaborative or their local board of health. Also, any individual who needs a safe place to isolate can call (617) 367-5150 to access an isolation and recovery site at no cost.

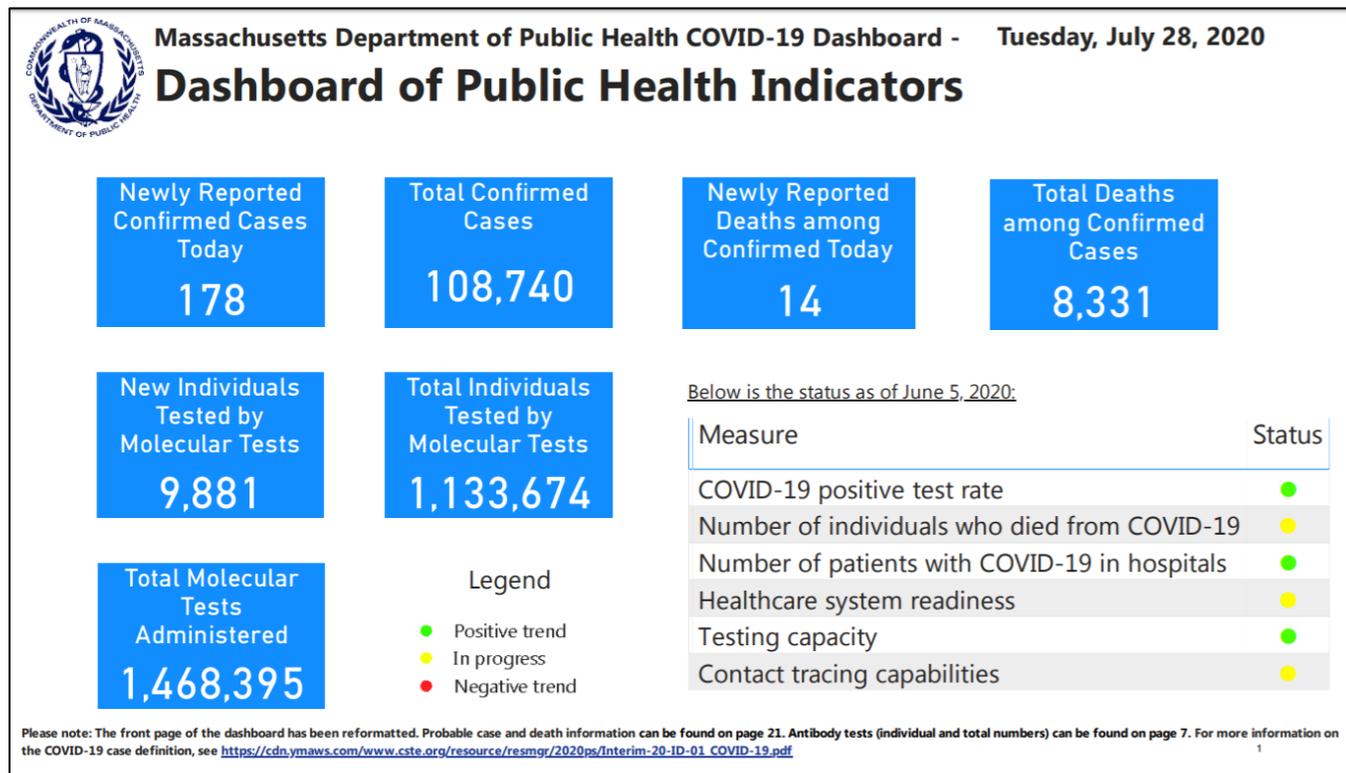
COVID-19 Public Health Update

Testing Update:

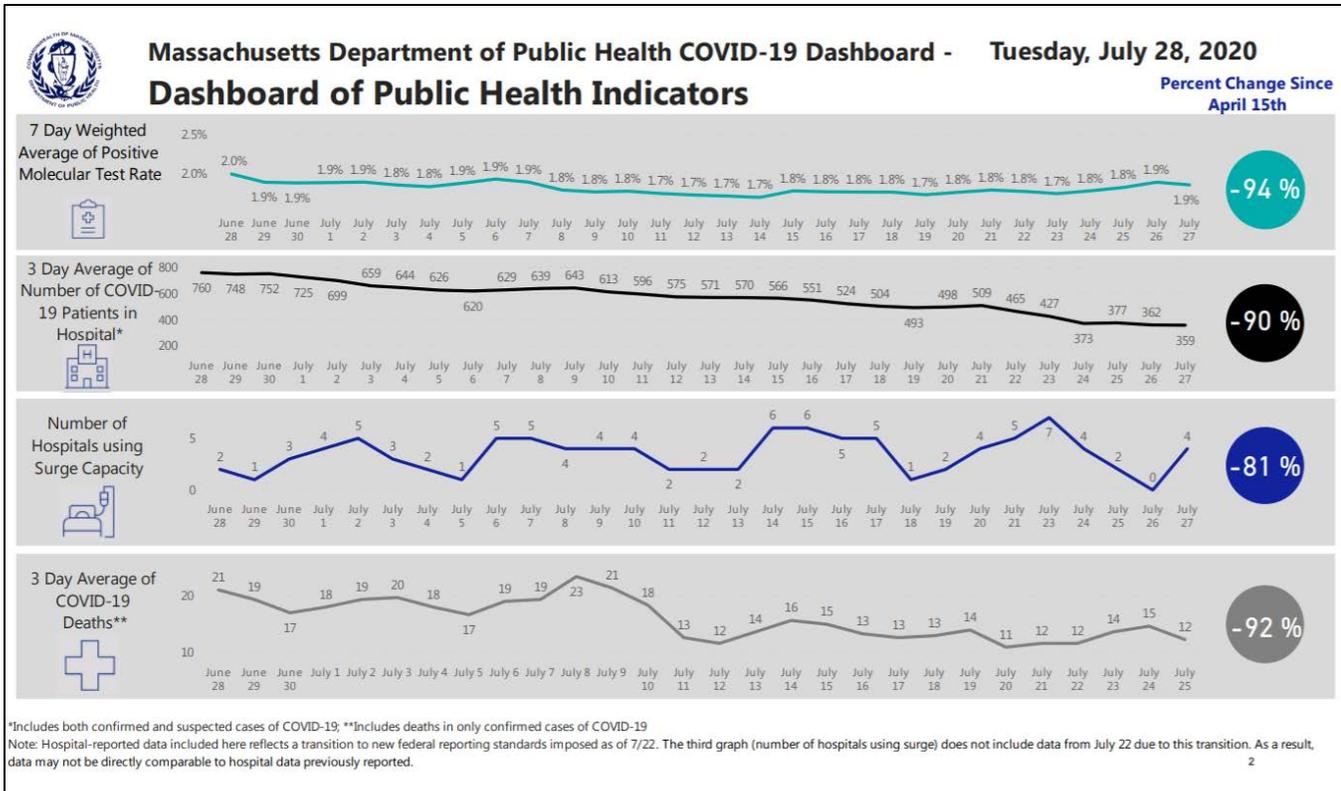
Today, more than **9,881** new individuals tested by molecular (viral) tests were reported in Massachusetts with **178** newly reported confirmed positive cases. Yesterday, more than **10,200** new individuals tested were reported to DPH. The total molecular tests administered to date is more than **1,468,395**.

Hospitalizations & Capacity Update:

As of today, **364** people are hospitalized, with **54** reported to be in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Key indicators from today’s Daily Dashboard are below.



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Important Updates

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 22 residents are housed in these hotels (change of +6 since last Thursday)
 - These hotels will continue to operate into August to support the “Stop the Spread” testing initiative.
- A total of 127,495 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 48 orders over the last two days.
- The largest 26 cities and towns have all received PPE allotments (based on per capita formulas) over the last two weeks. Additionally, Points of Distribution (POD’s) have been supplied to support PPE allocation to all cities and towns in the Commonwealth. Western MA PODs are underway, and central and eastern MA PODs are being supplied now.

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- DPH has made 28 deliveries of PPE and/or testing supplies to health care entities between Friday 7/24 and Tuesday 7/28.

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:

- MA Non-Congregate Medical Sheltering Program extended by FEMA to August 31, 2020.
- MA Emergency Feeding Program extended by FEMA to August 24, 2020.
- Federal HHS Public Health Emergency extended (presumably 90-day extension).
- Total FEMA RPA Applicants: 538 (+4)
- Total # Obligated Projects: 16 / \$ \$7,348,601.94 (+2 / +\$297,459.56)
- Total # of Payments Disbursed: 2 / \$444,131.50 (+1 / \$392,563.22)
- Online Applicant Technical Assistant Requests: 413 (+1)
- Continuing to provide technical assistance to project applicants.

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 7/28)	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	24,099
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	373
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	5,447

Mobile Testing at EOHHS Group Homes & Care Sites (as of 7/24 by Fallon Ambulance Service)

DDS, DMH, DCF and DPH Facilities	
Clients	12,835
Staff	18,156
Total Tests	30,991
Number of Locations	2,074



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

CALL US MONDAY THRU FRIDAY FROM 9AM-5PM 

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Holyoke Soldiers' Home Update:

- On Monday, a veteran resident of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke who was clinically recovered from COVID-19 (following CDC guidance) again experienced COVID-like symptoms, and was proactively transferred to a hospital for treatment and tested positive. 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

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- 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:

- 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

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- 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**

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- 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:

Overview of COVID-19 Testing	Importance of COVID-19 Testing	How to Safely Cover Your Face Outside of Home
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Spanish • Portuguese • Simplified Chinese • Traditional Chinese • Vietnamese • Haitian Creole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Spanish • Portuguese • Simplified Chinese • Traditional Chinese • Vietnamese • Haitian Creole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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):

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- 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.](#)
- 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](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org/plasma4covid) to learn more. 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