

Monday, April 27, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

State Actions in Today's Report:

- Daily Case Update (link in sidebar)
- Further Support, Resources, and Accountability Measures for Nursing Facilities & Increased Support for Congregate Care Providers
- Update on Mobile Testing Numbers
- Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes



Today, the Baker-Polito Administration announced a second round of funding for nursing facilities to support COVID-19 response efforts over the next two months, as well as increased funding for residential congregate care service providers.

Helpful Links:

- [Get Involved: Community Contact Tracing Collaborative](#)
- [Jobs Available to Assist Long Term Care Facilities](#)
- [Mass.Gov/covid19](#)
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [Unemployment & COVID-19](#)
- [Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal](#)
- [FrontlineMA.org](#)
- [Emergency Childcare Site](#)
- [MBTA.com/covid19](#)
- [COVID-19 Cost Eligibility and Tracking Guidance](#)
- [Complete List of Emergency Orders & Guidance](#)

Background on the Command Center

The COVID Command Center, under the leadership of Secretary Marylou Sudders and reporting to Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, is the Commonwealth's single point of strategic decision making and coordination for the Administration's comprehensive COVID-19 response.



Situation in Numbers

Massachusetts **current as of 4/27**

56,462 Total Cases ([click here for more information](#))

3,003 Deaths

244,887 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States **current as of 4/26**

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:

957,875 Total Cases

53,922 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's response to the COVID-19 pandemic ([see video here](#)).

Further Support, Resources, and Accountability Measures for Nursing Facilities (News Release)

The Baker-Polito Administration today announced a second round of funding up to \$130 million for nursing facilities to support COVID-19 response efforts over the next two months, as well as increased funding of \$44 million for residential congregate care service providers. This funding will support staffing costs, infection control and personal protective equipment (PPE). In addition to increased financial support, the administration has implemented required testing for staff and residents of nursing facilities.

Additional Support Services:

The Commonwealth will offer support for temporary staffing assistance for all nursing homes in need. This includes clinical response teams of 120 nurses and CNAs deployed in teams of 10 during emergency situations, crisis management support, and deployment of the Massachusetts National Guard. These efforts will be supported by a centralized infection control performance improvement center established by the Massachusetts Senior Care Association.

Increased Financial Support for Nursing Facilities:

The administration is releasing a second round of funding for two months for nursing homes that meet specific requirements and accountability measures. The funding is dependent on required COVID-19 testing of all staff and residents, regular infection control audits, appropriate allocation of funding and the public release of facility performance and funding use.

Further details about this second round of funding available for nursing facilities include:

- **Required Testing:** Facilities must test all staff and residents, and report results to the state. Facilities are also encouraged to identify and pursue testing avenues with area hospitals, EMS or other providers. The state's mobile testing program is available for those facilities unable to set up testing.
- **In-person Clinical Audits:** All nursing facilities will be regularly audited in-person for infection control and accountability, and each will receive a baseline audit during the first two weeks of May. These clinical audits will be conducted using a 28-point Infection Control Checklist, based on DPH, CDC and industry guidance. This checklist includes infection control, PPE supply and usage, staffing, clinical care, and communication requirements. Facilities will be scored into three ratings: in adherence (green), in adherence but warrants inspection (yellow) and not in adherence (red).
- **Funding Accountability:** Funding release is dependent on accountability measures, including audit ratings and appropriate funding allocation. Facilities must use this funding for staffing, infection control, PPE and other supports that directly benefit staff, including hotels for staff retention and infection control.
- **Staffing Supports:** The Commonwealth will provide temporary staffing assistance to all nursing homes during the COVID-19 public health crisis, including clinical rapid response teams to provide urgent, short-term staffing for facilities in need, crisis management experts, and the deployment of the Massachusetts National Guard to aid with logistical, environmental and other supports. The state will also contract with staffing agencies to support facilities that are otherwise unable to access staffing agencies.
- **Infection Control Performance Improvement Center:** The Massachusetts Senior Care Association and Hebrew Senior Life, in coordination with other industry providers, will lead an infection control performance improvement center to ensure accountability and provide assistance to facilities that are

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struggling with infection control capability. The performance improvement center will provide infection control protocols and trainings and PPE supply chain and management support, as well as identify, triage and provide infection control specialist support and intervention.

- **Public Reporting:** All performance measures and funding use will be publicly reported using a mandatory reporting template, and the Commonwealth will provide consolidated information in the testing completion status by facility, COVID-19 case counts and mortality of staff and residents, and audit results. These reports will be due shortly after June 30, and the Commonwealth will then compile and deliver a public report.

[Read more.](#)

Increased Support for Residential Congregate Care Service Providers:

The administration is providing a second phase of increased funding – \$44 million – across purchase of service residential congregate care service providers during the COVID-19 outbreak. This funding builds on the \$95 million in increased funding [announced on March 30](#), bringing the total funding for these providers to \$139 million, and will support increased staffing costs, infection control and PPE.

To mitigate many residential congregate care service providers’ expenses related to the COVID-19 surge, Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) agencies will increase the monthly reimbursement for May and June services for an additional 15%, in addition to the [previously announced](#) 10% increase. Further support to address provider needs during the surge include mobile COVID-19 testing expansion and coordination with MEMA to provide PPE to providers.

EOHHS agencies work with 238 residential service providers throughout the Commonwealth to ensure the health and well-being of over 20,500 individuals reflecting diverse populations, including children, youth and families, and individuals with physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioral health, intellectual and developmental disabilities and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

[Read more.](#)

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
4/27	1331	16
Total (as of 4/26)	19,699	433

**Mobile Testing at EOHHS Group Homes & Care Sites
(as of 4/26 by Fallon Ambulance Service)**

DDS, DMH, DCF and DPH Facilities	
Clients	4253
Staff	4385
Total Tests	8,638
Number of Locations	543

Cases in Long term Care Facilities (as of 4/27)

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	10,635
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	308
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	1,698



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

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



Other Important Updates

Holyoke Soldiers' Home

- The Holyoke Soldiers' Home continues to add executive staff to support the operations of the Home, and today added two additional nursing executives who are focused on infection control and quality assessments. These staff support the ongoing work of the Clinical Command and current staff as they respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Today, eight Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) coaches are starting on the units to provide additional coaching to ensure staff are compliant with proper use. These coaches will be on the units across all shifts observing staff PPE usage and providing real time coaching and friendly correction on PPE donning and doffing. Staff have all been trained, but require some additional coaching on the units to ensure they are compliant with proper use.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 Monday:**
 - 77 veteran resident deaths (66 positive, 10 negatives, 1 unknown)
 - Today's update includes 1 death of a resident who had tested positive and was DNR, DNH
 - 83 veteran residents have tested positive

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- 64 veteran residents have tested negative
- 2 veteran residents have pending tests
- 81 employees have tested positive

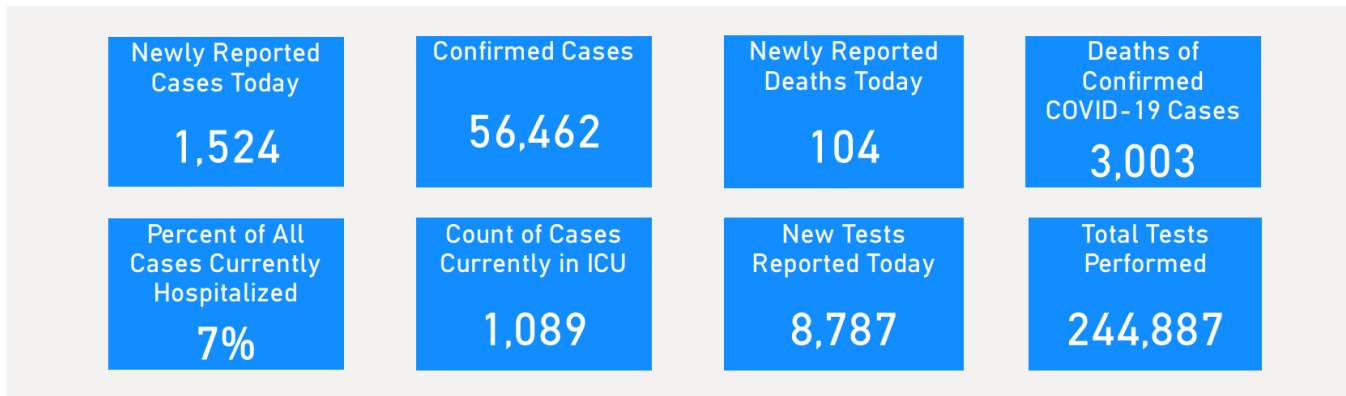
Chelsea Soldiers' Home

- This week, the Chelsea Soldiers' Home expects several veterans who were proactively transferred to VA facilities after testing positive for COVID-19 are being medically cleared to return to the Soldiers' Home. Veterans will be cohorted and will continue to be monitored.
- As retesting is being conducted for veterans on- and off-site, and some veteran residents are testing positive, they are being appropriately cohorted, and many are being transferred to other facilities for higher acuity care.
- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home clinical command continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including regular coordinating calls with the VA Health Care System, continuously reviewing and implementing infection control policy, monitoring and enforcing staff use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and closely monitoring staff levels, supplementing as necessary with support from contracted staff. So far 60 slots have been filled through staffing agency contracted roles.
- Governor Charlie Baker has advised flags be lowered to half-staff until the end of the public health emergency at the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea, Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, as well as the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Agawam and Winchendon due to the fact Military Honors are unavailable during this public health crisis.
- Veteran residents are communicating with their families and loved ones via video with support from the Chelsea Soldiers' Home Social Work team. Families can request updates on their loved ones by contacting the Home at CSH@mass.gov and through phone and video conversations. Please note the Soldiers' Home can only share medical information about a resident with the authorized health care proxy on file.
- **The total numbers at the Chelsea Soldiers' Home as of Monday:**
 - 26 veteran resident deaths (19 tested positive, 7 tested negative)
 - Today's update includes 3 veteran resident deaths: 1 negative who was receiving hospice services and was on comfort measures only, 2 who were positive and were on comfort measures only at the hospital.
 - 28 veteran residents who have tested positive
 - 198 veteran residents who have tested negative
 - 53 staff tested positive

Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard

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

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Resources

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.

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 receive notifications to your phone. To receive these notifications in Spanish, text **COVIDMAESP** to **888-777**

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- Take care of your emotional health:
- Call 2-1-1 and choose the “CALL2TALK” option.
- Samaritans is continuing operations 24/7, as always. During this unprecedented time, it can feel overwhelming to receive constant messages about COVID-19. Call or text their 24/7 helpline any time at 877-870-4673.
- The Disaster Distress Helpline, 1-800-985-5990, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster, including disease outbreaks like COVID-19. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories.

Please share our Communications Resources

Infographics

- [Stop the Spread of Germs](#)
- Social distancing: for [youth](#) for [general audience](#)
- [Coping](#) with stress or fear
- What to do [if you are sick](#)
- 10 tips for at-home [quarantine or self-monitoring](#)

Short videos:

[10 Tips for at home quarantine or self-monitoring](#)

[Stop the Spread of Germs like Seasonal Flu and COVID-19 \(:30\)](#)

[Help Prevent COVID-19 with Social Distancing \(:30\)](#)

[How Young People Can Help Prevent COVID-19 with Social Distancing \(:30\)](#)

[Coping with Stress and Fear from COVID-19 \(:30\)](#)

[Stay Home - Save Lives \(:06\)](#)

Spanish Radio Spots (available on request):

- Prevent the Spread of Germs
- Social Distancing
- Stay Home. Stay Safe. Save Lives.

How to Help Out

- [Donate](#) to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund.
- Volunteer opportunities for health professionals: [Please click here.](#)
- Get involved with the new Community Tracing Collaborative: [Please click here.](#)
- Donate or sell personal protective equipment: [Please click here.](#)
- Health care facilities can learn more about [requesting personal protective equipment here.](#)
- Apply for Jobs at COVID-19 Temporary Care Sites ([Details Here](#)).

Give Blood:

The COVID-19 virus has caused the cancellation of blood drives across the Commonwealth. There is an urgent need **now**. The Governor has deemed “Blood and plasma donors and the employees of the organizations that operate and manage related activities” as an essential service. Your support is needed to communicate to your

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residents that the need is urgent, and donating is a necessity to supply the hospitals with the blood our neighbors require. Donating blood is safe and people should not hesitate to give. In addition, there is a need for community blood drive sites in the eastern part of the state. Identifying donation sites is vital to meet the demand as we go forward. Your local knowledge, suggestions of sites, and potential partners are crucial to meeting the needs of our neighbors who need blood and blood products. To schedule a new blood drive contact Bill Forsyth at (617) 699-3808 or at email William.Forsyth@redcross.org.

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

Requests for Red Cross Emergency Response

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross (ARC) of Massachusetts is committed to fulfilling our Mission of providing emergency relief to our neighbors following a home fire or other disaster. We have implemented temporary changes to our response protocols. ARC we will be responding to your requests for service with a virtual response and ask your assistance in sharing this information with your Incident Commanders and Dispatch Center personnel.

Notification: Continue to request a response by contacting our long-standing emergency line **800-564-1234**.

When calling: Please have contact information for the head of household for each displaced family unit.

A point of contact from the Fire Department or Emergency Management on-scene that we can coordinate with if needed. Quick assessment as to extent of damage.

What we will do:

- Contact each head of household by phone or video chat. Open a virtual case for each affected family.
- Arrange for lodging if needed.
- Deliver a Client Assistance Card (financial assistance) to hotel, family member's home, etc.
- Provide Recovery guidance and assistance in the days following the incident.

If a virtual response is not possible, we will send a minimal number of Red Cross volunteers to the scene to orchestrate the virtual intake process. We value our partnership with your department and encourage you to contact us with any questions.