Sunday, March 22, 2020

COVID-19 Response Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

On March 10, 2020, Governor Charlie Baker declared a State of Emergency to support the Commonwealth's response to coronavirus. On March 14, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the creation of a new COVID-19 Response Command Center. Secretary Marylou Sudders is leading the cross-secretariat response to the outbreak.

The Command Center is the Commonwealth's single point of strategic decision making and coordination for the Administration's comprehensive COVID-19 response.

In support of the Command Center, the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Framingham has activated to Level 2 (Partial Activation). In addition, MEMA's Regional EOCs in Tewksbury, New Bedford, and Agawam have also been partially activated to support local communities.

Important protective measures to be aware of:

- Gatherings of over 25 people are prohibited until April 6th.
- On-premises consumption of food and drink at bars and restaurants is prohibited until April 6th.
- Elementary and Secondary Schools are closed until April 6th.
- Colleges and universities, both public and private, are urged to reduce the need for students to be on campus.
- Employers are encouraged to support alternative work arrangements, including allowing employees to work from home.
- Some government offices are closed, you should check the website or call ahead, to confirm hours of operation.
- MBTA trains and buses are running a reduced service schedule.
- Public & Private daycare providers will be closed effective March 23, and Exempt Emergency Child Care Programs will be established to provide priority access for families of emergency personnel, medical staff, and others critical to confronting COVID-19.
- Professional Licenses for individuals in good standing will be extended for 90-days after the end of the public health emergency.

See a list of all Public Health Orders & Guidance Issued During the State of Emergency

Situation in Numbers

Massachusetts current as of 3/22

646 Total Cases

5 Deaths

3,403 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory

2,601 additional tests performed to date by commercial laboratories

United States current as of 3/20

Case numbers are updated regularly at noon Mondays through Fridays.

Total Cases Reported to CDC*:

**CDC updates national numbers Mon.-Fri. by 4pm. Includes Confirmed & Presumptive Positive*

15,219 Total Cases (+4,777)
337 Travel-Related (+47)
321 Close Contact (+11)
14,561 Under Investigation (+4,719)

201 Deaths (+51)

54 Jurisdictions Reporting Cases (50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, and US V.I.)

Social Distancing Basics:

If you go out:

- ✓ Avoid crowds
- ✓ Stay 6 feet away from others
- ✓ Don't shake hands or hug
- ✓ Call/Facetime/online chat with friends and loved ones.

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
DAILY SITUATION REPORT

State Actions Today

Additional COVID-19 Deaths Announced: (News Release)
This afternoon, DPH announce the deaths of 3 residents of the Commonwealth, bringing the total to 5.

- Three men - two in their 70s from Hampden and Berkshire counties and a third man in his 90s from Suffolk County– have died from COVID-19-related illness, bringing the total number of deaths from the novel coronavirus in Massachusetts to five. All three men were hospitalized. The Berkshire County man was reported to have an underlying health condition but all three men were in an age group that is more likely to experience severe disease from COVID-19 regardless of prior health status.

Governor Attends Ecumenical Services:
Earlier today, Governor Baker attended an ecumenical service at Morning Star Baptist Church in Mattapan.

- At a media availability after services, the Governor echoed comments he made recently about the challenges of social distancing at a time when residents are turning to faith traditions for support.
- He also answered questions on a number of other topics, including the expected increase in the number of cases, increased testing capacity, work with the Army Corps of Engineers on planning for alternative care sites, and continuing state efforts to secure additional Personal Protective Equipment for health care, and other essential personnel.

Emergency Childcare Centers Update:

- Last week, the Commonwealth announced that effective Monday, March 23, all early education centers and family childcare providers will be closed.
- Starting Monday, selected sites will open to serve as emergency drop-in childcare services for families with no other options to continue going to work to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of the Commonwealth's residents.
- Child Care is meant to be for those who must report to work. Outside of the obvious emergency responders and medical professionals, this includes critical service workers like grocery store employees.
- As of Sunday evening, the Commonwealth had approved approximately 500 sites to start operations on Monday. We expect more to come online, **but this needs to be implemented safely and the sites should only be used as a last resort**.
- Exempt Emergency Child Care Website
- List of Providers As Of 3/22 at 5 pm

Virtual Town Halls on Unemployment Benefits:

- Beginning this week, in order to better meet the needs of residents whose employment has been affected by the COVID-19, the Department of Unemployment Assistance will be hosting daily town hall meetings to help constituents achieve a successful unemployment claim. DUA will also take questions from claimants across the Commonwealth. (Find Out How To Participate)

DPH Guidance to Hospitals:

- Today, DPH issued new guidance to hospitals regarding the implementation of alternative, acute, inpatient care space during the COVID-19 State of Emergency. (See the Guidance)

Stay Informed

Key Public Health Messages for All Residents:

- Protect yourself by following public health advice about keeping your hands clean and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Stay home if you are sick. If you need to consult a health care provider, call ahead first or use telehealth services.
- Protect others who are most at risk of COVID-19 by keeping your distance from people (at least 6 feet away from others), especially those who are older, and people living with chronic health conditions.
- If you are outside, avoid crowds.
- Don't shake hands or hug.
- Stay connected to friends and loved ones by phone or through other technology.
- Get information from trusted sources. Visit https://www.mass.gov/covid19 for the latest news, case counts, and lab testing results.
- 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

Communications Resources:

- New Social Distancing infographic released on website.
- Social Distancing messages are now on billboards and will soon be available on public transit. They are also now translated into multiple languages.
- There is a new video on Social Distancing specifically targeted specifically at youth.

COVID-2019 infographic for posting in all public places: https://www.mass.gov/doc/stop-the-spread-of-germs-respiratory-diseases-like-flu-and-covid-19/download

A short video for social media, waiting rooms, and other locations: https://youtu.be/HhUpkGxyjS4
Social media – follow and retweet DPH on Twitter @MassDPH, updated several times per day.
Massachusetts 2-1-1 - Massachusetts residents are urged to use 2-1-1 for information, resources, and referrals regarding COVID-19. Operators are staffing this hotline 24/7 and translators are available in multiple languages. Residents with questions can dial 2-1-1 from any landline or cellphone or use the live chat option on the Mass 2-1-1 website.

- Mass 2-1-1 answered nearly 1,500 calls on 3/21, bringing the total number of calls to **14,340** since activation.