Wednesday, December 30, 2020
COVID-19 Command Center
Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

The Command Center Situation Report is published weekly. The next report will be published on Thursday, 1/7/21.



Robert Aucoin, 78, a U.S. Air Force veteran and resident at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, receiving the first COVID-19 vaccine at the Home. Veteran residents in Holyoke and Chelsea were among a wave of long-term care staff and resident vaccinations that kicked-off this week. Story below. Photo credit: Leon Nguyen/The Springfield Republican

In This Week's Report:

- Latest Data: Public Health Update
- Week in Review: Key State Actions
  - Update on Vaccination and Care Sites
  - Long Term Care vaccinations begin in Nursing Homes, Soldiers' Homes
  - A&F/DLS Municipal Memo on CARE Act Extension
  - ABCC Ramps Up New Year's Eve Enforcement
  - DPH, Emergency Management, and Disaster Recovery Updates
  - Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes Weekly Update

Helpful Links:

- COVID-19 Vaccine in Massachusetts
- Apply for jobs at COVID-19 Alternate Care Sites:
  - UMassMemorialResponds.com
  - LowellGeneralResponds.com
- Public Messaging Resources for Municipalities & Businesses
- 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
- COVID-19 Cost Eligibility and Tracking Guidance

Situation in Numbers

Massachusetts current as of 12/30

352,558 Total Confirmed Cases (click here for more information)

12,076 Deaths among confirmed cases

10,848,872 tests for the virus conducted to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals, and commercial laboratories.

United States Last Updated 12/30

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:

19,432,125 Total Cases

337,419 Deaths

57 Jurisdictions Reporting Cases (50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Marianas, Marshall Islands, American Samoa, 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:

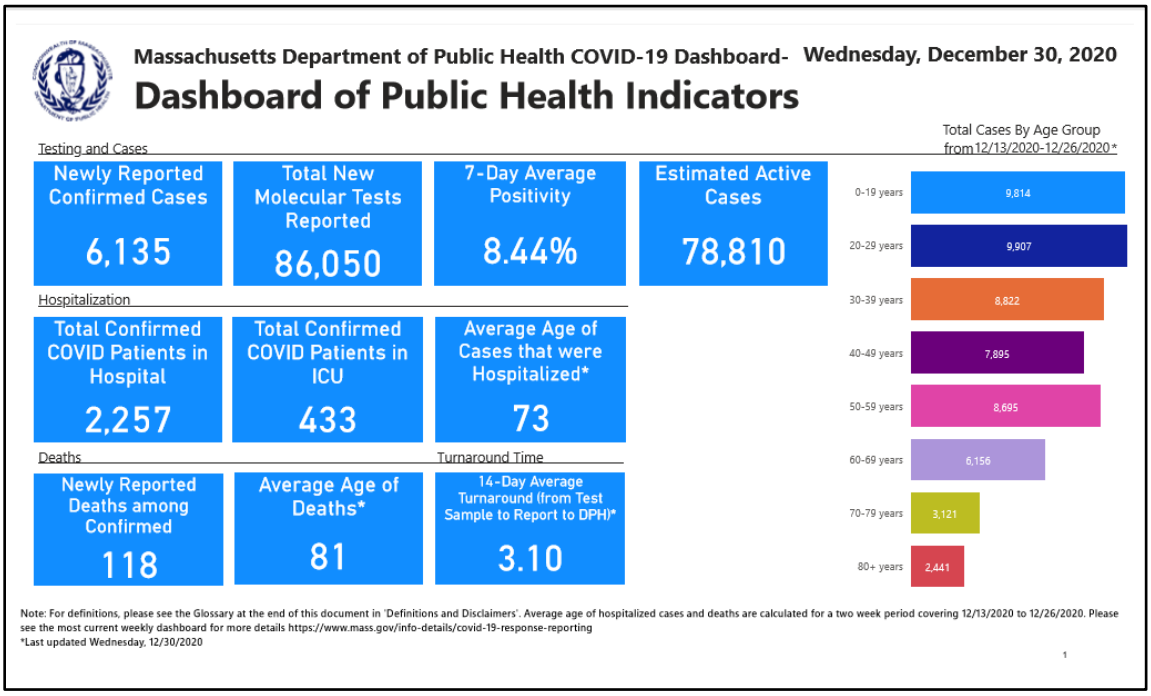
- ✓ Avoid crowds
- ✓ Stay 6 feet away from others
- ✓ Don't shake hands or hug
- ✓ Wear a face covering or mask if physical distancing is not possible.

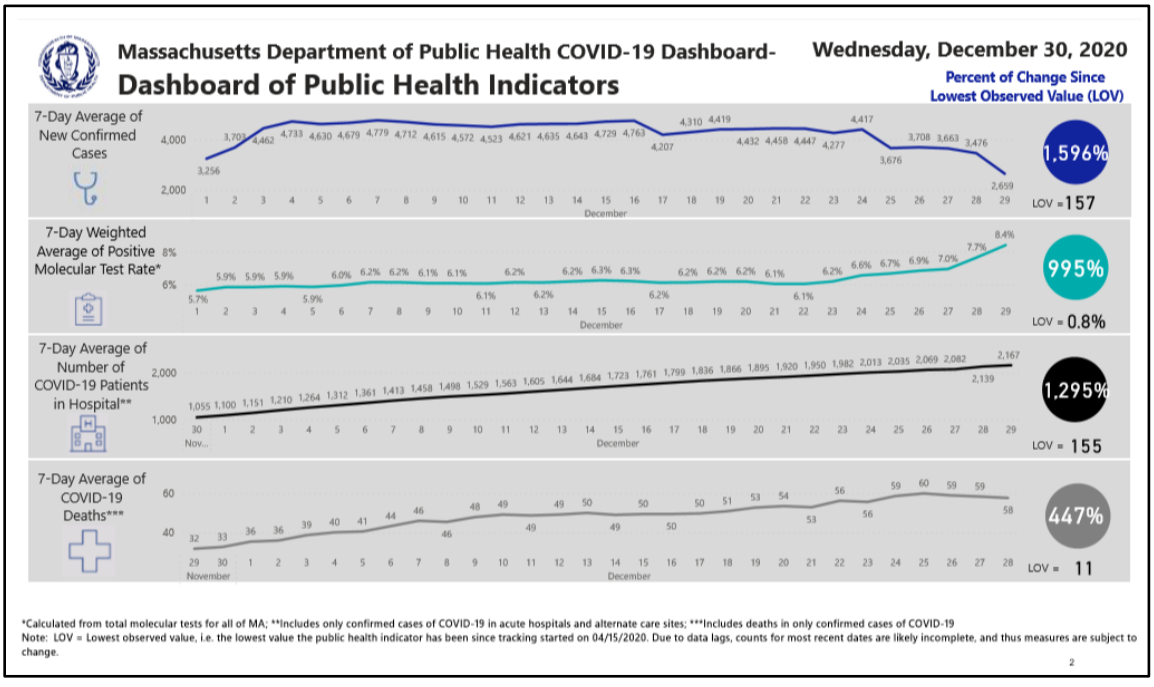
COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Latest Data: COVID-19 Public Health Update

***Testing Update**:* Today, over **86,000** new molecular (viral) tests were reported in Massachusetts with **6,135** newly reported confirmed positive cases. The total number of molecular tests administered to date is nearly **10.8 million**.

***Hospitalizations & Capacity Update**:* As of today, **2,257** people are hospitalized, with **433** 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:
The Command Center will release the **Weekly Public Health Report, with town by town information, including the weekly listing of city and town risk levels** on Thursday, 12/31. The report will also include 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.

NOTICE: COVID-19 dashboard reports will NOT be published on New Year's Day, Friday, January 1st. **Report published on January 2 will include two days of COVID-19 data.**

Week in Review: State Actions

Vaccination Update

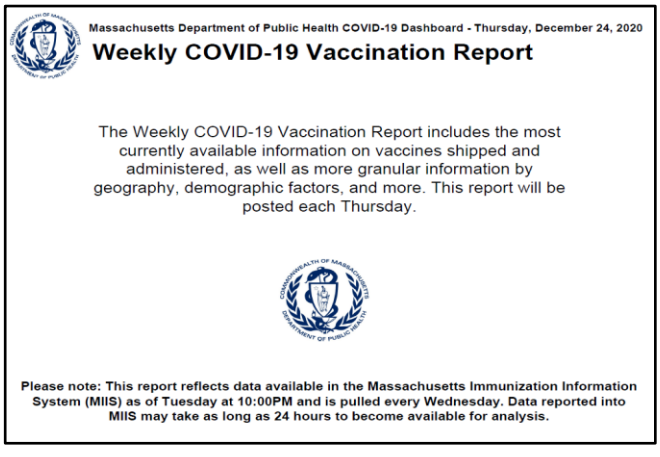
Today, the Baker-Polito Administration, and the COVID-19 Response Command Center provided an update on COVID-19 vaccine distribution in the Commonwealth. As of yesterday, approximately 75,000 doses had been administered and the more than 287,000 doses are expected to arrive in Massachusetts by the end of the year.



On Thursday, the Baker-Polito Administration launched a COVID-19 vaccine dashboard to update the public on vaccine distribution and progress on a weekly basis. The dashboard will be posted every Thursday by 5 p.m. and will include information on vaccine supply distribution, administration, and other data. The new dashboard can be found on the mass.gov/CovidVaccine website.

Key metrics that are included are data on:

- Number of doses of vaccine shipped and administered.
- Number of people vaccinated.
- Vaccine distribution numbers by county.
- Age and race/ethnicity breakdowns of those receiving vaccines.
- Vaccines administered by different types of providers.


Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard - Thursday, December 24, 2020

Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Report

The Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Report includes the most currently available information on vaccines shipped and administered, as well as more granular information by geography, demographic factors, and more. This report will be posted each Thursday.

Please note: This report reflects data available in the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS) as of Tuesday at 10:00PM and is pulled every Wednesday. Data reported into MIIS may take as long as 24 hours to become available for analysis.

The amount and type of data included on the dashboard will grow and be refined over time as vaccinations continue in additional groups and populations and additional vaccine products are approved and distributed.

This vaccination dashboard report builds on the state's ongoing efforts to publicly report out data and will help track the state's vaccination efforts for COVID-19. Currently, the Commonwealth produces one of the most

comprehensive public data reports on COVID-19 in the nation and includes detailed municipal-level data, information on contact tracing, COVID-19 clusters and more.

To help the public more easily access the Commonwealth's growing amount of COVID-19 information, the Department of Public Health will launch an interactive digital dashboard in early January.

COVID-19 Care Sites

During today's coronavirus update, EOHHS Secretary Sudders, Director of the Commonwealth's COVID-19 Command Center, also provided an overview of the situation facing hospitals across the state during the current surge of COVID-19 cases. In just over a month, hospitalizations due to COVID-10 have increased by 129 percent. During that same period, COVID-19 ICU admissions have grown by 106 percent. The demand on hospitals are expected to grow throughout January and may create severe constraints on both hospital staff and care capacity. The Commonwealth will continue to work with hospitals to ensure that residents throughout the state get the care they need. However, residents should expect several transfer options to be offered for those needing hospitalization during this time of increased demand for acute care service. For individuals needing hospitalization those options may include:

- Receiving care at the hospital you visit for care for the duration of your treatment,
- Some minor to moderately ill COVID-19 patients being triaged and stabilized at the receiving hospital, and then transferred to a specialized, fully staffed COVID-19 field hospital in either Lowell or Worcester,
- For individuals needing hospitalization for non-COVID-19 related illness, transfer to another hospital in the region

This approach to managing care capacity during the current or future surge of cases will ensure that patients get the right care, in the right setting, at the right time. COVID-19 patients transferred to one of the Commonwealth's two recently re-opened field hospitals can expect quality care by a team of doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals.



Secretary Sudders also made a plea to residents to continue following guidance on limiting the spread of COVID-19 in the community, by practicing "bubble fidelity" in New Year's celebrations, keeping gatherings small, and limiting them to people living in the same household.

Long Term Care vaccinations begin in Nursing Homes, Soldiers' Homes

On Monday, the first residents of long-term care facilities in Massachusetts received COVID-19 vaccination. Shirley Nolan, a retired teacher, was the first resident vaccinated at Benjamin Healthcare Center in Boston.



Yesterday, the first veteran residents at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke and the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea received the COVID-19 vaccination. Vaccination was done onsite at each Home, through a federal Long-Term Care pharmacy

partnership program with CVS and Walgreens. The onsite vaccinations also began for staff at both Soldiers' Homes on 12/29.

"Administering vaccines to our frontline health care workers and now some of our most vulnerable residents in the Soldiers' Home provides relief and hope that there are brighter days ahead for all," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "We are pleased to start providing the first dose to the incredible men and women living in both the Holyoke and Chelsea facilities to offer more protection from COVID-19, and remain grateful to the dedicated staff who are working tirelessly to keep our veterans safe and healthy during the pandemic."

"As the Commonwealth prioritizes long-term care residents in the COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan, we are glad to see the veterans who live at the Soldiers Homes receive their vaccinations today," said **Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. "We look forward to working with all of our partners on the continued rollout of the vaccine in a safe, fair and equitable way."

"The first wave of vaccinations of residents and staff at long term care facilities in the Commonwealth gives us hope for the beginning of the end of this devastating pandemic, one that we know has disproportionately impacted residents of long term care facilities," said **Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders.** "While there is hope, we must continue to be vigilant in the face of COVID-19, and I deeply appreciate the ongoing efforts of frontline health care workers like the team at the Soldiers' Homes during this unprecedented time."

"The Department of Veterans' Services and the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke and Chelsea move forward with hope and perseverance to a bright future for our veteran residents and staff," said **Veterans' Services Secretary Cheryl Lussier Poppe**. "We look forward to continuing our work to ensure our veterans are cared for, and today's vaccination is another vital step in our mission as we continue this commitment. The ongoing support of the surrounding community is impactful, and deeply appreciated, as we navigate this public health emergency together."

As Long Term Care facilities, the Soldiers' Homes in Chelsea and Holyoke are prioritized in Phase One of the COVID vaccine distribution plan. The Soldiers' Homes are enrolled in the CDC's Long-Term Care Pharmacy Partnership program for the COVID-19 vaccination administration.

In the coming weeks, there will be additional onsite vaccination clinics at each Home to vaccinate veteran residents and staff. The Homes are encouraging the vaccine for all Veteran residents and staff and are working to obtain consent for those interested. COVID vaccination is voluntary for everyone – however all people are encouraged to get vaccinated.

In addition to the COVID-19 vaccination at both Soldiers' Homes, the facilities will continue weekly testing and daily symptom checking of all residents and staff. Both Soldiers' Homes has been intently focused on following infection control procedures and maintaining best practices for the safety of veteran residents and staff.

A&F/DLS Provide Update Regarding the Coronavirus Relief Fund Extension

This week the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, and the Division of Local Services provided a guidance memo for municipal officials regarding the extension of the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund, which was signed into law as part of the most recent federal stimulus legislation. **You can read the memo by accessing the document here.**

DLS
DIVISION OF LOCAL SERVICES
MA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

ABCC Ramps Up New Year's Eve Enforcement

This New Year's Eve will require additional efforts by the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC) enforcement team. In addition to its annual impaired driving program, agency Investigators will be ensuring that restaurants and bars throughout the Commonwealth comply with COVID Safety Standards and the 10 PM mandatory night-time closing period.



To date, Investigators have found most restaurants to be in compliance with the Governor's Orders and Safety Standards. Facility layouts are maintaining proper distancing and restaurant staff and patrons have been wearing proper facial coverings. However, 38 bars have had their liquor licenses indefinitely suspended, when the commission found that they had flagrantly violated the Safety Standards while several more have pending hearings. (**See ABCC News Release**)

Important Updates

Department of Public Health Updates:

- A new page on the Long Term Care Facility Pharmacy Program has been launched, including sharing facility matches with either CVS and Walgreens.
- Continuing to make regular updates to provider webpages, including links to CDC resources and other DPH developed guidance documents. And the prioritization list on the website is updated regularly based on inquiries received.
- MA211 received 3,570 calls from Monday 12/21 through Sunday 12/27 for a new total of 179,531.
- DPH received Week 7 allocations on 12/22 as follows: Bamlanivimab 1870 doses and Regeneron 450 doses. This allocation is for a two-week period (12/22/20-1/5/21). The Therapeutics Working Group is recommending an equitable allocation strategy.
- There were 35 deliveries to health care entities on Tuesday (12/29) (6 PPE/11 testing supplies and 18 BinaxNOW kits); 21 deliveries were made on Wednesday (12/30) (4 PPE/7 testing supplies and 10 BinaxNOW kits); 24 deliveries have been scheduled for Thursday (12/31) (1 PPE/3 testing supplies and 20 BinaxNOW kits). No deliveries will be made on Friday (1/1/21) due to the holiday.
- Currently 294 volunteers with the Academic Public Health Volunteer Corps are supporting 47 local boards of health.
- Planning continues relative to the allocation and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine, including vaccination of first responders (EMS, police, and fire).
- DPH issued guidance for long-term care (LTC) facilities regarding ordering of BinaxNOW test kits.
- DPH issued Update to Guidance Regarding Seasonal Influenza Vaccination of Healthcare Personnel at Massachusetts Nursing Homes and Rest Homes for the 2020-2021 Influenza Season. Due to the CDC recommendation to avoid other vaccines for 14 days before and after the COVID-19 vaccine is administered, the October 6th DPH Commissioner's Order has been modified to require all personnel in long-term care facilities are vaccinated instead by February 28, 2021.
- For the date range of 12/18-12/24, 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.

- Currently 14 Rapid Response Teams are deployed to nursing homes across the Commonwealth. Teams are also helping nursing homes on the day of their Vaccine Clinics to ensure staff and residents are monitored after vaccination.
- 8 National Guard Teams are deployed and supporting nursing and rest homes.
- There were 55 nursing homes that held Federal Pharmacy Partnership Vaccine Clinics on Monday and Tuesday.

Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery Updates:

Mass Care

- 3 state contracted isolation/recovery hotels in the cities of Everett, Taunton, and Pittsfield continue to receive client placements: 150 individuals are currently housed in the program, a decrease of 37 since last week.
    - Top 5 referring cities:
        - Boston (169)
        - Springfield (129)
        - Brockton (95)
        - Worcester (84)
        - Cambridge (82)
    - To date, a total of 1,341 residents have been placed in these hotels for safe isolation and recovery.

Emergency Food Box Program Update (as of 12/28/20):

Food Bank/ MEMA Warehouse	Total Number of Food Boxes Distributed to Date	Total Number of Food Boxes Remaining in Inventory
Food Bank of Western MA	31,259	0
Greater Boston Food Bank	205,920	0
Merrimack Valley Food Bank	3,312	0
Worcester County Food Bank	1,440	0
MEMA Warehouse (Reserve)	36,869	3,456
Total Food Boxes	**278,800**	**3,456**

Logistics (including Personal Protective Equipment and Supplies)

- 11 orders prepared for pickup or delivery from 12/24-12/30.
- The Field Hospital in Lowell was supplied an additional shipment on 12/30, including hand sanitizer stations, blood pressure cuffs, and other medical supplies.
- The three isolation hotels continue to be supported with weekly allotments of PPE, snacks/drinks, cleaners, and administrative supplies.
- The MEMA State Logistics Warehouse will be closed on Friday, 1/1/2021.

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:

Data as of: 12/25/2020

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)
$649.5M +$40.76M	$460.8M +$5.27M	$52.9M +$7.12M	$7.3M $0
849 Projects +4	574 Projects +6	63 Projects +5	37 Projects 0

Approved Applicants: 630

- Online Applicant Technical Assistant Requests: 496
- FEMA Requests for Public Assistance (RPA) Applicants: 667
- MEMA has approved the Feeding Operations PW $9,325,068.48 (Federal Cost Share of $6,993,801.36). The project is pending final FEMA review and obligation.

Survivor Assistance:
Throughout the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday season, the MAVOAD (Mass Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster) have been busy with supplying clothing, activity items, and refreshments to the residents and staff who are at the isolation and quarantine hotels. Their great coordination and collaboration between 14+ organizations have helped make the holiday season a bit brighter for these folks who are in need.

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities (as of 12/30)	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	**30,642**
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	**416**
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	**7,340**



Holyoke Soldiers' Home Weekly Update (current as of 12/29/20)

- Yesterday, the first veteran residents and staff at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke received the COVID-19 vaccination. The first resident was Mr. Robert Aucoin, 78, Airman 2nd Class, U.S. Air Force.

  - The Veteran residents residing at the dedicated skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center were offered the COVID-19 vaccine on December 17.
- Veterans will ring in 2021 with safe celebrations at the Home. On New Year's Eve, the recreation staff will go room to room with eggnog, sparkling cider, and snacks. On New Year's Day homemade cinnamon rolls will start the day. The main meal will include Chicken Cordon Bleu, Shrimp Cocktail, and Ice Cream. The Veterans will be treated to a special virtual concert provided by Home Base, and hundreds of holiday cards continue to be distributed
  - Additionally, the Soldiers' Home will have staff on hand on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day to place FaceTime and phone calls for families to connect with their loved ones while visitation is suspended. You can contact the Family Line at (413)-552-4764 to schedule a virtual visit.
- The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke continues to prioritize virtual visitation and family communication as visitation and movement throughout the facility have been suspended, per infection control protocol, since November 20 for all units until further notice, and PPE protocols have been heightened. Families are encouraged to continue video visits for regular family communication through video chat, and the Family Line is available for ad hoc updates with support from social work and clinical staff. Virtual visits can be scheduled by calling the Family Line at 413-552-4764 Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Families can also request updates via email at CommunicationsMailbox-HLY@Mass.gov. Note: The Soldiers' Home can only share medical information about a resident with the authorized health care proxy on file.
- 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 and interim leadership including a permanent Deputy Superintendent, and a new Interim Superintendent.
  - On December 21, Glen Hevy, a retired U.S. Army Infantry Officer, joined as the new permanent Deputy Superintendent.
  - On December 20, Michael Lazo began as the Interim Superintendent of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke.
- The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke is taking every precaution to mitigate COVID-19 entering and spreading at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke. Based on guidance from DPH, and in consultation with infection control experts, the Home has implemented mandatory 2 times per week testing for all staff and residents. Increased testing frequency will allow us to detect COVID-19 early and will continue until the Home receives 14 consecutive days of negative results.
  - The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke 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.
- 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 Commonwealth has been making capital investments to address the short and long-term needs of the Home. This includes a short-term Refresh Project and a longer-term Rapid Planning Capital Project for a future Soldiers' Home in Holyoke. While the expedited capital project will address long-term facility

needs, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Department of Veterans' Services, and Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance have been addressing immediate capital needs, including a $6 million refresh of units, to significantly improve infection control for the residents and staff.

- On Veterans Day, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the next steps for the expedited capital project for the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke. Following the conclusion of the 12-week Rapid Planning Phase of the project, the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance released the needs assessment report, and announced the selection of Payette Associates for the next phase as the design firm to lead the design and planning phase, the next step of the expedited capital project. Payette will build on the evaluation they previously completed, and will develop a full project scope, refine the plan, and confirm the budget, timelines, and ensure conformity with the regulatory process. One of the early deliverables is the preparation of the submission for the VA State Home Construction Grant by its April 15, 2021 deadline. The website for the project is www.mass.gov/HolyokeSHProject.

- 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 December 29 is as follows:
  - Status:
    - 3 positive and not clinically recovered
      - On December 27, 3 veteran residents who are residing at Holyoke Medical Center received positive test results for COVID-19. All other Holyoke residents at HMC were tested and are COVID-negative.
    - 15 veterans are negative
    - 36 residents have a pending test. Please note that all veteran residents and staff are now being tested twice weekly, which will increase the number of pending tests.
    - 72 residents have been determined clinically recovered
    - 1 resident has refused testing
  - Resident locations:
    - 101 veterans are onsite
    - 26 veterans are offsite
      - 21 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 77 veteran deaths of veterans who tested positive
    - On December 16, 2020, a resident of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, who has been residing at the dedicated skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center since April, died. The resident had tested positive for COVID-19 in early December.
  - Following the most recent staff surveillance testing
    - 1 positive staff
    - All others who previously tested positive are clinically recovered

Chelsea Soldiers' Home Weekly Update (current as of 12/29/20)

- Yesterday, the first veteran residents and staff at the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea received the COVID-19 vaccination. The first resident was Mr. Dominic Pitella, 94, an Army Air Corps Corporal who has been residing at the Home since April 2018.

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

- Eric Johnson, MBA, began as the new permanent Superintendent of the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea on December 14. Johnson, a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator, is a health care executive and U.S. Army veteran who comes to Chelsea from Norwood Healthcare and Rehab, where he has been Executive Director since 2018. Prior to Norwood, Johnson was the Executive Director at two other skilled nursing facilities in Massachusetts.
- The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea continues to prioritize virtual visitation, as visitation and movement throughout the facility remains suspended for all units until further notice per infection control protocol. The Home remains vigilant in its infection control, including enhanced precautions throughout the facility and strict infection control protocols to keep veteran residents and staff safe, including continuing staff education, screening, and testing. Visitation will resume after 14 consecutive days without a new positive test.
- Families can request updates on their loved ones by contacting their assigned social worker, or emailing the Home at CSH@mass.gov. They can schedule virtual visits by video or phone call. 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.
- The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea currently 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 December 29 is as follows:
  - Residents
    - 4 veteran residents are positive
    - 133 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 staff surveillance testing
    - 23 employees are positive
    - All other employees who previously tested positive have been determined clinically recovered

Communications Resources

Public Messaging Resources for Communities:

The COVID-19 Command Center has produced many communication resources aimed at helping communities inform and educate residents on recent executive orders and guidance related to COVID-19.

Visitors to the Stop COVID-19 Public Messaging webpage will find both printable flyers, posters, and digital resources in multiple languages on topics such as:

- Statewide guidelines, advisories, and orders
- Staying safe in the community
- Using local public alert systems for COVID-19 information
- **NEW:** Materials for Business
  - Return to work guidance
  - Employee Screening Questionnaire
  - Business guidance – New, Temporary Capacity Limits
  - Updated safe store tips for retailers



DPH Communication Materials in Multiple Languages

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

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.

How to Help Out

- Work at an Alternate Care Site in either **Worcester** or **Lowell**
- Donate to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund

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