

Thursday, April 30, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

State Actions in Today's Report:

- Daily Case Update (link in sidebar)
- Governor Baker Provides Daily Update
- Secretary Sudders: A Focus on Mental Health & Well-being
- DHCD Emergency Grants to Address COVID-19 Homeless Impacts
- Update on Mobile Testing Numbers
- Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes



The Community Contact Tracing Collaborative, in partnership with Local Boards of Health has contacted about 5,000 people with positive COVID-19 tests in since it was launched on 4/3.

Helpful Links:

- [Updated Weekly City & Town Case Data](#)
- [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 4/30**

62,205 Total Cases ([click here for more information](#))

3,562 Deaths

275,647 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States **current as of 4/30**

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:

1,031,659 Total Cases

60,057 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 Commonwealth response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Governor provided his daily update on testing, hospitalizations, and PPE distribution, and provided updates on the Contact Tracing Collaborative, the Reopening Advisory Board, and the reimbursement of eligible costs incurred under the Federal Disaster Declaration.

Testing:

- Yesterday (April 29) 11,118 tests were reported in Massachusetts.
- The number of new, confirmed COVID-19 cases came in at 1,963.
- 17.7% of those tests were positive, down from a high of nearly 30%.

Hospitalizations & Capacity:

- As of April 29th there were 3,856 patients hospitalized statewide for COVID-19.
- Overall, our hospitals have had roughly this many COVID positive patients in their facilities for the last two weeks.
- For people who test positive for COVID-19, about 6% get sick enough to be hospitalized.
- Massachusetts hospitals have significantly increased their bed capacity and now have about 18,200 beds available across the state—including the temporary field hospitals.
- 54% of those beds remain available for patients.

Personal Protective Equipment:

- As of yesterday, the Commonwealth has delivered over 7 million pieces of PPE.
- This includes masks, gloves, gowns and ventilators distributed to health care workers, first responders and others. We continue to aggressively pursue all supply chain avenues.

Community Tracing Collaborative:

- Earlier this month, the Commonwealth announced the creation of a Community Tracing Collaborative in partnership with Partners in Health.
- To date, the collaborative has onboarded about 1,000 personnel.
- In addition to Partners in Health, over 80 local boards of health are now supporting this initiative as well.
- To date, the collaborative has made contact with about 5,000 people who are either COVID-19 positive themselves or close contacts of someone who has tested positive.
- Originally, the collaborative projected that each person who tested positive would have an average of 10 contacts that would need to be followed up on. So far the average number of contacts has proven to be around 2, highlighting the effectiveness of social distancing.

Reopening Advisory Board:

- The Reopening Advisory Board, co-chaired by Lt. Governor Polito and Housing & Economic Development Secretary Kennealy, has begun meeting with various employers, business organizations, and municipalities to gather as much data as they can, and to work with DPH and the healthcare community to develop specific guidance for reopening.

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- The Board has set up feedback and listening sessions across the state, and as of Wednesday has talked to retailers and members of the biotech, healthcare, and technology industries.

Update on Disaster Assistance:

- Today, Governor Baker submitted a request to FEMA requesting that the agency provide 100% reimbursement for eligible costs under the Federal Disaster Declaration issued last month, including acquiring PPE, setup of Alternate Care Sites, and deployment of the National Guard.
- Currently, the Commonwealth expects to absorb about 25% of these costs, with the remainder being reimbursed by the federal government.

May is Mental Health Month

Secretary Sudders, a social worker, and former Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health focused her update on the importance of caring for our mental health during the pandemic. From loneliness and situational depression resulting from isolation, anxiety from the fear of the illness, grief from losses, to worrying about economic security, these stresses are significant and can affect our mental well-being and that of our loved ones. Nearly half of Americans report that the coronavirus has had a negative impact on their mental health – as reported in an issue paper reported by the Kaiser family Foundation in April.



- If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others, **CALL2Talk** is a resource available through **2-1-1** line.
- In March, the Administration launched the [Massachusetts Network of Care](#), a searchable behavioral health directory of services and organizations dedicated to helping preserve and protect your mental health.
- This website connects Massachusetts residents with information in multiple languages on behavioral health services and treatment in their communities – including more than 5,000 organizations – searchable by keywords and zip codes.



The Massachusetts Network of Care website is managed by the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health and supported by the BlueCross BlueShield Foundation, the CF Adams Charitable Trust and Metrowest Health Foundation.

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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.

DHCD Announces Emergency Solutions Grants for Residents Experiencing Homelessness

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is pleased to announce the availability of \$16.4M in special Emergency Solutions Grant COVID-19 (ESG-CV) funding, as authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Public Law 116-136. ESG-CV funds are to be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) among individuals and families who are homeless or receiving homeless assistance; and to support additional homeless assistance and homelessness prevention activities to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. Any future ESG-CV funding allocated to DHCD from HUD will be added to this Notice of Funding Available (NOFA).

At this time, DHCD will only approve applications that propose usage of ESG-CV for costs related to providing street outreach and operating emergency shelter to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus to protect the health and safety of people experiencing homelessness and reduce the risk of virus spread. Examples of DHCD’s priorities include, but are not limited to, costs to de-populate existing shelters by identifying, leasing, and/or establishing alternative shelter locations, hotel/motel vouchers for persons who are unable to access traditional emergency shelter facilities and increased operational costs due to COVID-19.

DHCD expects to amend this NOFA in future months to account for rapidly evolving needs and priorities. Interested applicants are encouraged to regularly monitor COMMBUYS for updates. The NOFA and required application documents available on COMMBUYS under bid [BD-20-1076-OCDD-OCDD01-51110](#).

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Questions | Questions regarding the NOFA may be submitted to DHCDEmergencySolutionsGrant@MASS.GOV |
| Virtual Bidders Conference | DHCD will host a virtual bidders conference on May 12 th @ 10 am. Please register for ESG-CV NOFA Bidders Conference on May 12, 2020 10:00 AM EDT at: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8600681625117013515 After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. |
| Due Date | Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and considered in the order that they are received. |

These grants represent the latest effort in the Administration’s [ongoing strategy to address homelessness](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

The Mobile Testing Program can test both symptomatic and asymptomatic residents and staff at nursing homes, rest homes, Assisted Living Residences, and EOHHS group homes and care sites. The program was launched by the Command Center on 3/31 and operates under the auspices of the Massachusetts National Guard, in partnership with the Department of Public Health, Fallon Ambulance, and Broad Institute of Cambridge. See a summary below of testing activity.

Onsite Testing

| Date | Number of Tests Completed | Facilities Visited |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 4/30 | 2377 | 25 |
| Total (as of 4/30) | 24,296 | 478 |

| COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities (as of 4/30) | |
|--|---------------|
| Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities | 12,127 |
| LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19 | 318 |
| Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities | 2,101 |

Mobile Testing at EOHHS Group Homes & Care Sites (as of 4/30 by Fallon Ambulance Service)

| DDS, DMH, DCF and DPH Facilities | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Clients | 6124 |
| Staff | 8025 |
| Total Tests | 14,149 |
| Number of Locations | 1024 |

617-660-5399

NURSING HOME FAMILY RESOURCE LINE

617-660-5399

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

Other Important Updates

Holyoke Soldiers' Home

- Holyoke Soldiers' Home infection control staff are enforcing PPE use and sharing best practices for the safety and protection of residents and staff. This includes eight new PPE coaches who are on the units to provide additional friendly correction and coaching to ensure staff are compliant with proper use across all shifts, a function in addition to the training staff have already received.
- As veteran residents are being cared for, their status and symptoms are being closely monitored and they are being retested as appropriate. As results are returned, residents are being cohorted appropriately.
- Through recruiting and staffing efforts, the Holyoke Soldiers' Home will be onboarding an additional cohort of new staff on Monday. The Home is ensuring adequate staffing ratios for veteran resident care, and is continuing to post for and hire permanent staff. This is in addition to several nursing staff that were onboarded this week - a mix of permanent, per-diem, and contracted -- to support veteran care.
- 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

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Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Agawam and Winchendon due to the fact Military Honors are unavailable during this public health crisis.

- Regular family communication continues from Holyoke Soldiers' Home staff 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 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:**
 - 83 veteran resident deaths (71 positive, 11 negatives, 1 unknown)
 - Today's update includes 1 veteran resident death onsite who was DNR, DNH
 - Testing results of all residents:
 - 79 veteran residents have tested positive
 - 57 veteran residents have tested negative
 - 7 veteran residents have pending tests
 - Of all residents:
 - 106 residents are onsite
 - 37 residents are offsite
 - 31 residents are at a dedicated skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center
 - 6 residents are receiving acute care offsite
 - 81 employees have tested positive

Chelsea Soldiers' Home

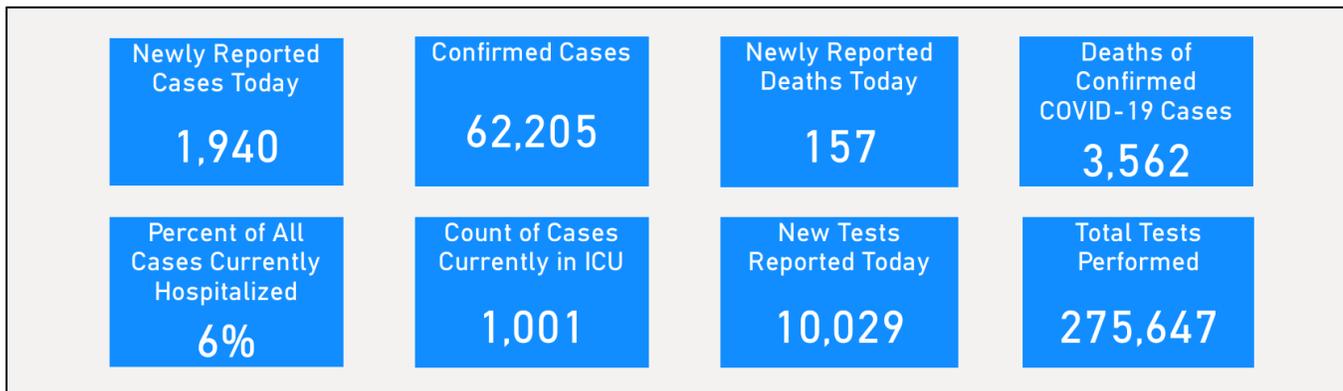
- This week the Chelsea Soldiers' Home is receiving a handful of veterans back who were proactively transferred to VA facilities after testing positive for COVID-19 and are being medically cleared to return to the Soldiers' Home. As veterans return, they are being cohorted and will continue to be monitored and evaluated.
- Veteran residents' health is being monitored and retesting is being conducted for veterans on- and off-site as appropriate. As results are received, veteran residents are being appropriately cohorted and further monitored. The majority of those who test positive are being proactively transferred to other facilities for further monitoring and the option of higher acuity care.
- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home has been continuously reviewing and revising its infection control policy to ensure best practices throughout the facility. 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, continuously reviewing and implementing infection control policy, monitoring and enforcing staff use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and closely monitoring staff levels, supplementing as necessary with support from contracted staff.

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- 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:**
 - 31 veteran resident deaths (24 tested positive, 7 tested negative)
 - Today's update includes 1 veteran resident death who had tested positive and was receiving comfort measures only at the hospital
 - 26 veteran residents who have tested positive
 - 195 veteran residents who have tested negative
 - 53 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:



Resources

COVID-19 Testing

The Department of Public Health (DPH) has posted to their COVID-19 website information on testing and mobile testing site locations ([available here](#)). This information is updated twice weekly.

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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.

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 [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, 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

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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

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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](https://www.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.