Saturday, April 4, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

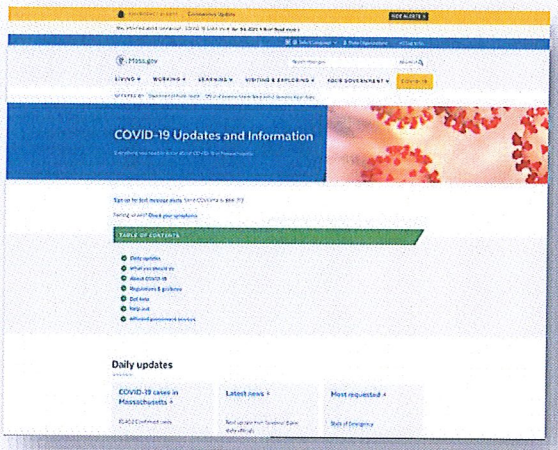
Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

State Actions in Today's Report:

- Daily Case Update (Link in sidebar)
- Guidance Released for Homeless Shelter Operators
- BORIM Action on Licensing of Clinical Fellows
- DOC Expands Health & Safety Measures
- Update on Cases in Long Term Care Facilities & Testing Program
- Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes

Mass.Gov/covid19 Refreshed: Visit the newly updated COVID-19 landing page which has provides improved organization and user experience. (**Visit Site**)



Helpful Links:

- Mass.Gov/covid19
- Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
- Unemployment & COVID-19
- Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal
- 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 4/4

11,736 Total Cases (click for more information

216 Deaths

68,800 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States current as of 4/4

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:

277,205 Total Cases

6,593 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

Guidance for Homeless Shelter Providers

DPH issued new guidance for Shelter providers regarding the establishment, staffing and operation of quarantine location for individuals who have exposure to a positive COVID-19 case.

- **COVID-19 Guidance for Individual Homeless Shelters** | **Doc**
- **Homeless Shelter COVID-19 FAQ** | **Doc**

BORIM Action on Licensure for Clinical Fellows

The following Information was sent through the HHAN today for Academic Medical Centers. If you work at such an institution, please share this message widely. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine has authorized expediting full licensure for clinical fellows. Please find additional information at this link including emergency temporary 90-day license application for physicians who have completed training seeking a full license. (Licensure Application)

DOC Expands Health & Safety Measures Across its Facilities

Out of an abundance of caution, the Massachusetts Department of Correction late yesterday expanded the enhanced health and safety measures in place at all its facilities to further reduce avenues for COVID-19 introduction or transmission.

Elevated protocols are already in place at all 16 DOC facilities: alcohol-based hand sanitizer has been distributed and is available to all inmates and staff at all facilities, high-touch areas are frequently sanitized, and access to soap and running water remain fully accessible to all inmates and personnel. Screening areas have been implemented at DOC facilities, where all persons seeking to enter have their temperatures taken and are surveyed for risk factors. Staff, vendors, and others have been instructed not to enter if they feel ill or meet other criteria.

DOC has now implemented additional measures department-wide to further deter the introduction and transmission of COVID-19. (News Release)

Other Important Updates

Known Cases in Long Term Care Facilities (as of 4/4)

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care Facilities	
Residents of LTC Facilities with Positive Test Results	480
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	94

Click here for the source

DPH is working with the nursing home industry and individual nursing homes across the state to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in their facilities and to make sure residents are receiving the care they need during this unprecedented public health emergency. The administration has distributed advisories to support facilities who

have implemented infectious disease controls, restricted visitation to long term care facilities, implemented mobile testing, distributed personal protective equipment and provide support and technical assistance by public health nurses and epidemiologists. Department of Public Health epidemiologists and nurses are working daily with nursing homes across the state to respond to these outbreaks and prevent additional cases. When a nursing home or rest home has identified staffing shortages, DPH works with regional, state, and federal partners such as the Medical Reserve Corps to request staffing support of nurses with nursing home experience to help ensure the facility has the skilled nursing staff they need to appropriately and safely care for residents.

Update on Nursing Home Testing Program

Last week, the Commonwealth implemented a pilot project that allows for safe, on-site testing of symptomatic residents of nursing and rest homes with a quick turnaround. The pilot is operating under the auspices of the Massachusetts National Guard in partnership with the Department of Public Health and Broad Institute of Cambridge, and samples will be collected by trained personnel from the Massachusetts National Guard. See below for summary of tests completed this week.

Number of Tests Completed:

- Tues: 225 (Holyoke Soldiers' Home)
- Wed: 55 (Hunt Nursing and Rehabilitation Center)
- Thurs: 109 (10 facilities)
- Friday: 168 (16 facilities completed/ 6 cancelled when MANG called to confirm they were coming)
- Saturday: (To be provided in Sunday's Sitrep)

Update on Holyoke & Chelsea Soldiers' Home (as of 4/4)

The Commonwealth continues to make every resource available to the clinical command centers at the Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes as they work to care for the veteran residents and staff, including deploying additional staff, supplies, and support for veteran residents, families, and employees as they navigate the challenges of this public health emergency. Below are today's updates.

Holyoke Soldiers' Home

- On April 3rd, the state engaged Holyoke Medical Center (HMC) to rapidly free up 40 beds for COVID-19-negative residents from the Soldiers' Home of Holyoke. The National Guard and the Clinical Command Center completed the moves of all 40 medically complex patients throughout the day and night to this specially outfitted treatment unit at HMC.
    - The National Guard was deployed to set up the unit and to support the transfer of these frail, veteran residents to the new hospital treatment unit.
    - This move allows staff at the Holyoke to focus on the veteran residents who remain at the home, including those in isolation who have tested positive and for the residents to receive treatment at hospital level of care.
    - Each veteran resident is being monitored closely for the development of any symptoms that may indicate COVID-19 infection.

- Holyoke has strengthened family communication and has confirmed that every veteran residents' health care proxy has been contacted by the home and provided an update.
    - As a reminder, 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.
    - The Soldiers' Home can only share medical information about a resident with the authorized health care proxy listed in the veteran's file.

- The Holyoke Soldiers' Home clinical command structure continues to proactively prepare and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including bringing on additional nursing staff who will start on Monday.
    - A curriculum for staff training and infection control is being developed with support from UMass Nursing School faculty.
    - The National Guard is working with clinical command to support clinical and non-clinical staffing needs at the home. A chaplain and additional behavioral health specialists were added by the National Guard.
    - Holyoke has implemented the guidance issued from CDC, DPH, CMS, and the VA.
    - The clinical command is properly isolating and caring for COVID-19 positive residents, and is distributing the required use of PPE, restricting visitors, increased personal hygiene measures, and increased disinfection protocols.
    - Additional contracted housekeeping staff has been brought onsite for ongoing cleaning to ensure that infection control measures are adhered to.

- **The total numbers at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home as of Saturday:**
    - 22 veteran resident deaths (16 positive tests, 3 pending, 2 negatives, 1 unknown)
    - 59 veteran residents have tested positive
    - 159 veteran residents have tested negative
    - 18 staff tested positive

Chelsea Soldiers' Home

- All 14 veteran residents at the Soldiers' Home of Chelsea who have tested positive for COVID-19 were transferred to the Boston VA Health Care System and are properly isolated and being cared for. The Soldiers' Home will continue to take these clinically appropriate steps with residents who require specialized treatment.
    - All residents and staff of the Chelsea Soldiers' Home are being tested and the results used to inform proper isolation, care and treatment of veterans as well as staffing needs.

- All veteran residents testing will be completed this weekend and staff testing will be completed in the next few days. Testing is being conducted by the National Guard in collaboration with the Department of Public Health.
    - The first round of testing for veteran residents was largely negative.
- iPads are being delivered to Chelsea to support the communication between veteran residents and their loved ones.
    - Families can also request updates on their loved ones by contacting the Home at CSH@mass.gov.
    - The Soldiers' Home can only share medical information about a resident with the authorized health care proxy who is listed in the veteran's file.

- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home clinical command structure continues to proactively prepare and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - The Chelsea Soldiers' Home has and continues to implement the guidance issued from CDC, DPH, CMS, and the VA.
  - Strictly enforcing isolation rooms and quarantine zones for COVID-19 positive residents, increased use of PPE, restricting visitors, increased personal hygiene measures, and increased disinfection protocols.
  - Chelsea is tracking PPE closely and late Friday received an additional shipment of masks.
  - Deep cleaning has been and is continuing to be conducted throughout the facility per CDC guidelines.
  - The Home has contracted with a cleaning vendor to augment staff housekeeping efforts.

- **The total numbers at Chelsea Soldiers' Home as of Saturday:**
  - 3 veteran resident deaths (3 positive)
  - 14 veteran residents who have tested positive
  - 19 veteran residents who have tested negative
  - 6 staff tested positive

How to Help Out

- 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**.

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 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. 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.

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.
- 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.

Communications Resources:

- DPH Flyer/Infographic on reducing stress & coping with fear of COVID-19

- DMH resources on maintaining Emotional Health & Well-Being
- Social Distancing (youth and general) 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.
- MA Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) visual tool for communicating with hard of hearing and Deaf individuals.
- Find and share printable flyers on prevention measures and social distancing on the Department of Public Health's website. Flyers available in multiple languages. Find the flyers by clicking here.

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

Social media – follow and retweet DPH on Twitter @MassDPH, updated several times per day.