Thursday, November 12, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

The Command Center Situation Report is published weekly on Thursdays.



On Tuesday, Governor Baker, Lt. Governor Polito, and Secretary Sudders joined hospital CEOs Jody White, of Lowell General Hospital, and Kate Walsh, from Boston Medical Center to provide an update on hospital preparedness as the Commonwealth addresses a rise in COVID-19 cases.

In This Week's Report:

- Latest Data: Public Health Update
- Week in Review: Key State Actions
  - Updated Metrics, Guidance on Schools
  - Suspension of Interstate Youth Hockey
  - NEW Public Information Resources on Targeted Health Measures
  - DPH, Emergency Management, and Disaster Recovery Updates
  - Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes Weekly Update

Helpful Links:

- Tips for a Safe Thanksgiving
- Mass.gov/findfoodhelp
- Stop the Spread
- HandHoldMA.org
- Reopening Massachusetts
- Mass.Gov/covid19
- Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
- Unemployment & COVID-19
- Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal
- Emergency Childcare Site
- COVID-19 Cost Eligibility and Tracking Guidance

Situation in Numbers

Massachusetts current as of 11/12

174,953 Total Confirmed Cases (click here for more information)

10,015 Deaths among confirmed cases

7,004,724 tests for the virus conducted to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals, and commercial laboratories.

United States Last Updated 11/12

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:

10,314,254 Total Cases

241,069 Deaths

56 Jurisdictions Reporting Cases (50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Marianas, Marshall Islands, 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.

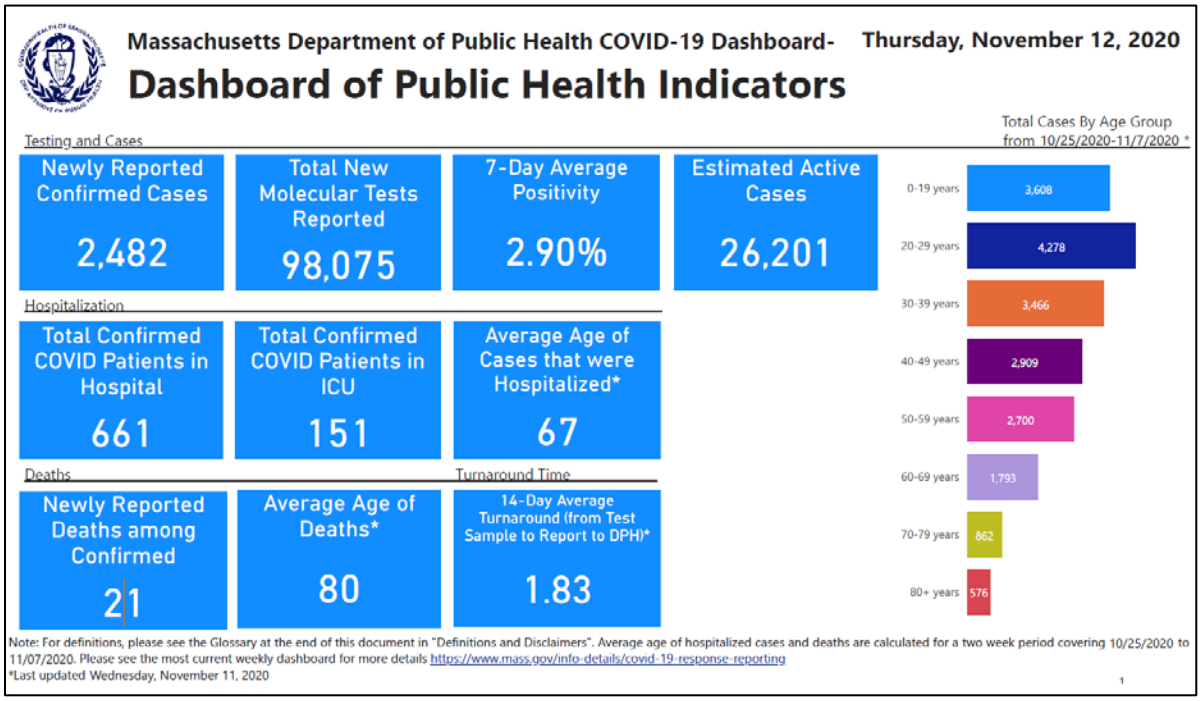
COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

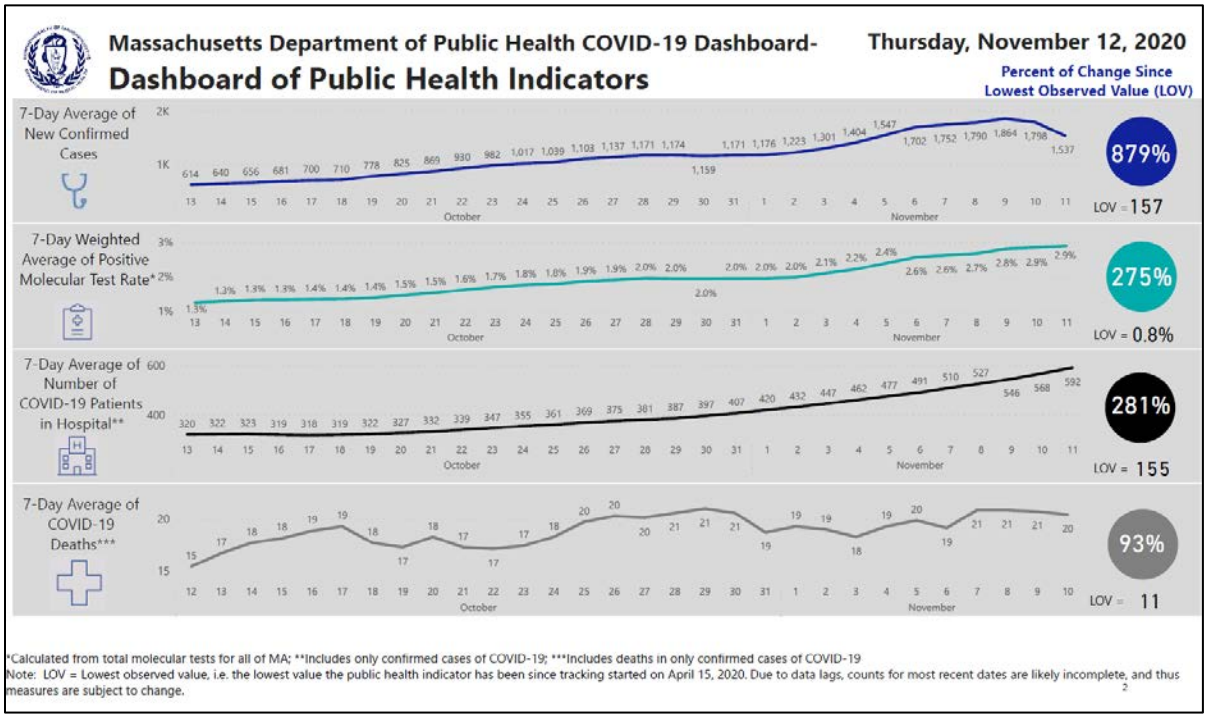
Latest Data: COVID-19 Public Health Update

***Testing Update**:*

Today, over **98,000** new molecular (viral) tests were reported in Massachusetts with **2,482** newly reported confirmed positive cases. The total number of molecular tests administered to date is over **7 million**.

***Hospitalizations & Capacity Update**:* As of today, **661** people are hospitalized, with **151** reported to be in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Key indicators from today's Daily Dashboard are below.





COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Weekly Public Health Report:
Today the Command Center released the Weekly Public Health Report, with town by town information, including the weekly listing of city and town risk levels. The report posted today also includes granular information on cases by county, biweekly testing rates, contact tracing information (including active COVID cluster information by Exposure Setting Type), hospitalization data, race and ethnicity data, information about cases in long term care facilities, and PPE distribution data.

Week in Review: State Actions

Updated Metrics, Guidance on Schools
The Baker-Polito Administration and COVID-19 Command Center released updated metrics for schools and municipalities. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education also released updated school guidance.

This update builds on the state's ongoing efforts to refine data that is reported publicly to track the impact of the virus in the Commonwealth. The updated metrics for communities will give school districts more data to make informed decisions regarding in-person learning. Local officials have also used these metrics to make decisions for schools and businesses in their communities.



Understanding of the virus continues to evolve. Studies have shown that there is low transmission in schools, even in communities where there are high rates of COVID.

UPDATED METRICS FOR SCHOOLS & MUNICIPALITIES

The updated metrics adjust for the reporting of cases by a municipality's population size. These metrics incorporate cases per 100,000 residents and the test positivity rate when determining a municipality color designation.

Using one metric to determine school reopenings community by community does not reflect the state's current understanding of the virus in the Commonwealth that there is more transmission across the Commonwealth due to increased cases of COVID-19.

The Command Center has also been reviewing metrics used by other states as well as what is available in the academic and national data sets. This updated metric also will better account for communities that conduct a significant amount of testing.

This metric will continue to be used to determine whether a community is in Step 1 of Phase 3 or Step 2. Communities currently in Step 1 of Phase 3 will need to have 3 weeks of data where the community is designated yellow, green or grey in order to move to Step 2 of Phase 3.

Under the new methodology, the color-coded designations are: 16 red communities, 91 yellow communities, 79 green communities, and 165 grey communities based on this week's data.

Details on the metrics:

	Population		
Group	**Under 10K**	**10K-50K**	**Over 50K**
Grey	Less than or equal to 10 total cases	Less than or equal to 10 total cases	Less than or equal to 15 total cases
Green	Less than or equal to 15 total cases	<10 avg cases/100k AND >10 total cases	<10 avg cases/100k AND >15 total cases
Yellow	Less than or equal to 25 total cases	>=10 avg cases/100k OR >= 5% pos rate	>=10 avg cases/100k OR >= 4% pos rate
Red	More than 25 total cases	>=10 avg cases/100k AND >=5% pos rate	>=10 avg cases/100k AND >=4% pos rate

DESE's UPDATED SCHOOL GUIDANCE:

In coordination with this data metric update, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has issued updated guidance to prioritize in-person learning statewide and support municipalities.

Scientific evidence and COVID-19 transmission data supports that with strong health and safety protocols in place, schools are able to operate safely and successfully with in-person learning. This updated guidance was developed in conjunction with medical professionals and public health experts.

Under this guidance, districts and schools in communities designated gray, green or yellow are expected to have students learning fully in-person when possible.

The guidance states that schools in red communities should implement hybrid models while maximizing in-person learning for high-needs students.

In communities with the highest numbers of COVID-19 cases, DESE and DPH will work with local school officials to develop and implement risk reduction strategies.

Fully remote instructional models should be implemented only as a last resort, and classrooms should reopen after appropriate mitigation strategies have been implemented.

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

This update replaces previous guidance, Interpreting DPH COVID-19 Health Metrics, issued on August 11, and structured learning time requirements for students and related regulatory and statutory standards remain in effect for all districts.

Read the full DESE guidance here.

Northeast Governors Issue Statement on Suspension of Interstate Youth Hockey

In response to recent coronavirus outbreaks associated with the conduct of interstate youth hockey activities, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, Maine Governor Janet Mills, Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo, New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu, Vermont Governor Phil Scott, and Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont will support a regional approach to interstate competitions. As case numbers increase in many states across the country, it is critical that neighboring states coordinate a regional approach to limit further community spread of the virus.



The seven states will suspend interstate competitions for public and private schools and youth hockey effective this Saturday, November 14, 2020 through at minimum December 31, 2020. The prohibition will not impact interstate collegiate, professional, or U.S. national team hockey activities, which will remain subject to existing health and safety protocols and/or restrictions.

As public health data continues to evolve, the states will reassess the need for continued restrictions on interstate sports activities.

Read the press release here.

NEW Public Information Resources on Targeted Health Measures Available for Communities:

The COVID-19 Command Center has produced new resources aimed at helping communities to inform and educate residents on recent executive orders and tips for less risky Thanksgiving gatherings.

Executive Orders + Stay at Home Advisory one-pagers/flyers

- Available in multiple languages at the links below:
  - Public gathering guidance
  - Private gathering guidance
  - Face Mask order
  - Stay-at-home Advisory
  - Early business closure & alcohol guidance

- **Social Media posts on Thanksgiving Tips**
  - https://www.facebook.com/massgov/posts/1728164364021213
  - https://www.instagram.com/p/CHQSE5Egi4B/
  - https://twitter.com/MassGov/status/1324736982275313664
  - https://nextdoor.com/post/167003750?init_source=copy_link_share

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Important Updates

Department of Public Health Updates:



- DPH continues to share COVID updates via our social media channels including a new graphic about the latest face mask requirements.
- DPH has revised its daily dashboard to focus on current and cumulative metrics most important to track the pandemic in Massachusetts. Look for the daily dashboard and weekly report here.
- Keep updated on preparations for a COVID-19 vaccine by checking our webpage at www.mass.gov/COVIDvaccine.
- MA211 received 7,070 calls from Monday 11/2 through Tuesday 11/10 for a new total of 148,136.
- On 11/11, DPH received 84,680 Abbott BinaxNOW™ COVID-19 Tests, which is the sixth shipment received from this HHS distribution of rapid point-of-care tests.
- Initial resurgence planning meetings were held in each of the HMCC regions.
- For the date range of 10/30-11/5, 95 of 96 Massachusetts hospitals were 100% compliant in their COVID-19 data submissions to the DPH WebEOC portal which is submitted to the federal HHS Protect portal daily.
- DPH reissued a memorandum to LTCF to provide clarification on licensure requirements pertaining to notice of permanent removal of LTCF beds from service and the related permanent reduction on the LTCF license of the number of beds the licensee is authorized to operate at the facility. This memo also provides a reminder about the LTCF license renewal process.
- DPH issued guidance to inform adult day health facilities, out-of-hospital dialysis units, and long-term care facilities of the process to report mandatory personnel influenza data and to provide guidance for facilities to fulfill the requirement for submission of personnel influenza data to DPH in compliance with both 105 CMR 150.002(D)(8) and the DPH Commissioner's Public Health Order issued in October.

Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery Updates:

Mass Care

- 1 state contracted isolation/recovery hotel in the city of Everett continues to receive client placements.
  - Currently 59 residents are housed in this hotel (+11 change since last Thursday)
  - The hotel is currently at **68% occupancy.**
  - To date, a total of 803 residents have been placed in this hotel for safe isolation and recovery.

Emergency Food Box Program: To support immediate food insecurity needs in Massachusetts, MEMA was charged by the COVID-19 Command Center's Food Security Task Force with coordinating the Emergency Food Box Program. This program was established back in April to provide emergency food, in the form of shelf stable food boxes, to the Commonwealth's four major food banks as a relief valve. While delivery of food boxes coming into the food banks have ceased due to the program coming to an end, any remaining food box inventory continues to be distributed. Below is an update on the program.

Food Bank/ MEMA Warehouse	Total Number of Food Boxes Received to Date	Total Number of Food Boxes Distributed to Date	Total Number of Food Boxes Remaining in Inventory
Food Bank of Western MA	31,259	31,259	0
Greater Boston Food Bank	206,592	204,096	2,496

Merrimack Valley Food Bank	3,312	3,312	0
Worcester County Food Bank	1,440	1,432	8
MEMA Warehouse (Reserve)	37,938	36,869	1,069
Total Food Boxes	**280,541**	**276,968**	**3,573**

Logistics (including Personal Protective Equipment and Supplies)

- MEMA coordinated 128 deliveries prepared for pick up or delivery between November 6th and November 12th.
- MDPH coordinated 12 deliveries to health care entities on Tuesday (11/10) (3 PPE/9 testing supplies), and 18 deliveries have been scheduled for Friday (11/13) (6 PPE/12 testing supplies).
- KN-95 were distributed to every police department in the Commonwealth (Local, State, College/University, and Sheriff) this week, with ongoing distribution occurring through Friday, November 13th. 20 masks were allocated to each officer, totaling 539,900 masks being distributed.

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:

FEMA Public Assistance Program

Data as of: 11/9/2020

MEMA COVID-19 EXECUTIVE DASHBOARD
AGGREGATE PROGRAM VIEW

Note: Financial data represents 75% federal cost share; figures do not include MEMA management cost allowance

Overall (Best Available Estimate)	Submitted (Eligibility & Cost Review)	Approved (by FEMA)	Paid (by MEMA)
$599.1M +$16.78M	$418.7M +$5.84M	$7.4M +$0.04M	$6.9M $0.00M
792 Projects -1	519 Projects +12	38 Projects +2	26 Projects 0

Approved Applicants: 606

Long Term Recovery Program

- MIT Lincoln Labs Collaboration with Long-Term Recovery Working Group: MEMA and the State Long-Term Recovery working group will begin collaborating with MIT Lincoln Labs on long-term recovery data collection and funding gaps.
- State Economic Recovery Plan: MEMA has coordinated with FEMA and state partners to hold a state economic recovery plan meeting on December 1st from 10:30 am to 12 pm. This meeting will align state priorities with potential avenues for federal assistance.

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities (as of 11/12)	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	**26,143**
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	**392**
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	**6,538**



Note: Yesterday, the Baker-Polito Administration celebrated Veterans Day with a virtual ceremony. The virtual Veterans Day ceremony included speakers and musical performers from across the Commonwealth, as well as remarks by Governor Baker, and a tribute from several branches of our military. If you missed the ceremony, a recording of the event can be found at mass.gov/VeteransDay2020.



Holyoke Soldiers' Home Weekly Update (current as of 11/10/20)

- In addition to sharing the Veterans Day virtual ceremony on closed circuit TV, the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke marked Veterans Day with special gifts, treats, and music.
- Phase II of the Refresh Project to enhance residential units, an important initiative to ensure infection control continues to be met and that care areas are clean, safe, and comfortable, began for the second floor on Monday, October 19. Phase I of the Refresh Project is complete and the veterans from the second floor have successfully and safely moved to their new rooms on the third floor.
- 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. Over the past weeks, the Home welcomed new permanent leadership and staff positions including a Nurse Practitioner, two Recreational Therapists, and three Certified Nursing Assistants.
- The health of all veteran residents of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke is being constantly monitored. Regular surveillance and diagnostic testing are routine and ongoing for veterans and surveillance testing for staff.

  - On Thursday, October 29, 2020, a non-clinical staff member of the Home tested positive for COVID-19 during this week's routine staff surveillance testing. Per infection control protocol, Veterans cannot move throughout the facility and the Home is cancelling visitation for two weeks, beginning on Thursday, October 29. Currently, the Home plans to resume visitation on Saturday, November 14, as we await test results to confirm that there are no new positive cases.
  - The staff member was asymptomatic and was immediately sent home. This staff member does not provide direct care to residents but does work on direct care units.
  - Veterans and families on the affected units have been called and all residents and family have been sent a written notification. Please note the Soldiers' Home can only share medical information about a resident with the authorized health care proxy on file.
  - All staff members are required to wear N95 masks and face shields throughout their shift and full PPE is required going in and out of each veteran's room.
  - Families and loved ones can schedule virtual visits with veterans using the Family Line.
- This temporary suspension of visitation does affect previously planned extended visitation for Veterans Day, and we encourage families and loves ones to schedule video visits. After visitation resumes, the Home plans to add a Sunday visitation during the week of Veterans Day.
- Veteran and Family Advisory Council meetings are resuming this month. The Family Advisory Council will meet on Thursday, November 19, 2020, and the Veterans Advisory council will meet on Thursday, November 12, 2020. The Veteran and Family Advisory Councils will be run by veterans and families with assistance from the Soldiers' Home.
  - The Advisory Council helps the Home partner with veterans and families to provide constructive guidance amongst diverse perspectives and lived experiences.
  - Through the feedback from the Veterans and Family Council, the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke hopes to integrate ideas into service delivery and quality improvement efforts to positively impact family and veteran-centered care.
- In addition to mandatory testing at state-operated 24/7 facilities, daily symptom checking and routine staff surveillance testing are important tools to protect staff, residents and visitors and will remain in place until such time there is a medical breakthrough or a safe and effective vaccine for COVID 19. Staff who are not feeling well are instructed not to come to work and to contact their health care provider. If staff show any signs of COVID-symptoms, they are required to self-quarantine at home, per CDC guidance for health care workers.
- 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. All veteran residents' health is being monitored and retesting is being conducted for veterans both on- and off-site as clinically appropriate.
  - The Soldiers' Home's medical team is making all clinical decisions following the latest CDC guidance, which continues to evolve as the medical community learns more about this new virus. The CDC recommends making medical decisions regarding when to end isolation and determine that the patient has recovered based on symptoms and time elapsed.
  - Since the start of the pandemic, more than 80 residents had been determined clinically recovered, which means that they at one point tested positive for COVID-19 but are now considered clinically recovered as defined by federal CDC guidance.
- The Baker-Polito Administration is in the midst of the expedited capital project to reimagine the future of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, led by architecture firm Payette. The project team has gathered input from a broad community of stakeholders as part of the Rapid Planning Phase, in addition to working on the needs assessment, the clinical options, and the facility's infrastructure. This work will inform the development of the implementation plan to meet the April 15, 2021 federal Veterans' Affairs' State Home Construction Grant application deadline.

    - The website for the project is www.mass.gov/HolyokeSHProject, and the online survey to gather input can be taken here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WCX32P2.
- 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 status of all residents as of November 10 is as follows:
    - Status:
        - 0 positive and not clinically recovered
        - 57 veterans are negative
        - 0 resident have a pending test
        - 74 residents have been determined clinically recovered
        - 1 resident has refused testing
    - Resident locations:
        - 105 veterans are onsite
        - 27 veterans are offsite
            - 22 veterans are at a dedicated skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center
            - 5 veterans are receiving acute care offsite
    - Since March 1, there have been 76 veteran deaths of veterans who tested positive
    - From the most recent round of staff surveillance testing
        - 1 tested positive
        - All others who previously tested positive are clinically recovered

Chelsea Soldiers' Home Weekly Update (current as of 11/10/20)

- In addition to sharing the Veterans Day virtual ceremony on closed circuit TV, the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea celebrated Veterans Day with a virtual message from Rear Admiral Michael Wettlaufer, Commander of the Military Sealift Command. Donated Commemorative Vietnam Books will be distributed to residents, and other donated gifts will be given to residents in Independent Living.
- Long Term Care veterans have moved into their new private spaces following the completion of a short-term ward conversation project at the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea to enhance infection control and resident safety. This project will also incorporate negative air pressure to improve airflow, which will be utilized until the opening of the Community Living Center (Fall 2022). The Home has released a live link for families and staff to virtually tour newly designed private spaces for veteran residents in the Long Term Care: Click here to view a virtual tour of these areas.
- Visitation at the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea continues between veterans and loved ones. Following visitation guidance, the Home's protocols prioritize the health and safety of 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.
    - 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.
- Clinical staff closely monitor any changes in residents, and the Soldiers' Home's medical team is making all clinical decisions following the latest CDC guidance, which continues to evolve as the medical community learns more about this new virus. The CDC recommends making medical decisions regarding when to end isolation and determine that the patient has recovered based on symptoms and time elapsed.

  - Since the start of the pandemic, more than 40 residents had been determined clinically recovered, which means that they at one point tested positive for COVID-19 but are now considered clinically recovered as defined by federal CDC guidance.
  - Individuals are determined recovered according to CDC guidance, and may test positive even after being clinically recovered. This is a known consequence of the PCR test, which is extremely sensitive to picking up virus or viral remnants even weeks after recovery.
- The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea currently conducts bi-weekly staff surveillance testing. In accordance with the recent CMS Interim Rule, the Soldiers' Home is now conducting weekly testing until the facility is 14 days without positive test results. These tests are provided at no cost to employees.
- The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea monitors the PPE supply, and continues to receive shipments of PPE. 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 status as of November 10 is as follows:
  - Residents
    - 0 veteran residents are positive
    - 143 veteran residents are negative
    - 41 residents have recovered, meaning they previously tested positive and are now clinically recovered
    - 0 residents have pending tests
    - Since March 1, there have been 31 deaths of veterans who tested positive
  - Following the most recent round of staff surveillance testing:
    - 1 employee is positive
    - All other employees who previously tested positive have been determined clinically recovered

Resources

MassSupport

MassSupport is the Massachusetts Crisis Counseling Program funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and managed in partnership between the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health and Riverside Trauma Center, a program of Riverside Community Care.

Contact MassSupport by phone at **888-215-4920** or by email at **MassSupport@riversidecc.org**

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.

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) now reports on the number of positive COVID-19 cases as reported to the DESE by school districts (including charter schools), collaboratives, and approved special education schools. The data only represents what has been reported to DESE. For more information and to view the report people can visit: http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/positive-cases/

COVID-19 Test Site Locator
MEMA, in conjunction with the COVID-19 Command Center, has developed an interactive map that shows the locations of COVID-19 testing sites around the Commonwealth.

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 daily as enhancements are continuously being added.

Health care facilities can learn more about **requesting personal protective equipment here**.

Stay Informed

- Get information from trusted sources. Get notified by text, email, or phone call in your preferred language. Visit https://member.everbridge.net/index/406686158291020/#/signup to sign-up for **AlertsMA** for the latest news on the Commonwealth's response to COVID-19
- 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.

Communications Resources

Public Messaging Resources for Higher-Risk Communities

- Public messaging graphics & guidelines for use in your community

DPH Communication Materials in Multiple Languages

- **Facts Sheets**
- **Videos**

How to Help Out

- Donate to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund.
- Volunteer opportunities for health professionals: **Please click 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 to learn more. 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