

Friday, May 15, 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 Provides Daily Update
- Large Employers to Continue Work From Home to Support Reopening
- COVID Test Site Locator Launched
- New Campaign to Help Residents Cope with Social Isolation
- Update on Mobile Testing Numbers
- Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes



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 5/15

83,421 Total Cases ([click here for more information](#))

5,592 Deaths

435,679 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States Last Updated 5/15

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:

1,412,121 Total Cases

85,990 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 and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito joined Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders to provide an update on the COVID-19 response. ([See video here](#)).

The Governor provided his daily update on testing, hospitalizations, and PPE distribution. Secretary Sudders spoke on launching the new virtual test location map where residents can find COVID-19 testing sites near them.

Daily Update on Testing, Hospitalizations, and PPE Distribution

Testing:

- Yesterday (May 14th) approximately 14,300 new tests were reported in Massachusetts. Over 4240,000 total tests have been completed to date.
 - 12% of yesterday's tests were positive. Positive test rates have been around 10% for the past week.

Hospitalizations and Capacity:

- As of May 14th, the number of hospitalizations continues to trend downward.
- Approximately 2,800 individuals are reported hospitalized.

Personal Protective Equipment:

- To date, the Commonwealth has delivered over 10.6 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.

Large MA Employers to Continue Work From Home Policies to Support Safe Reopening

Today, the Baker-Polito Administration released a partial list of employers who are committing to continuing work from home policies for the foreseeable future as a way to provide more flexibility for their employees and greater capacity for social distancing on the state's public transportation system. Partnering with leading employers to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Administration is planning a phased reopening process that balances public health precautions with reopening the economy during the pandemic. The companies cited, including some of the largest employers in Massachusetts and totaling 150,000 employees, will have significant portions of their workforce working remotely for the rest of the spring and, in numerous cases, beyond. [Read the news release with list of employers.](#)



Massachusetts COVID-19 Test Site Locator Launched

The Baker-Polito Administration today launched a new public resource for locating COVID-19 testing sites throughout the Commonwealth, continuing [its push to expand capacity](#) and access to COVID-19 testing for residents of Massachusetts.

Residents can visit www.Mass.Gov/covidtestmap and search for testing sites by zip code or city/town. The interactive map quickly provides information about testing location hours, testing protocols, insurance coverage,

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and users can also download directions to the testing site. Because the information on the map is updated regularly, residents are strongly encouraged to contact the testing site for details **before** traveling for a test. Many sites may also require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment.

MEMA, in coordination with the COVID-19 Command Center, created the mapping tool. All information is sourced from testing site operators and healthcare providers. Information continues to evolve quickly, so those looking to be tested are encouraged to contact sites prior to arrival.

Earlier this week the Administration [outlined its plan](#) to expand COVID-19 testing in Massachusetts. That plan will be submitted to the federal government later this month.

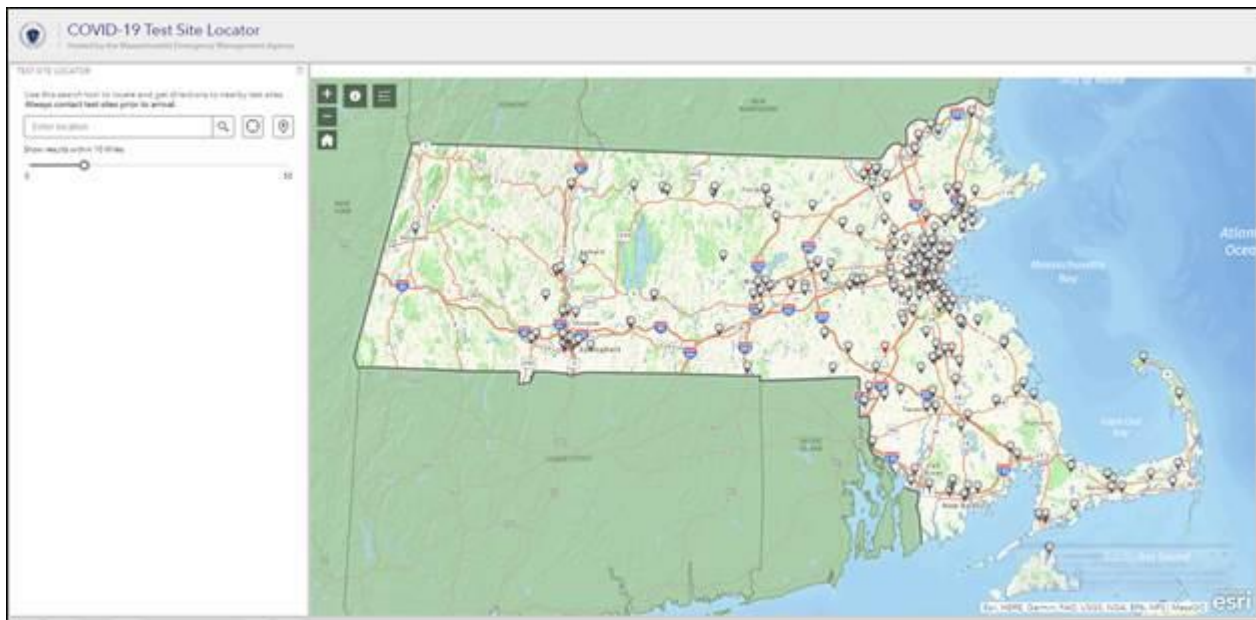


Figure 1: Test Site Locator Map

Coping During COVID: New Awareness Campaign Launched to Address Social Isolation During Pandemic

Senate President Karen Spilka and Massachusetts Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders today announced the launch of an awareness effort to help people cope with social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic and May's Mental Health Awareness month.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, nearly 1 in 2 Americans say they are now dealing with anxiety and depression, double the normal rate from a year ago, according to Kantar's National Health & Wellness study. Massachusetts' new awareness campaign centers around "What If?," a new video promoting the power of reaching out and connecting with those who might be struggling to cope, and includes practical tips and resources on the enhanced mass.gov/covid19 site.



"May is National Mental Health Awareness Month, and it is particularly important this year to address one of the common,

[Click here to watch the "What If" video.](#)

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but less talked about, challenges brought on by the pandemic – the feeling of being alone during uncertain times,” said Senate President Karen Spilka. “One of the most fundamental things *anyone* can do to help those struggling to cope is simple: reach out to your friends or loved ones to see how they are doing. This campaign also seeks to connect those who may need additional resources to the supports we have available as a state. I’m proud to partner with Secretary Sudders and her team on this timely and necessary effort.”

“We know that COVID-19 is impacting people’s mental health in very different, but very profound ways,” said Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders. “Social distancing and staying at home, while necessary and effective during this public health crisis, can create challenges for everyone, and especially for those with behavioral health conditions. In partnership with Senate President Spilka, the effort launched today will raise awareness that there are many ways to cope.” ([Learn More About The Campaign](#))

Deadline Approaching for Nursing Facility Testing Requirement

On April 27, [the Administration announced](#) a comprehensive nursing home accountability and support policy which includes up to \$130 million in new funding to support long care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. To access this support package, nursing facilities are **required to conduct baseline testing of staff and residents**. Testing **must be completed by May 25** in order for facilities to be eligible for the enhanced funding. To date, only 10% of nursing facilities have met this requirement.

More information related to the required testing policy can be found [here](#) and an FAQ can be found [here](#). As a reminder, facilities have several options for testing which can be found in the FAQ.

Nursing facilities wishing to pursue testing through state-directed methods (COVID Command Center Congregate Care Mobile Testing Program call center), must:

- Call the call center at 617-366-2350 to **request testing no later than Monday, May 18th, at 4 PM**
- Confirm with the call center that your facility is ready with paperwork to be scheduled no later than Wednesday, May 20th, at 4 PM. The call center will work with you to ensure the requisition requirements are met

Nursing facilities that have not called to request testing by Monday, May 18th, at 4 PM, will not be able to make use of the COVID Command Center Congregate Care Mobile Testing Program and will have to use an alternate testing channel to meet requirements before May 25th.

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

Onsite Testing

Date	Number of Tests Completed	Facilities Visited
5/15	1,421	15
Total (as of 5/15)	43,498	699

**Mobile Testing at EOHHS Group Homes & Care Sites
(as of 5/15 by Fallon Ambulance Service)**

DDS, DMH, DCF and DPH Facilities	
Clients	9,528
Staff	14,368
Total Tests	23,896
Number of Locations	1,509

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities (as of 5/15)	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	17,744
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	342
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	3,414



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

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



Other Important Updates

Holyoke Soldiers' Home Update

- Today, an army veteran residing at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home is celebrating his 100th birthday, and his family will be holding a socially distant parade of cars outside, created with coordination from the Home's social work staff.
- 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 veterans that are at a dedicated skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center have all been retested and results are being returned.
- 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.
- Additional social and recreational activities are also being added back in while maintaining social distance and proper usage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- 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.
- 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](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.
- 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.

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- **The total numbers at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home as of Friday May 15:**
 - 88 veteran resident deaths (74 positive, 13 negatives, 1 unknown)
 - Testing results of all residents:
 - 74 veteran residents have tested positive
 - 54 veteran residents have tested negative
 - 8 veteran residents have pending tests
 - Resident locations:
 - 104 residents are onsite
 - 32 residents are offsite
 - 31 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

- Yesterday, the Chelsea Soldiers' Home received a shipment of thousands of gowns to supplement the closely tracked supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Chelsea Clinical Command monitoring and enforcing 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, and this week, welcomed the VA Boston Health Care System Incident Commander to collaborate on best practices and further testing. The Home has reviewed 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 Chelsea Soldiers' Home leadership and Board of Trustees accepted a generous donation from Brighton Marine of 175 iPads to help keep Veterans stay connected during the pandemic. These iPads will allow for additional video visits between veteran residents and their loved ones, which have been made 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 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 Friday May 15:**
 - 38 veteran resident deaths (30 tested positive, 8 tested negative)
 - 36 veteran residents who have tested positive
 - 178 veteran residents who have tested negative
 - 57 staff tested positive

COVID-19 Public Health Data

The Department of Public Health has made available the underlying data files the Department uses each day to produce the COVID-19 Dashboard, as part of a continued effort to expand the amount and type of data released to the public. The data files are updated and posted daily (**by 4pm**) with the dashboard report for the public, researchers, and media to 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:

Newly Reported Cases Today 1,239	Confirmed Cases 83,421	Newly Reported Deaths Today 110	Deaths of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases 5,592
Percent of All Cases Currently Hospitalized 3%	Count of Cases Currently in ICU 749	New Tests Reported Today 11,318	Total Tests Performed 435,679

Please Note: Data from the Massachusetts Department of Correction's (DOC) on-site testing program is now included in the DPH Daily COVID-19 Dashboard.

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](#)). Currently there are sites in Lexington, Pittsfield, Taunton, Northampton, and Everett. 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.

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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.

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



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- [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 \(:06\)](#)

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

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.