

Thursday, April 16, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

State Actions in Today's Report:

- Daily Case Update (Link in sidebar)
- Update on Contact Tracing
- Updates on Testing, PPE and Hospital Capacity
- Update on Unemployment Compensation
- Update on Mobile Testing Program & Cases in LTC Facilities
- Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes

DPH, MassDOT Team Up For New Statewide Billboard Campaign



Helpful Links:

- [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 4/16**

32,181 Total Cases ([click here for more information](#))

1,245 Deaths

140,773 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States **current as of 4/16**

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:

632,548 Total Cases

27,012 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

Earlier today, Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito joined Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders to provide the following updates on the Commonwealth's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. ([See video of today's briefing](#))

Update on Contact Tracing

On April 3, the Baker-Polito Administration announced an [initiative](#) to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in Massachusetts through contact tracing. Working with Partners in Health, Massachusetts was the first state in the nation to develop a program to trace individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 as well as their immediate contacts who may have been exposed to the virus. Through a team of leading medical experts working with the Department of Public Health, this program has already hired 176 employees to do contact tracing by phone, and hundreds of additional staff will be trained and on boarded in the coming weeks.

Residents who receive a phone call from the Contact Tracing Collaborative are urged to take the call and provide the relevant information.

Update on Testing

- Massachusetts is the leading state in the country on per-capita testing
- As today, 140,773 tests have been conducted
- Today's 8,750 new tests is the largest single day tally since testing began

Update on PPE & Equipment

- More than 3.8 million pieces of PPE have been distributed to hospitals, nursing homes, community health centers, public safety personnel, local boards of health and state agencies.
- This includes more than 2.2 million gloves, over 850,000 masks, over 370,000 masks from the AirKraft delivery, and over 180,000 protective gowns
- 380 ventilators have been received and distributed
- FEMA is sending 1 million pieces of PPE, including masks and TyVek Suits

Update on Hospital Capacity

- Over the last several days, there has been an increase in hospitalizations
- As of the end of day Tuesday, there were 17,800 hospital beds statewide
- Just over half of those beds are available
- Including just over 6,000 acute care, or non-ICU beds
- Approximately 2,500 ICU beds, and
- Approximately 750 beds available at Field Medical Stations at the DCU Center in Worcester, and at the BCEC in Boston
- The number of beds at Field Medical Stations will increase as three more sites come online soon in Bourne, Dartmouth and Lowell

Update on Unemployment Compensation

Federal data indicates that over 570,000 Massachusetts residents have applied for unemployment since March 15, including about 100,000 in the last week (Typical volume is between 7,000-10,000 applications per week). As of today, the Department of Unemployment Assistance is paying unemployment compensation to over 315,000 Massachusetts residents.

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
DAILY SITUATION REPORT

This past weekend the Administration launched a new Spanish language application form, and forms in more languages will be launched shortly. DUA has dramatically increased its call center staff and to date, has made over 115,000 calls to residents.

DUA has held 25 daily virtual town halls in both English and Spanish to guide people through the application process. Over 175,000 residents have attended online as of today.

As of last week, claimants are receiving an additional \$600 on top of their existing benefit due to the implementation of the federal CARES Act benefit.

The Administration continues to make progress in building a technological infrastructure that will allow for processing of unemployment claims by workers not traditionally covered by the unemployment system, such as the self-employed and gig economy workers. The system is being refined and tested so that it can be launched as soon as possible.

Update on Mobile Testing Program for Long Term Care, Assisted Living Residences and DDS Group Homes

On March 31, the Commonwealth implemented a project that allows for safe, on-site testing of residents of nursing and rest homes with a quick turnaround. The program has expanded and can now test both symptomatic and asymptomatic residents and staff at nursing homes, rest homes, Assisted Living Residences, and Department of Developmental Services group homes. Facilities with clinical capacity, can also order test kits to perform themselves. The program operates under the auspices of the Massachusetts National Guard, in partnership with the Department of Public Health and Broad Institute of Cambridge, See a summary below of activity today and since the launch of the program.

Onsite Testing

Date	Number of Tests Completed	Facilities Visited
4/15	1311	15
Total (as of 4/15)	5,883	279

Testing Kits Provided

Date	Number of Kits Sent	Facility Count
4/15	2351	26
Total (as of 4/15)	10,995	103

Cases in Long term Care Facilities (as of 4/16)

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	4798
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	232
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	610

Expanded Data Reporting

The Command Center continues to provide the most updated data related to cases, planning and response at the links below.

- Daily dashboard data [are published here](#)
- Cases, city/town, & hospital facility data [are published here](#)
- PPE distribution data [are published here](#)
- Hospital capacity published data [are published here](#)

Other Important Updates

Holyoke Soldiers' Home

- The emergency Incident Command Center is working to build leadership and staff capacity to enhance clinical operations of the facility, and has established staff huddles to improve communications with all staff.
 - The Holyoke Soldiers' Home command center and interim leadership team continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and outbreak at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home, including enforcing quarantine zones for COVID-19 positive residents, enforcing use of PPE and monitoring supply, and ensuring increased disinfection protocols.
 - The Home is maintaining strong staff-to-resident ratios with continued presence of the Massachusetts National Guard trained medical and operational staff, and will recruit new staff and monitor staffing plans.
- Infection control experts from the Department of Public Health worked with the Nursing and Infection Control team to complete PPE proper use education with staff, and moving forward, a nursing executive consultant that was brought on board this week will be leading this effort.
- The Holyoke Soldiers' Home is closely tracking personal protective equipment (PPE) closely and an additional 2,000 gowns were delivered today from the Department of Public Health.
- Through a partnership with Holyoke Medical Center and Baystate Health, expedited testing of veteran residents continues and as results come in veterans are being moved and cohorted appropriately within the facility, and social distancing continues to be urged among veteran residents and staff.
- The Holyoke Soldiers' Home is regularly communicating 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.
 - 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:**
 - 52 veteran resident deaths (44 positive tests, 7 negatives, 1 unknown)
 - Today's deaths include 1 positive with a DNR, DNH; 1 positive receiving hospice care with a DNR, DNH; 2 positives with DNR at hospital, 1 negative, DNH, DNH
 - 97 veteran residents have tested positive
 - 75 veteran residents have tested negative
 - 2 veteran residents have pending tests
 - 81 employees have tested positive

Chelsea Soldiers' Home

- There have been more than 50 video visits between veteran residents and their loved ones complete with support from the Chelsea Soldiers' Home Social Work team.

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
DAILY SITUATION REPORT

- 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.
- All veteran residents have been tested and the results have been received. If residents are positive, they are being isolated and their health is closely monitored, and if they test negative, they are appropriately cohorted and monitored.
 - The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea is accepting Veterans back who tested positive and were proactively sent out to other facilities, but who have been medically cleared to return to the facility. They will temporarily stay on a dedicated ward, where their health will be monitored before returning to their respective wards.
 - Additional wards have been established for veterans who are symptomatic but had negative tests.
- Staffing levels continue to be monitored closely by the Chelsea clinical command and they are being augmented by recently established contracts with six agencies to fill open slots with contract staff.
 - As staff testing results are returned, there are currently 51 staff who have tested positive and are therefore quarantined/out from work in accordance with CDC guidelines.
 - Existing staff are being provided emotional support through the Employee Assistance Program.
- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home clinical command continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including regular coordinating calls with the VA Health Care System, daily monitoring of personal protective equipment (PPE) supply, and continuously reviewing and implementing infection control policy.
- **The total numbers at Chelsea Soldiers' Home as of Thursday:**
 - 12 veteran resident deaths (8 tested positive, 4 tested negative)
 - 27 veteran residents who have tested positive
 - 208 veteran residents who have tested negative
 - 51 staff tested positive

How to Help Out

- [Donate](#) to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund.
- Volunteer opportunities for health professionals: [Please click here.](#)
- Volunteer for the new Community Tracing Collaborative by visiting the [PIH Ma-Response](#) page [Or DIRECT link](#) to recruiter web.
- 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:

As you are aware, 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

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER DAILY SITUATION REPORT

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).

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.

Massachusetts Frontline Worker Resources

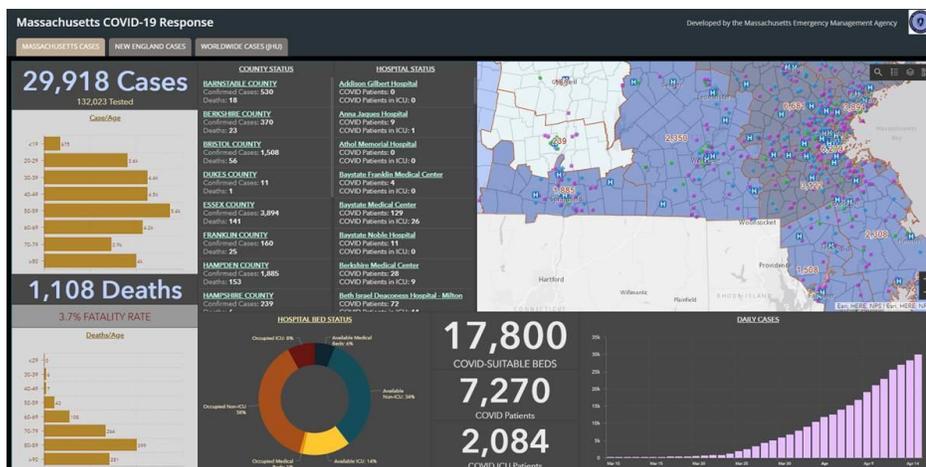
In an effort to connect frontline workers with various supports such as free/discounted meals, guidance on accessing PPE and priority testing, emergency child care, and alternate housing options, the Attorney General's Office developed the Frontline Workers Resource website. The website can be accessed at FrontlineMA.org.

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 and help others do the same. If you need emotional support during these stressful times:
 - 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:

NEW: [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.

Social media – please continue to follow and re-tweet DPH on Twitter @MassDPH, updated several times per day.

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. In order to maintain our commitment to assisting to those affected while balancing our volunteer workforce safety, we have implemented the below 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.