

Tuesday, April 7, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

State Actions in Today's Report:

- Daily Case Update (Link in sidebar)
- Baker-Polito Administration Announce \$800M Infusion for Health Care Providers Throughout MA
- Nursing Home Resource Line
- Expansion of Rapid COVID-19 Drive-Thru Testing
- DPH Issues Grocery Store Order Re: Operation & Occupancy
- PPE & Equipment Update From The Command Center
- Update on Cases in Long Term Care Facilities & Testing Program
- Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes

Nursing Home Family Resource Line Launched (See Details Below)



A graphic for the Nursing Home Family Resource Line. It features a smartphone icon with the number 617-660-5399 on the screen. To the right, the text reads "NURSING HOME FAMILY RESOURCE LINE" in blue, followed by "617-660-5399" in large grey font. At the bottom, it says "CALL ANY TIME 9AM-5PM, 7 DAYS A WEEK" and includes the Massachusetts state seal.

Helpful Links:

- [Mass.Gov/covid19](https://www.mass.gov/covid19)
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [Unemployment & COVID-19](#)
- [Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal](#)
- [Emergency Childcare Site](#)
- [MBTA.com/covid19](https://www.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 4/7**

15,202 Total Cases (click for more information)

356 Deaths*

* Please note that today's reported deaths reflect deaths occurring over the weekend and the past 24 hours.

81,344 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States **current as of 4/7**

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:

374,329 Total Cases

12,064 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

At a 2:30 p.m. press conference, Governor Baker, Lt. Governor Polito, and Secretary Sudders provided the following updates and announcements: ([see video of today's briefing](#))

Additional MassHealth Financial Resources: ([News Release](#))

The Baker-Polito Administration has announced a new infusion of \$800 million in stabilization funding through MassHealth to support health care providers impacted by and responding to COVID-19. Health care providers across the Commonwealth have stepped up in unprecedented ways in the past few weeks while experiencing a significant impact on their revenue and operations. This funding will support hospitals, nursing facilities, primary care providers, behavioral health providers, and long-term services and supports providers and will be distributed starting this month and through July. This funding is in addition to the \$290 million in immediate cash relief and \$550 million in accelerated payments to providers announced in March. The Executive Office of Health and Human Services will continue to monitor and evaluate the situation.

These resources include:

- More than \$400 million to hospitals.
 - The majority of this funding will support 28 safety net and high-Medicaid hospitals, to address lost revenue and increased costs for hospitals at the front lines of treating patients with COVID-19.
 - This includes a 20% rate increase for COVID-19 care, as well as a 7.5% across-the-board rate increase for other hospital care.
- More than \$80 million for Nursing Facilities
 - \$50 million will be dedicated funding for all nursing facilities across the state.
 - Facilities and units within nursing facilities that are designated COVID-19 sites of care will receive approximately \$30 million in additional funding to support their capacity to care for COVID-19 patients.
- More than \$300 million for other health care providers that are delivering medical care for COVID-19 or providing services that keep residents safe in their homes and out of the hospital, including:
 - More than \$50 million for community health centers.
 - Around \$30 million for personal care attendants.
 - Funding for ambulance providers physicians, community behavioral health providers, and Home Health Agencies.
 - Funding for certain long-term services and supports day programs such as Adult Day Health or Day Habilitation programs that have converted from group programs to actively serving members via alternative means.

Nursing Home Family Resource Line:

Also, today the Baker-Polito Administration announced the launch of a new **Nursing Home Family Resource Line**, a dedicated telephone line that will connect family members of nursing home and rest home residents with the information and resources they need. This resource was created so that family and community members have one central contact that they can reach out to if they have questions or concerns about the care their loved one is receiving during the COVID-19 outbreak. **The line is staffed from 9 AM – 5 PM, seven days a week.** Staff will coordinate across state agencies to help callers find answers to their questions.

Families and community members can call the line at **(617) 660-5399**.

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PPE & Equipment Update From The Command Center

As work continues to ensure health care workers on the frontlines are protected and safe, Secretary Sudders offered the following update on PPE and ventilator distribution to health care facilities, cities, towns and first responders throughout Massachusetts.

- Since the outbreak started, over 1,000 deliveries have been made
- Last weekend, approximately 350 deliveries, including over 340,000 AIRKRAFT N95 masks and almost 475,000 masks total
- 98 ventilators of the 100 secured from the federal stockpile have been deployed
- Nearly 100,000 gowns and over 1 million gloves have been distributed

PPE has gone to nursing homes and senior living facilities, hospitals, community health centers, local public safety, boards of health and other health care facilities in the Commonwealth.

Other State Actions Today

Expansion of Rapid COVID-19 Drive-Through Testing In Massachusetts ([News Release](#))

Earlier today, the Baker-Polito Administration and CVS announced the launch of a new rapid testing site in Lowell, which will enable on-the-spot COVID-19 testing and results at no cost. The new CVS site in Lowell will use the new Abbott ID NOW™ COVID-19 test. With the launch of this site, Massachusetts is the third state where CVS has launched rapid testing sites, joining Georgia and Rhode Island.

CVS Health will be transitioning its efforts to support COVID-19 testing in Massachusetts to the Lowell location, which allows for up to 1,000 patients to be tested per day and receive results on-site so they can properly quarantine or seek treatment as appropriate. As a result, the company will be halting COVID-19 testing at the original Shrewsbury pilot testing site.

Testing at the Lowell site will be overseen by licensed health care providers from MinuteClinic, the retail medical clinic of CVS Health. The rapid COVID-19 testing will take place in the parking lot of the Showcase Cinemas located at 32 Reiss Avenue, in Lowell. **No testing will take place at CVS Pharmacy or MinuteClinic locations.** Patients will need to pre-register in advance online at [CVS.com](https://www.cvs.com) in order to schedule a same-day time slot for testing.

DPH Issues New Grocery Store Guidance

On April 7, the Department of Public Health issued an emergency order regarding grocery store operations and occupancy limits. ([See the Order](#))

Other Important Updates

Known Cases in Long Term Care Facilities (as of 4/7 at 12:30 p.m.)

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	958
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	129

[Click here for the source](#)

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Update on Nursing Home Testing Program

Last week, the Commonwealth implemented a project that allows for safe, on-site testing of symptomatic residents of nursing and rest homes with a quick turnaround. The program is operating under the auspices of the Massachusetts National Guard in partnership with the Department of Public Health and Broad Institute of Cambridge. Since launching the initiative, more than **1,600** tests have been collected. See a summary below of tests completed so far.

Date	Tests Completed	Facilities Visited
3/31	225	1
4/1	55	1
4/2	145	10
4/3	193	18
4/4	310	21
4/5	309	18
4/6	124	11
4/7	308	23
Total	1669	103

Update on Holyoke & Chelsea Soldiers' Home (as of 4/7)

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 updates for 4/7:

Holyoke Soldiers' Home

- Today, Executive Office of Health and Human Services Deputy Secretary Dan Tsai visited the Holyoke Soldiers' Home today to thank the staff on the ground for their dedication and support.
- Staff testing is being completed this week
- Ongoing family communication is continuing with support from nurse case managers and social workers brought onsite on Monday.
 - 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 Holyoke Soldiers' Home clinical command structure continues to prepare and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Ensuring staffing levels to continue care for residents, including leveraging clinical support from the National Guard. An enhanced staffing pattern is being developed, and additional support from contracted and per-diem staff is being added.
 - Medical and nursing rounding continues to ensure infection protocols are being followed.

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- Holyoke continues to implement the guidance issued from CDC, DPH, CMS, and the VA.
- The clinical command is enforcing quarantine zones for COVID-19 positive residents, and continues to distribute and require use of PPE, restricting visitors, increased personal hygiene measures, and increased disinfection protocols.
- Additional contracted housekeeping staff brought onsite for ongoing terminal cleaning to ensure that infection control measures are adhered to.
- **The total numbers at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home as of Tuesday:**
 - 25 veteran resident deaths (18 positive tests, 3 pending, 3 negatives, 1 unknown)
 - 65 veteran residents have tested positive
 - 94 veteran residents have tested negative
 - 67 staff tested positive; 210 staff tested negative

Chelsea Soldiers' Home

- All community/shared areas at Chelsea have been closed, and residents in Chelsea's Domiciliary - a dormitory style residence - are being screened coming in and out of the dorm, and visitors continue to be restricted.
 - In the event that they are needed, additional isolation zones have been identified.
- Staff testing is in progress and will be completed early this week.
 - Staff that are currently on medical leave are also being screened via drive through testing in the parking lot.
- The team continues to manage staffing to provide safe care for residents - and is putting in place per diem contracts with NP, RN, LPNs for immediate starts.
- Continued support for resident communications with loved ones:
 - iPads have been delivered to Chelsea to support veteran resident communications, with assistance of social workers.
 - Families can also request updates on their loved ones by contacting the Home at CSH@mass.gov.
 - Please note the Soldiers' Home can only share medical information about a resident with the authorized health care proxy on file.
- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home clinical command structure continues to proactively prepare and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including regular, frequent deep cleaning and terminal cleaning.
 - 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 on Friday received an additional shipment of masks.
 - Deep cleaning has been and is continuing to be conducted throughout the facility per CDC guidelines and Chelsea has contracted with a cleaning vendor to augment staff housekeeping efforts.
 - All veteran residents who test positive for COVID-19 have been transferred to the Boston VA Health Care System, and if additional veteran residents test positive, they will be proactively transferred to the to be properly quarantined and cared for.
- **The total numbers at Chelsea Soldiers' Home as of Tuesday:**
 - 5 veteran resident deaths (4 tested positive, 1 test pending)

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- 14 veteran residents who have tested positive
- 19 veteran residents who have tested negative
- 258 veteran residents have been tested and are awaiting results
- 9 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.](#)

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](https://www.redcross.org) or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

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.

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:

[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)

10 Tips for at home quarantine or self-monitoring -- coming soon.

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.

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- 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.