

Thursday, April 1, 2021

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, 4/8/21.



On Tuesday, the Baker-Polito Administration joined with state and federal partners to tour the mass vaccination site at the Hynes Convention Center. The Commonwealth and FEMA announced a partnership to expand access to the COVID-19 vaccine by bringing 6,000 federal doses daily, for a total of 7,000 doses per day when combined with the state's current allocation. (See details below in Week in Review section.)

In This Week's Report:

- Latest Data: Public Health & Vaccine Data Update
- Week in Review: Key State Actions
 - Mobile Vaccination & New Support Announced for Disproportionately Impacted Communities
 - MA and FEMA Team up to Increase Vaccination Administration
 - Pooled Testing Initiative Shows Low School Positivity Rate
 - Vaccine Rates Updated, Additional Vaccinators Authorized
 - Safely Celebrating Spring Holidays in Long Term Care Facilities
 - DPH, Emergency Management, and Disaster Recovery Updates
 - Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes Weekly Update

Helpful Links:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine in Massachusetts](#)
- [Public Messaging Resources for Municipalities & Businesses](#)
- [Mass.gov/findfoodhelp](#)
- [Unemployment & COVID-19](#)
- [Reopening Massachusetts](#)
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [COVID-19 Cost Eligibility and Tracking Guidance](#)



Situation in Numbers

Massachusetts **current as of 4/1**

600,632 Total Confirmed Cases ([click here for more information](#))

16,876 Deaths among confirmed cases

18,928,748 tests for the virus conducted to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals, and commercial laboratories.

United States **Last Updated 4/1**

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:

30,277,908 Total Cases

549,098 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.

Latest Data: COVID-19 Public Health Update

Massachusetts Department of Public Health | COVID-19 Dashboard

Today at a Glance

Released on: April 1, 2021
Data as of: March 31, 2021
Caution: recent data may be incomplete

	Cases	Testing	Hospitalizations	Deaths
<p>Navigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Today's Overview Overview Trends COVID-19 Cases COVID-19 Testing Hospitalization COVID-19 Deaths Higher Ed & LTCF Patient Breakdown City and Town Resources Data Archive 	<p>Confirmed Cases</p> <p>Today there were 2,455 new, confirmed cases reported bringing the total to 600,632 total confirmed cases.</p> <p>Probable Cases</p> <p>Today, there were 304 new, probable cases reported bringing the total to 37,707 total probable cases.</p> <p>Estimated Active Cases</p> <p>There are an estimated 32,868 currently active COVID-19 cases.</p>	<p>Tests Reported</p> <p>There were 107,740 new COVID-19 molecular tests reported, bringing the cumulative total to 18,928,748 tests.</p> <p>Turn Around Time</p> <p>The current turn around time for a molecular test is 1.29 days.</p> <p>Percent Positivity</p> <p>The 7-day average of percent positivity is 2.49%.</p>	<p>Hospitalizations</p> <p>There are 700 patients hospitalized for COVID-19.</p> <p>ICU & Intubated Patients</p> <p>There are 166 patients in Intensive Care Units (ICU) and 86 patients are intubated.</p> <p>Average Age of Patients</p> <p>The average age of patients who were hospitalized for COVID-19 was 64 years old.</p>	<p>Confirmed Deaths</p> <p>There were 32 new, confirmed deaths reported. There have been 16,876 confirmed deaths in total.</p> <p>Probable Deaths</p> <p>There were 0 new, probable deaths reported. There have been 341 probable deaths in total.</p>
<p>For details on the definitions of each indicator hover over the box or graph. All data included in this dashboard are preliminary and subject to change. Data Sources: COVID-19 Data provided by the Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences and the Registry of Vital Records and Statistics; COVID-19 Hospitalization Data provided by the MDPH survey of hospitals (hospital survey data are self-reported). Created by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences, Office of Integrated Surveillance and Informatics Services.</p>				

Massachusetts Department of Public Health | COVID-19 Dashboard

Trends: 7-day Averages Over Time

Released on: April 1, 2021
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	Cases	Testing	Hospitalizations	Deaths
<p>Navigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Today's Overview Overview Trends COVID-19 Cases COVID-19 Testing Hospitalization COVID-19 Deaths Higher Ed & LTCF Patient Breakdown City and Town Resources Data Archive 	<p>7-day average of COVID-19 confirmed cases</p> <p>The lowest observed value was 156.7 on 7/4/2020.</p>	<p>7-day weighted average percent positivity</p> <p>The lowest observed value was 0.8% on 9/21/2020.</p>	<p>7-day average of hospitalizations</p> <p>The lowest observed value was 155.3 on 8/26/2020.</p>	<p>7-day average of confirmed deaths</p> <p>The lowest observed value was 3.7 on 9/9/2020.</p>
<p>Date Filter</p> <p>3/1/2020 3/31/2021</p> <p><input type="text" value=""/> <input type="text" value=""/></p>	<p>For details on the definitions of each indicator please see the corresponding tab for that indicator. All data included in this dashboard are preliminary and subject to change. Data Sources: COVID-19 Data provided by the Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences and the Registry of Vital Records and Statistics; Created by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences, Office of Integrated Surveillance and Informatics Services.</p>			

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Weekly Public Health Report:

The Command Center released the [Weekly Public Health Report, with town by town information, including the weekly listing of city and town risk levels](#) on Thursday, 4/1. The report also includes 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.

Vaccine Update: For a more detailed weekly breakdown, [visit the MA COVID-19 Vaccination Data webpage](#).

	3/26	3/27	3/28	3/29	3/30	3/31	4/1
DOSES SHIPPED							
Doses Shipped to MA Providers (MIIS)*	2,716,965	2,716,965	2,716,965	2,716,965	2,950,685	3,046,975	3,129,475
Doses Shipped to Pharmacies and Directly by the Federal Government - Including FPPP Providers (Tiberius)	1,028,495	1,028,495	1,051,895	1,059,595	1,112,885	1,154,985	1,218,535
Grand Total Shipped to MA	3,745,460	3,745,460	3,768,860	3,776,560	4,063,570	4,201,960	4,348,010
DOSES ADMINISTERED (MIIS)*							
1st Moderna or Pfizer Doses Administered # of people with at least one dose	2,028,944	2,075,557	2,116,388	2,137,827	2,180,672	2,219,002	2,268,511
2nd Moderna or Pfizer Doses Administered # of people fully vaccinated	1,115,188	1,143,630	1,169,856	1,187,938	1,217,085	1,247,666	1,279,486
Janssen (J&J) Doses Administered (MIIS) # of people fully vaccinated	79,717	81,677	83,277	83,870	85,520	88,043	90,593
Grand Total Doses Administered (MIIS)	3,223,849	3,300,864	3,369,521	3,409,635	3,483,277	3,554,711	3,638,590
Grand Total Fully Vaccinated People with Existing COVID-19 Vaccines**	1,194,905	1,225,307	1,253,133	1,271,808	1,302,605	1,335,709	1,370,079
% of Total Doses Shipped That Have Been Reported as Administered	86.1%	88.1%	89.4%	90.3%	85.7%	84.6%	83.7%

*Data from the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS) are as of midnight the night before.

**Fully vaccinated people have 2 doses of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine or 1 dose of Janssen (J&J) vaccine

MA Dose Allocation Update:

This week, the Commonwealth received 382,980 first and second doses as part of the state allocation. These figures do not include doses provided directly from the federal government to the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) or Community Vaccination Centers (CVC).

These numbers include a one-time shipment of 29,800 J&J vaccines for providers. Another 10,000 J&J vaccines will be set aside to utilize for the homebound vaccination program that was announced last week for a total of 40,000 J&J.

This week, first doses and second dose state allocations (total doses), were distributed among providers as follows:

- Health systems and health care providers (excluding community health centers): 133,210
- Mass vaccination locations: 106,300
- Regional Collaboratives and Local Boards of Health: 84,660
- Community Health Centers: 28,950
- Retail pharmacies (non-CVS) state allocation: 13,090
- Mobile Clinics supporting long-term care facilities, congregate care, affordable/low-income senior housing and homebound individuals: 14,670

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Weekly allocations are subject to change based on federal availability, demand from providers, and obligations to meet second doses. Providers have 10 days to use their doses and must meet specific performance thresholds.

Federal Doses:

In addition to the state allocation, the federal government distributes vaccines to CVS Health sites as part of the Federal Retail Pharmacy Partnership as well as to certain Massachusetts federally qualified community health centers. These quantities fluctuate on a weekly basis and are not counted as part of the state's weekly allocation. This week, 152,020 first and second doses were allocated to the retail pharmacy program. 15 FQHCs received 58,290 doses directly from the Federal Government. The Community Vaccination Clinic at the Hynes Convention Center was allocated 42,120 doses.

Continued Vigilance:

While vaccine efforts continue across the Commonwealth, it is important to continue to wear a face covering, practice social distancing, limit your interactions with your closest and engage in physical distancing. Individuals are encouraged to get tested if feeling sick or think you have been exposed to COVID-19. Testing is free, and widely available, with over 400 testing sites in the Commonwealth.

Week in Review: State Actions

Administration Announces Mobile Vaccination & Additional Support for Disproportionately Impacted Communities

The Baker-Polito Administration today announced details for a new mobile vaccination effort made possible by a recently-launched [partnership with FEMA](#) that is bringing 6,000 additional daily doses to Massachusetts. The Administration also announced the awarding of a \$4.7 million grant to support local public health efforts in the 20 most disproportionately impacted communities in the Commonwealth and highlighted new outreach efforts in these communities. The Administration made these announcements during a visit to the vaccination clinic at [La Colaborativa in Chelsea](#), one of four hard-hit communities the Administration is supporting with a total of \$100 million after previously being slated to receive disproportionately smaller amounts of federal funding through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

FEMA-Supported Mobile Vaccination

This week, the Commonwealth and FEMA launched a partnership that designates the Hynes Convention Center in Boston as a federal mass vaccination site where FEMA will support the daily administration of 6,000 vaccine daily doses for an eight-week period. This collaboration includes vaccinations beyond the Hynes location, following a "hub and spoke" model which allows



Gov. Baker, Lt. Gov. Polito, and EOHHS Sec. Sudders visited La Colaborativa, and East Boston Neighborhood Health Center today to announce new support for communities like Chelsea that have been hit hard by COVID-19.

**COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT**

doses from the central “hub” to be distributed to nearby communities through mobile vaccination units and pop-up clinics, with a focus on vaccine equity.

Starting next week and ramping up over time, mobile vaccination efforts will be launched in Chelsea, Revere, Boston, Fall River and New Bedford. Like the Hynes site and other federally supported sites across the country, these cities were selected based the CDC’s Social Vulnerability Index, along with their proximity to the Hynes.

These mobile and pop up clinics will scale over time, with up to 500 vaccines per day available for each community. Doses will be picked up by the mobile vaccination teams at the Hynes and then distributed and administered in these communities. Most of these mobile units and pop up clinics will be set up in city parks, parking lots, and other trusted community locations identified by the municipalities as easy to access for community members. The program will also include grassroots efforts in each community to raise awareness about these mobile clinics and assist in booking appointments. Similar to the broader partnership with FEMA, this mobile program will run for 8 weeks.

Equity Outreach Initiatives

Beginning next week, over 200 bi-lingual, locally hired community organizers will hold 83 outreach events in neighborhoods across each of our 20 equity communities for business walks and door-to-door canvassing and will also start phone-banking efforts to support vaccine appointment registration. Archipalego Strategies Group (ASG), a minority-women owned business and Health Care for All have been working closely with the Department of Public health and our equity communities to build a robust outreach program that is tailored to the needs of each community.

\$4.7 Million Best Value Grant Awards

The Commonwealth this week will distribute \$4.7M of federal grant funding to the 20 communities most disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 that will enable them to lead vaccine clinics and promote vaccine trust and confidence. This funding will support local municipalities and health departments as they:

- collaborate with key stakeholders including local Community and Faith-Based Organizations; Community Health Centers, and Community Health Workers who can support grassroots outreach;
- additional staffing (e.g., public health nursing) and resources to support vaccine clinics in disproportionately impacted communities;
- identify gaps and map available resources to reduce barriers to vaccination; and
- disseminate culturally appropriate translations of communications campaign materials, including Trust the Facts. Get the Vax. campaign materials and vaccine FAQs in multiple languages, and support outreach efforts such as town halls and information sharing in close coordination with Community Liaisons, ASG and HCFA.

The funding includes a minimum of \$100,000 dedicated to support staffing and public health infrastructure for local public health. This funding will be for today through June 30, 2022.

City/Town	Amount	Haverhill	\$181,807	New Bedford	\$223,687
Boston	\$963,429	Holyoke	\$151,192	Randolph	\$142,514
Brockton	\$222,064	Lawrence	\$209,550	Revere	\$175,682
Chelsea	\$146,794	Leominster	\$150,432	Springfield	\$296,713
Everett	\$160,302	Lowell	\$245,185	Worcester	\$338,378
Fall River	\$211,129	Lynn	\$225,362	Total	4,739,816
Fitchburg	\$152,370	Malden	\$184,177		
Framingham	\$192,517	Methuen	\$166,532		

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

The Commonwealth and FEMA Team Up Launch to Increase Vaccination Administration:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and FEMA announce today a partnership to expand access to the COVID-19 vaccine by bringing 6,000 federal doses daily to the Hynes Convention Center vaccination site, for a total of 7,000 doses per day when combined with the state's current allocation.

This Community Vaccination Center (CVC) program will be open to the public, with additional services available for the most disproportionately impacted communities in Suffolk County, starting March 31.

People interested in booking an appointment at the Hynes Convention Center vaccination site should continue to pre-register at vaccinesignup.mass.gov.

There will be no disruption to the appointment process with this federal expansion. The state will also coordinate additional community outreach to assist vulnerable residents with signups.

Additionally, a portion of the federal doses will be designated for mobile units for areas of Suffolk County (Chelsea, Revere & Boston). The Baker-Polito Administration will provide more details on these efforts soon.



Gov. Baker, Lt. Gov. Polito, Sec. Sudders and MEMA Director Phillips were pleased to join Sen. Markey, Rep. Lynch, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky, along with partners from CIC-Health and Mass General Brigham to tour the Hynes Convention Center vaccination site, and announce a new partnership with FEMA for a Community Vaccination Center Pilot Program in Boston.

The Hynes Community Vaccination site will have interpreters available daily for individuals speaking Spanish, Mandarin, and Haitian/Creole, as well as capability to utilize telephonic translation with access to 240 different languages. The Hynes is centrally located and accessible via public transportation on the MBTA Green Line (Hynes Convention Center Station and Prudential Center Station), the MBTA Orange Line (Back Bay Station via passageways), the Commuter Rail, and major bus routes to ensure individuals with transportation challenges can access the site. Free parking is available for those with private transportation.

Additionally, MassHealth is offering new flexibilities for Non-Emergency Medical Transportation for members with access/functional needs to ensure equitable transportation access to and from the sites.

The Commonwealth, federal, and state contracted staff will be used to support the operations at this facility for the duration of 8 weeks. Along with staffing, FEMA and its federal partners will provide support through operations, logistics and vaccine allocations. The addition of the FEMA site and the resources that come with it will enable Massachusetts to further operationalize its commitment to equity, a core pillar of the state's vaccination plan, which includes \$27.4 million in CDC funding focused on the 20 communities hardest hit by COVID-19, including Boston. The state Department of Public Health is working in these cities and towns on customized plans to reduce barriers to vaccination and increase awareness and confidence in vaccine safety, joining with neighborhood health centers, local health departments, and community and faith based groups to increase vaccination.

How the Site was Selected

The Hynes site, like other federally supported sites across the country, was selected based on data analysis including the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index, population needs and challenges, and available public transit options to the center. Input from state and local partners was crucial in determining the location. The Hynes site

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

will have a vaccination output of several thousand doses per day at maximum operating capacity. One thousand doses from the Commonwealth will be increased by an additional 6,000 doses from a separate federal allocation.

“Massachusetts is a national leader for vaccines and this additional support from the federal government will help to increase access and availability to some of our most disproportionately impacted communities,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “We are grateful for the support from the Biden-Harris Administration for selecting Massachusetts to host one of these sites and for the support of our congressional delegation in applying for this program.”

The Hynes Convention Center is a well-known destination within the Greater Boston community, having been in operation since 1968. It possesses all the critical infrastructure requirements and facilities such as running water, restrooms and parking to host thousands of individuals at a time, safely and comfortably.

“The goal of establishing these joint federal pilot centers is to continue to expand the rate of vaccinations in an efficient, effective and equitable manner, with an explicit focus on making sure communities with a high risk of COVID-19 exposure and infection are not left behind,” said Acting Region 1 Administrator and Federal Coordinating Officer Paul Ford, who oversees FEMA’s operations in New England. “FEMA remains committed to helping everyone in America during this time and we will continue to work with our partners to stop the spread of this disease.”

First-In-The-Nation COVID-19 Pooled Testing Initiative Shows Low Positivity Rate in Schools:

On Monday, the Baker-Polito Administration announced that data collected from its statewide, first-in-the-nation pooled testing initiative in schools across the Commonwealth found low positivity rates – far less than 1 percent – among students and staff. The statewide testing program, funded entirely by the Commonwealth and available to every Massachusetts public school at no cost, was also extended through the school year.

[Launched](#) in February and the first program of its kind nationwide, Massachusetts schools have tested nearly 159,000 individuals in 22,679 pools with a pool positivity rate of 0.76 percent to date; because the average pool included 7 people,

individual prevalence among those tested is well below that number. More than 1,000 schools are enrolled in the COVID-19 pooled testing initiative, and more than 329,000 students, educators and staff are eligible to be tested on a weekly basis. Of the collected pooled tests, Massachusetts is not aware of any in which there was more than one positive individual, suggesting that there is extremely little evidence of in-school transmission of COVID-19 in Massachusetts.

The test is performed at least once per week on an anterior nasal swab and results are delivered within 24 hours. If a pooled test result is negative, then all individuals within that pool are presumed negative and may continue to remain in school. If a pooled test result is positive, then everyone in the pool is given an individual diagnostic test. Once positive individuals are identified, they must follow isolation guidance. Students, teachers, and staff that were close contacts of the positive individual must quarantine according to current requirements. According to a [study](#) conducted by the Rockefeller Foundation released in December 2020, community outbreak had not been traced to an elementary school, with contact tracing studies concluding that children are almost never the source in infection clusters.

“Massachusetts’ robust and ambitious program offering COVID-19 surveillance testing to all schools, charters, and special education collaboratives led the nation,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “The science is clear that it is



COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

safe for kids to be in the classrooms, and this initiative has proved to serve as an invaluable tool for schools throughout the Commonwealth as they return to in-person learning.”

“Access to this pooled testing program has given many school districts the information and assurance they need in order to be able to keep educating students in person safely and successfully,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “We are grateful to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services for undertaking this critical program on behalf of our students, teachers and school staff.” With initial state funding set to expire on April 18, the Baker-Polito Administration also announced today that it will cover the costs of the COVID-19 pooled surveillance testing through the end of the school year, an effort made possible by additional federal funds specifically for COVID-19 testing, anticipated to total approximately \$207 million for Massachusetts. Schools who are not yet enrolled in the program are encouraged to do so by contacting K12Covid19Testing@mass.gov, and can learn more [here](#).

Additionally, the Administration also announced today that it will now cover the costs of COVID-19 testing at sites dedicated to early education providers. In January, the Administration partnered with private and philanthropic funders, including supporters from the [Massachusetts Early Education Funder Collaborative](#) and [BayCoast Bank](#), to [launch a pilot COVID-19](#) testing program dedicated to providing on-demand PCR testing to child care providers and the families they serve to ensure easy access to testing when there is suspected COVID-19 exposure. The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) set up nine rotating drive-through testing sites throughout the Commonwealth, which are only open only to child care providers and individuals affiliated with programs.

COVID-19 Vaccine Rates Updated, Additional Vaccinators Authorized:

Effective April 1, the MassHealth rate of payment for vaccine administration will be \$45.87, to align with the newly revised Medicare rates for the Boston region. The Biden-Harris Administration [announced](#) updates to the Medicare rate structure on March 15th. Massachusetts was the first state in the nation to set Medicaid rates higher than Medicare for the COVID-19 vaccine to ensure payment would not be a barrier to vaccination. The newly released federal rates are nearly identical to the rates previously established in Massachusetts to better support broad-scale vaccination efforts.

In accordance with the Division of Insurance [bulletin](#), commercial insurers must pay at least the MassHealth rate, if not more, for COVID-19 vaccines. By aligning with the federal rate and adopting the flat per-shot rate structure, all payers will pay a total of \$91.74 for the two-shot Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines, and \$45.87 for the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Additional Authorized Vaccinators

To increase vaccine accessibility across a wide range of providers, on March 25, 2021, the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health issued an [Order](#) to allow additional certain individuals to administer COVID-19 vaccines in the Commonwealth. These certain individuals include:

- Podiatrists licensed pursuant to G.L. c. 112, § 16;
- Phlebotomists, which means persons whose responsibilities include, but are not limited to, collecting blood samples from patients under the supervision of a physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant licensed in Massachusetts, separating blood into different test tubes in order for it to be used in medical tests, accurately labeling said tubes and ensuring correct samples are sent to the laboratory;
- Medical assistants who otherwise do not meet the requirements to administer vaccine pursuant to G.L. c. 112, § 265 and DPH guidance; and
- Designated Massachusetts Military Division vaccinators, which means military personnel who are certified by the United States Army as Combat Lifesavers.

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

This [COVID-19 Vaccinators chart](#) lists the different groups of individuals who can possess and administer COVID-19 vaccines.

Important Updates

Safely celebrating upcoming spring holidays in LTC facilities

With the “spring holidays” upon us, the Executive Office of Health & Human Services is encouraging facilities, families, residents and staff to engage in low-risk celebrations to mitigate risk of getting or spreading COVID-19 to those in the community, fellow residents and staff.

Families are encouraged to communicate with the facility or residence before making plans to bring their loved one home to understand their policies and make sure their celebration is as safe as possible.

[Visit this webpage for the latest tips and guidance for safe visitation.](#)

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities (as of 4/1)	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	34,941
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	424
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	8,960



Department of Public Health Updates:

- New vaccine awareness activities such as door-knocking campaigns, phone banking, and other outreach is starting in the 20 communities most heavily impacted by COVID. Watch for new information and details to be added soon to www.mass.gov/covidvaccineequity.org.
- Two new :15 second New Campaign videos have been added to [Trust the Facts, Get the Vax Campaign Materials | Mass.gov](#).
- A [guide](#) for community groups, providers, and others to host local meetings about the COVID-19 vaccine has been translated into 10 languages. The guide includes answers to commonly asked questions and encourages discussion and feedback.
- DPH issued the [Weekly COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Bulletin](#), for the week of 3/29.
- DPH Epidemiology Line handled 417 COVID-19 calls and 79 non-COVID-19 calls for a total of 496 calls from 3/22 through 3/28.
- As of 3/30, the [Academic Public Health Volunteer Corps](#) has 303 volunteers supporting 43 local boards of health.
- MA211 received 5,019 calls from Monday 3/22 through Sunday 3/28 for a new total of 272,912. These numbers do not reflect calls to the new appointment assistance call centers.
- There were 14 deliveries to health care entities on Tuesday (3/30), 29 deliveries were made on Thursday (4/1) and 16 deliveries have been scheduled for Friday (4/2).
- DPH provided long-term care (LTC) facilities with guidance regarding [BinaxNOW Rapid Point of Care COVID-19 Testing](#) and [BinaxNOW Maximum Order Volumes, COVID-19 Vaccination Reporting for Long-Term Care](#)

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Facilities, and Vaccination of Long-Term Care Residents and Staff following the Federal Pharmacy Partnership Program.

- DPH provided long-term care (LTC) facilities with updated guidance that enables non-essential personnel (i.e. hairdressers, contractors) to safely enter the homes to provide services.
- All HMCC Regions are at Tier 2 status, in accordance with the [DPH COVID-19 Resurgence Planning and Response Guidance for Acute Care Hospitals](#). DPH and the COVID-19 Command Center will continue to work closely with all regions to monitor hospital capacity statewide.
- There are currently 5 Rapid Response Teams, comprised of nursing staff, deployed to nursing homes across the Commonwealth. Teams are also administering second doses of Pfizer vaccine to nursing and rest home residents and vaccinating using Janssen vaccine at nursing homes and rest homes that have a high number of residents that are unvaccinated.

Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery Updates:

Mass Care

- 2 state contracted isolation/recovery hotels in the communities of Everett and Pittsfield continue to receive client placements: 60 individuals are currently housed in the program.
 - Top 5 referring cities:
 - Boston (398)
 - Worcester (194)
 - Springfield (175)
 - Quincy (123)
 - Cambridge (118)
 - To date, a total of 2,272 residents have been placed in these hotels for safe isolation and recovery, an increase of 49 since last week.

Community Food Box Program Update 3/26-4/1:

MEMA is partnering with the Salvation Army, and a vendor, to bring in shelf-stable food boxes each week to support communities in their effort to deliver food to individuals and families in quarantine and isolation who require assistance accessing food. Each week MEMA's warehouse receives a delivery of shelf-stable food boxes. Distribution of food boxes is coordinated between MEMA and communities in need via a request through WebEOC. The table below reflects the current food box inventory, and number of food boxes distributed to communities during the weekly reporting period (data is updated every Friday).

Total Number of Food Boxes in MEMA's Inventory	Total Number of Food Boxes Distributed to One or More Local Communities During the Reporting Period	Total Number of Communities that Received Food Boxes During the Reporting Period
3,827	440	5

Logistics (including Personal Protective Equipment and Supplies)

- 40 orders prepared for pickup or delivery from the MEMA Statewide Logistics Warehouse from 3/26-4/1
- MEMA supplied 18 DPH Community Health Center Grant Programs with 97,000 KN95 this week

Disaster Recovery

On March 27, 2020, 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

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

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: 3/26/2021

MEMA COVID-19 EXECUTIVE DASHBOARD AGGREGATE PROGRAM VIEW

Note: Financial data for pre-submission projects reflect 100% federal cost share while submitted projects continue to reflect 75% federal cost share. The remaining 25% federal cost share for submitted projects will be reported as FEMA adjusts cost share for these projects on a rolling basis. In addition, figures do not include MEMA management cost allowance.

Overall <small>(Best Available Estimate)</small>	Submitted <small>(Eligibility & Cost Review)</small>	Approved* <small>(by FEMA)</small>	Paid <small>(by MEMA)</small>
\$1.4B <small>+\$69.02M</small>	\$1.1B <small>+\$82.41M</small>	\$616.0M <small>+\$98.62M</small>	\$293.1M <small>+\$781.74K</small>
978 Projects <small>+11</small>	696 Projects <small>+15</small>	189 Projects <small>+15</small>	105 Projects <small>+18</small>
Approved Applicants: 654			

- FEMA Requests for Public Assistance: 664 (+1)
- Technical Assistant Requests: 518 (+2)
- Finalizing guidance to ensure all applicants supporting COVID-19 vaccination sites meet the FEMA equitable pandemic response reporting metrics.
- New project obligations (11): \$98,409,910.90

Soldiers’ Homes Updates:

On March 30, the Department of Veterans’ Services and the Soldiers’ Homes received confirmation from the U.S. Department of Veterans’ Affairs that several projects will receive federal funding, including \$6.79M for the Electronic Medical Record implementation project that will serve both Homes. The Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke was notified of committed funds for the ongoing Refresh Project, which focuses on improving infection control in the current facility.

Holyoke Soldiers’ Home Weekly Update (current as of 3/30/21)

- On Wednesday morning, the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke raised its iconic United States Flag to full staff as a symbol of hope for all. 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, and continues to rebuild staff and leadership as we move forward.
 - On Tuesday evening, the unions that represent staff at the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke are held a vigil to honor and remember Veterans lost to COVID-19.
- In addition to the many ongoing support offerings for staff, the Soldiers’ Home will have onsite support available over the course of the next two weeks, provided by the Western MA COVID Peer Support team.
- The Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke is in the midst of a search for a qualified permanent Superintendent, and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services is working with an executive search firm to find

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

qualified candidates. The final candidates are being interviewed in public session by the Board of Trustees on [Tuesday](#), and the Board of Trustees are voting on the final candidate on [Thursday](#).

- The Soldiers' Home will be welcoming special Sunday visitation on April 4 so that families can celebrate Easter together. Loved ones can also visit during expanded in-person visitation hours into the evening on Wednesdays, with visits open Tuesday – Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Wednesdays 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
 - The Home re-opened in-person visitation for veteran residents and their loved ones, starting February 10, 2021, and since then has hosted 575 visitors.
 - The Home is implementing updated guidance from DPH to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents, staff, and those visiting. All visitors are screened and required to wear PPE and social distance, and negative test results are strongly encouraged before visiting. There is designated visitation space at each Home, and high touch surface are sanitized after each visit.
 - At least 24 slots will be offered each day, and visits are scheduled for at least 45 minutes. Visits can be scheduled by calling the Family Line at 413-552-4764. 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
 - The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke will also continue to offer and support virtual visitation. The Family Line is available for ad hoc updates with support from social work and clinical staff. 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 Baker-Polito Administration is moving forward on the expedited capital project to plan for the future of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, and the next step is passage of the [\\$400 million bond bill](#) which would provide capital authorization for the major project to reconstruct the long-term care facility at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. Secretary of Veterans' Services Cheryl Lussier Poppe and EOHS Assistant Secretary for Administration and Finance Alda Rego testified before the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight in support of the bond bill last week, and it has since been reported favorably out of this committee.
 - The Commonwealth has been making capital investments to address the short and long-term needs of the Home, including a short-term Refresh Project, a \$6 million refresh of units to significantly improve infection control for the residents and staff, and this longer-term Rapid Planning Capital Project (www.mass.gov/HolyokeSHProject) for a future Soldiers' Home in Holyoke.
 - This bond bill is the next step of the expedited capital project, following the recommendations laid out in the [needs assessment report](#) that was released on Veterans Day, following the [Rapid Planning Phase](#). Payette Associates is the design firm leading the design and planning phase, building on the evaluation they previously completed, and developing a full project scope, refining the plan, confirming the budget, timelines, and ensuring conformity with the regulatory process. To meet the VA State Home Construction Grant's April 15, 2021 deadline, the bond bill must be enacted by mid-March, with a terms bill filed and enacted soon afterwards. The design development phase must be completed by August 1, 2021 to be eligible for this cycle of the grant program.
- The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke hosted 3 onsite vaccination clinics, the last on February 9. The first and second vaccination clinics were held on December 29 and January 19. Following the completion of the vaccination clinics:
 - 117 veteran residents and 225 staff have received both doses.
 - 1 veteran resident and 11 staff have received their first dose.
 - The Home is strongly encouraging all staff to receive the vaccine. On top of the efforts to provide educational information about the COVID-19 vaccine, including COVID-19 vaccine FAQ sheets, and vaccine informational forums with clinical staff, individuals who had not been

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

vaccinated received individual outreach to provide education and encourage vaccination. All educational materials are available in both English and Spanish.

- Phase III of the Refresh Project continues on the 4th Floor. The Refresh Project is an important infection control initiative to improve the home in the immediate term for residents and staff.
- The Soldiers' Home continues to work with Home Base, a veteran support organization that is a partnership of the Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital, to help improve the quality of life, increase psychosocial interventions to address isolation during the pandemic. Home Base has linked us to interactive virtual concerts provided by professional and amateur volunteers, featuring musical performances and conversation between the Veterans and musicians. The concerts occur every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. The team at Home Base is working with Social Work, Recreation and Nursing to provide other opportunities for virtual activities. Home Base has extended their free veteran counseling offerings to our Soldier's Home families and staff.
- 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 is continuing 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.
- 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 widespread vaccination 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 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 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 March 30 is as follows:
 - Status:
 - 0 veteran residents are positive and not clinically recovered
 - 3 veteran residents are negative
 - 41 veteran 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.
 - 71 veteran residents have been determined clinically recovered
 - 0 veteran residents have refused testing
 - Resident locations:
 - 110 veteran residents are onsite
 - 5 veteran residents are offsite
 - 3 are receiving acute care offsite
 - 2 domiciliary veterans are on an extended leave of absence
 - Since March 1, there have been 77 deaths of veteran residents who tested positive
 - Following the most recent staff surveillance testing
 - 0 are positive
 - All others who previously tested positive are clinically recovered

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER

WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Chelsea Soldiers' Home Weekly Update (current as of 3/30/21)

- The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea has re-opened in-person visitation for veteran residents and their loved ones, starting February 10, 2021, and has since hosted 207 in-person visits with veterans.
- Visitation is offered 7 days a week 9 AM to 7:30 PM. The Home is implementing updated guidance from DPH to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents, staff, and those visiting. All visitors are screened and required to wear PPE and social distance, and negative test results are strongly encouraged before visiting. There is designated visitation space at each Home, and high touch surfaces are sanitized after each visit.
 - Eight visitation slots will be offered each day, and visits will be scheduled for at least 45 minutes long.
 - The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea also continues to offer and support virtual visitation.
 - Families can request updates on their loved ones by contacting their assigned social worker, or emailing the Home at CSH@mass.gov. Medical information can only be shared with an authorized health care proxy.
- The Soldiers' Home in Chelsea hosted 3 onsite vaccination clinics, the last on February 9. The first and second vaccination clinics were held on December 29 and 30, and January 19 and 20. Following the completion of the onsite vaccination clinics:
 - 159 residents and 208 staff have received both doses
 - 6 veteran residents and 67 staff have received their first dose.
- 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.
- 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 [CMS rules](#). 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 March 30 is as follows:
 - Residents
 - 0 veteran residents are positive
 - 125 veteran residents are negative
 - 48 veteran residents have recovered, meaning they previously tested positive and are now clinically recovered
 - 0 veteran residents have pending tests
 - Since March 1, there have been 31 deaths of veteran residents who tested positive
 - Following the most recent staff surveillance testing:
 - 0 employees are positive
 - All other employees who previously tested positive have been determined clinically recovered

Communications Resources

New Campaign videos added

Two new :15 second videos have been added to [Trust the Facts, Get the Vax Campaign Materials | Mass.gov](#). Feel free to use them in your outreach:

- What You Need to Know
- Protect Yourself and Your Loved Ones



New 'Trusted Sources' PSA

Our latest video comes from Dr. Lloyd Fisher, President of the MA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, who self-recorded a short video for us. Dr. Fisher included his daughter who took part in the vaccine trials. Please [share the tweet](#) via your networks using our #TrusttheFacts hashtag.



Eligibility graphics

- Use these new [graphics](#) for your newsletters and social media showing COVID-19 vaccine eligibility dates for everyone who lives, works, or studies in Massachusetts.

Vaccine Equity Initiative website

- Visit [COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Initiative | Mass.gov](#) for the latest on the initiative in 20 of our hardest hit communities to increase equity in COVID-19 vaccine awareness and access.

FAQ for certain workers eligible in Phase 2

- Visit [COVID-19 vaccinations for certain workers | Mass.gov](#) for an FAQ and other COVID-19 vaccine eligibility requirements and information for workers in certain categories.

Guidance for people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19

- Until more people are vaccinated, prevention measures will be necessary, even for individuals fully vaccinated. Review MA's [Guidance for people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19](#).

CDC 'plain language' materials in multiple languages

- [Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Communication Resources for COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

Other Public Messaging Resources for Communities:

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

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

- [Trust the Facts, Get the Vax Campaign Materials | Mass.gov](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Posters | Mass.gov](#)
- [Preparing for your COVID-19 Vaccination Appointment flier | Mass.gov](#)
- [Guide to hosting a forum on the COVID-19 Vaccine | Mass.gov](#)

Visitors to COVID-19 resources for municipalities webpage will find these new resources, and additional flyers, posters, and digital resources in multiple languages on topics such as:

- [When can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?](#)
- [Statewide guidelines, advisories, and orders](#)
- [Staying safe in the community](#)
- [Using local public alert systems for COVID-19 information](#)
- [Materials for Business](#), including:
 - Return to work guidance
 - Employee Screening Questionnaire
 - Business guidance – New, Temporary Capacity Limits
 - Updated safe store tips for retailers



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

COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

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 tool](#) 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

- [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