

Thursday, April 23, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

State Actions in Today's Report:

- Daily Case Update (link in sidebar)
- Administration, Hospital CEOs: Don't Put Off Urgent Care.
- Public Service Announcement
- Message From The Office of the Child Advocate
- Update on Food Security Task Force
- Update on Mobile Testing Numbers
- Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes

New PSA Reminds Residents: Hospitals Open for Serious Non-Coronavirus Care (See Below)



Helpful Links:

- [Get Involved: Community Contact Tracing Collaborative](#)
- [Jobs Available to Assist Long Term Care Facilities](#)
- [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 4/23**

46,023 Total Cases ([click here for more information](#))

2,360 Deaths

195,076 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States **current as of 4/23**

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:

828,441 Total Cases

46,379 Deaths

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

Social Distancing Basics:

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

If you go out:

- ✓ Avoid crowds
- ✓ Stay 6 feet away from others
- ✓ Don't shake hands or hug

State Actions Today

Today, Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito joined Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders, Tufts Medical Center CEO Michael Apkon, MD, Newton Wellesley Hospital Interim President & Mass General Brigham Chief Clinical Officer Gregg Meyer, MD, and Baystate Medical Center President Nancy Shendell-Falik to provide an update on the Commonwealth's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. ([See video of today's briefing](#))



Governor Baker provided an update on the increase in testing, cases and deaths in the state and also spoke about the heavy burden faced by the Commonwealth's residents during the pandemic. "We must remember the people behind these numbers. They are our neighbors and friends. And, these people have families and loved ones whose world have by shattered by this ruthless virus," Governor Baker said. He said now was a good time to remember that the sacrifices and disruptions that we are all living and working through is to protect our parents, grandparents, siblings, children, neighbors and friends.

The Governor also provide an update on the Commonwealth's ongoing efforts to secure and distribute PPE and equipment for frontline responders. As of yesterday, the Command Center through its response agency partners have delivered:

- Almost 5.5 million pieces of PPE
- Received and validated approximately 200,000 testing swabs that will support the Mobile Testing Program and also health care providers in underserved areas across the state to expand their daily testing capacity

Governor Baker also reported that nearly 4,000 people with COVID-19 were hospitalized statewide, representing 9% of total number of known cases in Massachusetts. Of the 18,000 available hospital beds statewide, ranging from ICU beds to field hospital beds, 56% are empty and available for patients.

It is because of the intensive surge capacity efforts of the Commonwealth, and many health care partners, that hospitals throughout the state are able to continue meeting the urgent care needs of residents. Each speaker today echoed the same message, if you are in need of urgent, non-coronavirus care, emergency rooms and hospitals are ready to provide you care.

Public Service Announcement

Recently, six Boston teaching hospitals (Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston Children's Hospital, Boston Medical Center, Brigham Health, Massachusetts General Hospital, and Tufts Medical Center) collaborated to develop a televised public service announcement urging residents not to delay seeking needed medical care due to COVID-19. This PSA will air on all Boston television stations starting today.

([Watch the PSA here](#))

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Message to Members of the Legislature from the Office of The Child Advocate

As our state grapples with the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on all of our child- and family-serving state and local systems, I want to make sure you are aware that the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) is here as a resource for you and your constituents who may be having difficulty navigating complex state services. We know that state agencies are working very hard in response to the Covid-19 crisis, and that the challenges we are collectively experiencing are unprecedented. We also know that gaps exist and that there are opportunities for improvement.

If you or your staff are working with family that is having difficulty with a state service for children (e.g. foster care, residential treatment, special education services) that you have been unable to resolve through the normal state agency administrative resolution, please contact our staff at the OCA.

You can reach the OCA Complaint Line in the following ways:

- Email: childadvocate@mass.gov
- Phone: 617-979-8360

Update: Food Security Task Force

The Baker-Polito Administration, through the COVID-19 Command Center has launched a Food Security Task Force which is comprised of representatives from state agencies, the Legislature, non-governmental organizations, local partners (such as Greater Boston Food Bank), and faith-based organizations. The Task Force will work to coordinate resources and communication across sectors, stakeholder group, and government at all levels to ensure food insecurity and issue related to the food supply chain are addressed.

The goals of the panel are to:

- Identify immediate needs to be addressed across the state
- Maximize nutrition program access, enrollment and participation
- Create and implement plans that address all regions of the state and their unique challenges in the food supply chain, short and long term
- Explore creative partnerships to maximize resource available in the Commonwealth

The Task Force has established the following three focused workgroups to optimize their efforts:

Workgroup	Initial Workgroup Focus
Workgroup 1	Identify immediate needs
Workgroup 2	Maximize access, enrollment and participation in food assistance programs
Workgroup 3	Access to food and resiliency of food supply chain

The Task Force will present their recommendations to the Governor by the end of this month.

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

Onsite Testing

Date	Number of Tests Completed	Facilities Visited
4/22	1672	17
Total (as of 4/22)	11,796	341

Mobile Testing at EOHHS Group Homes & Care Sites (as of 4/23)

DDS, DMH, DCF and DPH Facilities	
Clients	3219
Staff	3710
Total Tests	6,929
Number of Locations	407

Cases in Long term Care Facilities (as of 4/23)

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	8,435
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	283
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	1,316

Other Important Updates

Holyoke Soldiers' Home

- Employee use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is being monitored, enforced, and supplemented, and yesterday 250 face shields were donated by Hasbro and Cartamundi.
- In addition to increased environmental cleaning, two Ionizing Machines, brought in by the National Guard, were set up yesterday to purify the air.
- To support the emotional well-being of staff, National Guard Chaplains are offering a short service to allow staff to reflect, decompress, and pray in a peaceful setting.
- The Clinical Command continues to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak while bringing on additional management staff for nursing, facilities, operations and administration to complement the existing staff.
 - This week, consulting support is being provided by Baystate Medical Practice Management to assist in administrative procedures, and additional social work staff is onboard to support staff.
- 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.

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- The Holyoke Soldiers' Home continues regular communication with veteran residents' health care proxies, and is scheduling regular updates for families, which is made possible through the additional clinical case management nursing staff that was brought on board.
 - On Monday, the Military Friends Foundation delivered a donation of 20 iPads for veterans to use to communicate with their families and for personal entertainment during quarantine.
 - Families can call the Family Hotline at 413-552-4764 Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., and Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 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 total numbers at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home as of Thursday:**
 - 68 veteran resident deaths (57 positive, 9 negatives, 1 pending, 1 unknown)
 - Today's update includes 2 deaths, both tested positive and had DNR, DNH
 - 90 veteran residents have tested positive
 - 60 veteran residents have tested negative
 - 8 veteran residents have pending tests
 - 81 employees have tested positive

Chelsea Soldiers' Home

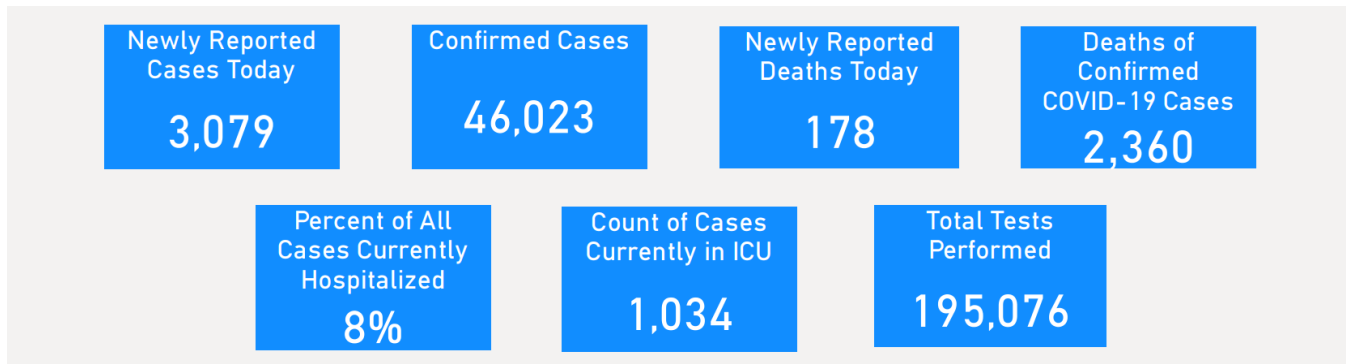
- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home is coordinating to make additional dedicated spaces for Veterans who were proactively sent out to VA facilities after testing positive for COVID-19, and are being medically cleared to return to the Soldiers' Home.
- As retesting is being conducted and some veteran residents are testing positive, they are being appropriately cohorted, and many are being transferred to other facilities for higher acuity care.
- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home clinical command continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including regular coordinating calls with the VA Health Care System, continuously reviewing and implementing infection control policy, and daily monitoring of personal protective equipment (PPE) supply and procuring additional PPE from regular supply chain and from emergency DPH sources.
- Staffing levels are being closely monitored by the Chelsea clinical command, and identified gaps driven by positive employees in self-quarantine per CDC guidelines are being filled by contractors from staffing agencies as needed. So far 47 slots have been filled through staffing agency contracted roles.
- 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.
- Veteran residents are communicating with their families and loved ones via video with support from the Chelsea Soldiers' Home Social Work team.
 - Families can request updates on their loved ones by contacting the Home at CSH@mass.gov and through phone and video conversations. Please note the Soldiers' Home can only share medical information about a resident with the authorized health care proxy on file.
- **The total numbers at the Chelsea Soldiers' Home as of Thursday:**
 - 19 veteran resident deaths (14 tested positive, 5 tested negative)

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- Today's update includes 3 deaths: 2 positive who were on comfort measures only at the hospital, 1 negative who was on comfort measures only
- 30 veteran residents who have tested positive
- 203 veteran residents who have tested negative
- 52 staff tested positive

Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard

An enhanced, comprehensive and detailed COVID-19 data report, which includes trend data in a variety of areas (e.g. information on cases rates, testing, geography of confirmed cases etc.), death related data and specific data on COVID-19 hospital census information, nursing homes, skilled nursing facilities, rest homes (with known clusters), and PPE distribution is updated daily by 4PM. **City and town case data are published weekly each Wednesday.** ([click here to access the report](#)) Key data reflected in today's report is provided below:



Resources

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 [website](#) with information and guidance regarding the 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,

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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.

Buoy Health's free Online Symptom Checker

Individuals can use Buoy Health's free online symptom checker to connect with telemedicine options. This tool is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency that requires immediate attention please call 911 or the number for your local emergency service. Buoy is available at www.buoy.com/mass and is available in both English and Spanish.

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

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:

[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](#)).

Give Blood:

The COVID-19 virus has caused the cancellation of blood drives across the Commonwealth. There is an urgent need ***now***. The Governor has deemed “Blood and plasma donors and the employees of the organizations that operate and manage related activities” as an essential service. Your support is needed to communicate to your residents that the need is urgent, and donating is a necessity to supply the hospitals with the blood our neighbors require. Donating blood is safe and people should not hesitate to give. In addition, there is a need for community blood drive sites in the eastern part of the state. Identifying donation sites is vital to meet the demand as we go forward. Your local knowledge, suggestions of sites, and potential partners are crucial to meeting the needs of our neighbors who need blood and blood products. To schedule a new blood drive contact Bill Forsyth at (617) 699-3808 or at email William.Forsyth@redcross.org.

Those who are healthy, feeling well and eligible to give blood or platelets, are urged to make an appointment to donate as soon as possible by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

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.
- 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.