

# Thursday, April 15, 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, 4/22/21.



Wednesday, the Baker-Polito Administration, in partnership with the Boston Red Sox, The BASE, El Mundo, CIC Health, and FEMA, announced a week-long initiative to boost vaccine access to populations disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Red Sox Week at the Hynes will take place from April 19th to the 25th, with 20,000 first dose vaccination appointments being booked for communities of color. (See story below.)

### In This Week's Report:

- Latest Data: Public Health & Vaccine Data Update
- Week in Review: Key State Actions
  - Baker Administration Announces Targeted Equity Partnership with Boston Red Sox/Community Partners and Additional Sites on Pre-registration System
  - MA Aligns Public Dashboard Data for Long-Term Care Deaths with CDC, National Standards
  - DPH, Emergency Management, and Disaster Recovery Updates
  - Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes Weekly Update

### Helpful Links:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine in Massachusetts](#)
- [FEMA COVID-19 Funeral Assistance](#)
- [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 4/15**

626,550 Total Confirmed Cases ([click here for more information](#))

17,087 Deaths among confirmed cases

20,146,905 tests for the virus conducted to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals, and commercial laboratories.

United States **Last Updated 4/15**

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:

31,231,869 Total Cases

561,356 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 15, 2021  
Data as of: April 14, 2021  
Caution: recent data may be incomplete

Navigation	Cases	Testing	Hospitalizations	Deaths																								
<p><b>Today's Overview</b></p> <p>Overview Trends</p> <p>COVID-19 Cases</p> <p>COVID-19 Testing</p> <p>Hospitalizations</p> <p>COVID-19 Deaths</p> <p>Higher Ed &amp; LTCF</p> <p>Patient Breakdown</p> <p>City and Town Data</p> <p>Resources</p> <p>Data Archive</p> <p>For data on COVID-19 variants, click here (CDC website)</p>	<p><b>Confirmed Cases</b></p> <p>Today there were 1,884 new, confirmed cases reported bringing the total to 626,550 total confirmed cases.</p> <p><b>Confirmed cases by age during the last two weeks</b> *Data updated weekly</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age group (years)</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>0-4</td><td>1,235</td></tr> <tr><td>5-9</td><td>1,469</td></tr> <tr><td>10-14</td><td>1,816</td></tr> <tr><td>15-19</td><td>2,696</td></tr> <tr><td>20-29</td><td>5,942</td></tr> <tr><td>30-39</td><td>4,419</td></tr> <tr><td>40-49</td><td>3,227</td></tr> <tr><td>50-59</td><td>3,155</td></tr> <tr><td>60-69</td><td>1,924</td></tr> <tr><td>70-79</td><td>546</td></tr> <tr><td>80+</td><td>287</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Probable Cases</b></p> <p>Today, there were 239 new, probable cases reported bringing the total to 40,516 total probable cases.</p> <p><b>Estimated Active Cases</b></p> <p>There are an estimated 35,478 currently active COVID-19 cases.</p>	Age group (years)	Count	0-4	1,235	5-9	1,469	10-14	1,816	15-19	2,696	20-29	5,942	30-39	4,419	40-49	3,227	50-59	3,155	60-69	1,924	70-79	546	80+	287	<p><b>Tests Reported</b></p> <p>There were 101,521 new COVID-19 molecular tests reported, bringing the cumulative total to 20,146,905 tests.</p> <p><b>Turn Around Time</b></p> <p>The current turn around time for a molecular test is 1.25 days.</p> <p><b>Percent Positivity</b></p> <p>The 7-day average of percent positivity is 2.30%.</p>	<p><b>Hospitalizations</b></p> <p>There are 710 patients hospitalized for COVID-19.</p> <p><b>ICU &amp; Intubated Patients</b></p> <p>There are 162 patients in Intensive Care Units (ICU) and 102 patients are intubated.</p> <p><b>Average Age of Patients</b></p> <p>The average age of patients who were hospitalized for COVID-19 was 59 years old.</p>	<p><b>Confirmed Deaths</b></p> <p>There were 5 new, confirmed deaths reported. There have been 17,087 confirmed deaths in total.</p> <p><b>Probable Deaths</b></p> <p>There were 0 new, probable deaths reported. There have been 345 probable deaths in total.</p> <p><b>Average Age of Deaths</b></p> <p>The average age of patients who died of COVID-19 was 74 years old.</p>
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<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 15, 2021  
Data as of: April 14, 2021  
Caution: recent data may be incomplete

Navigation	Cases	Testing	Hospitalizations	Deaths
<p><b>Today's Overview</b></p> <p><b>Overview Trends</b></p> <p>COVID-19 Cases</p> <p>COVID-19 Testing</p> <p>Hospitalizations</p> <p>COVID-19 Deaths</p> <p>Higher Ed &amp; LTCF</p> <p>Patient Breakdown</p> <p>City and Town Data</p> <p>Resources</p> <p>Data Archive</p> <p>Date Filter</p> <p>3/1/2020 <input type="text"/> 4/14/2021 <input type="text"/></p>	<p><b>7-day average of COVID-19 confirmed cases</b></p> <p>The lowest observed value was 156.7 on 7/4/2020.</p>	<p><b>7-day weighted average percent positivity</b></p> <p>The lowest observed value was 0.77% on 9/21/2020.</p>	<p><b>7-day average of hospitalizations</b></p> <p>The lowest observed value was 155.3 on 8/26/2020.</p>	<p><b>7-day average of confirmed deaths</b></p> <p>The lowest observed value was 8.1 on 4/13/2021.</p>
<p>The lowest observed value is since tracking of the lowest value began on April 15, 2020. 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](#) on Thursday, 4/15. The report primarily includes information related to cases and inspection data for Long Term Care Facilities. Data previously included in the Weekly Report, including town-level data, contact tracing information (including active COVID cluster information by Exposure Setting Type), are now presented in the [Daily Interactive Dashboard](#).

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

	4/9	4/10	4/11	4/12	4/13	4/14	4/15
<b>DOSES SHIPPED</b>							
Doses Shipped to MA Providers (MIIS)*	3,612,025	3,693,925	3,693,925	3,693,925	3,833,155	3,888,655	3,999,805
Doses Shipped to Pharmacies and Directly by the Federal Government - Including FPPP Providers (Tiberius)	1,508,935	1,508,935	1,508,935	1,520,935	1,580,615	1,622,715	1,631,755
<b>Grand Total Shipped to MA</b>	<b>5,120,960</b>	<b>5,202,860</b>	<b>5,202,860</b>	<b>5,214,860</b>	<b>5,413,770</b>	<b>5,511,370</b>	<b>5,631,560</b>
<b>DOSES ADMINISTERED (MIIS)*</b>							
1st Moderna or Pfizer Doses Administered # of people with at least one dose	2,640,124	2,695,542	2,735,963	2,767,991	2,814,054	2,864,282	2,917,816
2nd Moderna or Pfizer Doses Administered # of people fully vaccinated	1,535,806	1,570,771	1,594,878	1,607,970	1,640,165	1,675,599	1,716,407
Janssen (J&J) Doses Administered (MIIS) # of people fully vaccinated	141,155	156,230	170,788	181,034	192,920	199,717	200,423
<b>Grand Total Doses Administered (MIIS)</b>	<b>4,317,085</b>	<b>4,422,543</b>	<b>4,501,629</b>	<b>4,556,995</b>	<b>4,647,139</b>	<b>4,739,598</b>	<b>4,834,646</b>
Grand Total Fully Vaccinated People with Existing COVID-19 Vaccines**	1,676,961	1,727,001	1,765,666	1,789,004	1,833,085	1,875,316	1,916,830
<b>% of Total Doses Shipped That Have Been Reported as Administered</b>	<b>84.3%</b>	<b>85.0%</b>	<b>86.5%</b>	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>85.8%</b>	<b>86.0%</b>	<b>85.8%</b>

\*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 353,660 first and second doses the state’s 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 Center (CVC).

These numbers include 12,400 J&J doses that have been paused in accordance with FDA and CDC guidance.

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): 129,300
- Regional Collaboratives and Local Boards of Health: 66,500
- Mass vaccination locations: 121,520
- Community Health Centers state allocation only: 21,640
- Retail pharmacies (non-CVS) state allocation only: 8,000
- Mobile Clinics supporting long-term care facilities, congregate care, affordable/low-income senior housing, and homebound individuals: 6,400

## 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 has distributed over 270,000 vaccines to CVS Health sites as part of the Federal Retail Pharmacy Partnership as well as to certain Massachusetts federally qualified community health centers.

This week, 130,510 first and second doses were allocated to the retail pharmacy program.

23 FQHCs received 57,610 doses directly from the Federal Government.

The Community Vaccination Clinic at the Hynes Convention Center was allocated 84,240 doses.

These quantities also include J&J doses that have been put on pause, per FDA and CDC recommendation.

## *Week in Review: State Actions*

### **Baker Administration Announces Targeted Equity Partnership with Boston Red Sox/Community Partners and Additional Sites on Pre-registration System**

On Wednesday, the Baker-Polito Administration announced “Red Sox Week” at the Hynes Convention Center to increase access to vaccines for disproportionately impacted communities. The Administration also announced additional regional collaboratives that will now be available for booking appointments on the Commonwealth’s pre-registration system.



*From Left: Sam Kennedy, president and CEO of the Boston Red Sox, Alberto Vasallo, president and CEO of El Mundo Boston, and Robert Lewis, Jr., founder and president of The Base, speak at Wednesday’s announcement.*

### **Red Sox Week**

The Baker- Polito Administration, in partnership with the Boston Red Sox, The BASE, El Mundo, CIC Health, and FEMA, has kicked-off a week-long initiative to boost vaccine access to populations disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Red Sox Week at the Hynes will take place from April 19th to the 25th, with 20,000 first dose vaccination appointments being booked for communities of color. Grassroots outreach efforts began this week in Equity Communities to fill the appointments. Appointments are being scheduled through grassroots outreach efforts by community partners including the Red Sox Foundation, El Mundo, The BASE, Archipelago Strategies Group, Healthcare for All, and Boston Public Health Commission.

Red Sox Week at the Hynes is dedicated to creating a positive vaccination experience that celebrates and honors the diverse cultures across the Commonwealth. Red Sox Week at the Hynes will include bi-lingual Spanish-speaking staff and volunteers, added Spanish signage to help direct guests through the onsite registration and vaccination process as well as Red Sox themed attractions including: a selfie station, Red Sox trophies, socially-distanced visits with Wally the Green Monster and a raffle to win tickets to a Red Sox game.

## COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Residents who have their second doses scheduled for the Hynes next week will have their appointments honored.

### **Regional Collaboratives**

This week, four additional regional collaboratives will be added to the preregistration booking system. The Northborough, West Springfield, Palmer and Northampton regional collaboratives will be available for preregistration later this week.

Additionally, users can now select their vaccination location before selecting from available appointments. Once a user receives a booking link or code, they will proceed to a page similar to the Commonwealth's VaxFinder tool. Users will be able to select the vaccination location that works best for them, and then view and select available appointments for that location.

To date, over 1.6 million people have preregistered using the state's system, with around 1 million having been contacted with the opportunity to book appointments. The Administration will continue to make improvements to the system in the weeks ahead, to make the process even easier as more people become eligible.

## *Important Updates*

### **Massachusetts Aligns Public Dashboard Data for Long-Term Care Deaths with CDC, National Standards**

Starting today, the Department of Public Health (DPH) will use the CDC's national definition standard on the weekly public dashboard for deaths in long-term care facilities. This data is already collected by DPH and submitted to the CDC and is consistent with how other states report this data using a more precise definition.

The Department will continue to collect and post the same categories of data, and in aligning with this federal definition, will better inform the long-term care community about COVID-19 deaths now that there is more information available on the virus. This revision also comports with the reporting requirements of the legislatively enacted Chapter 93 of the Acts of 2020 in June 2020.

Massachusetts collects some of the most robust and detailed data in the country for COVID-19, continues to update the information and uses this information to manage the pandemic to ensure the health and safety of residents. To date, the Commonwealth has defined a long-term care COVID death as any resident in a facility who contracted COVID at any time prior to their death in a facility or a hospital or other location – **even those who later recovered**. The federal definition, which will be reflected in the weekly dashboard for April 15, continues to specify a long-term care COVID death as a resident in a facility who died specifically from COVID-related complications, whether the death occurred in the facility or a hospital or other location – **but not those who were assessed as having recovered** from COVID-19. This definition is consistent with the measures used by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Health Safety Network (NHSN) and adopted by most states.

"Every life lost due to COVID-19 is a heartbreaking tragedy and DPH is dedicated to providing the most accurate and up-to-date information for our providers, medical community and the public both in Massachusetts and nationwide to track this virus and understand its impact on our most vulnerable populations," **said DPH State Epidemiologist Dr. Catherine Brown**. "By aligning the long-term death count on the state's weekly dashboard with federal definitions for long-term care facilities, Massachusetts is aligning with the definition that other states use. DPH also believes this definition better supports long-term care facilities now that so many residents and staff are vaccinated to closely monitor the effect of COVID in a well-vaccinated but vulnerable population."

## COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Massachusetts is one of the few states in the nation that has passed state laws on COVID-19 reporting, and in June enacted Chapter 93 of the Acts of 2020 to capture and publicly report resident and staff cases and deaths directly related to COVID-19. This reporting has enabled DPH to identify and provide a public health response to any clusters or trends.

“The Command Center’s decision to align the Commonwealth with the CDC’s National Healthcare Safety Network definition of a COVID-related death in a long-term care facility is important. In early April of 2020, Massachusetts led the nation by being among the first states to establish a transparent policy of collecting, documenting, and making publicly available COVID-19 infections and deaths among residents and staff in nursing facilities. Later, the federal government announced a similar transparency policy, but with a different definition of a COVID-19 related death,” **said Massachusetts Senior Care Association President Tara Gregorio.** “While today’s decision to align with the federal system’s definition will allow for standardization of data and metrics, we continue to be devastated by the staggering loss of life and illness in the Commonwealth’s nursing facilities. And we remain committed to doing all we can to continue to prevent and contain a resurgence of the virus in nursing facilities.”

As of April 5, 2021 (last week’s Weekly Report), cumulative reported data showed 6,722 COVID-19-related long-term care deaths, including deaths among probable and recovered cases. Using the updated federal definition, as of April 12, 2021, reported data showed 5,502 COVID-19 related deaths (whether they died in the facility or another location such as a hospital). Applying this more precise definition to the data revises the number of COVID-19 deaths in long-term care facilities by 1,220.

A footnote will be included in the Weekly Report to indicate that starting April 15, DPH has updated its weekly report to remove any long-term care deaths attributed to residents who had recovered from COVID, in alignment with the CDC. When the number of deaths is between 1-4 residents, the number is suppressed to protect the identity of the resident.



### **Department of Public Health Updates:**

- DPH and the Command Center are working with a variety of partners on “Red Sox Week at the Hynes” to boost vaccine access for communities most disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
- ‘Trusted Sources’ PSAs: DPH is asking a variety of spokespeople to self-record short videos promoting COVID vaccine trust. Our latest comes from [Dr. Eduardo Haddad, Lawrence General Hospital](#). Partners are sharing via social media using our #TrusttheFacts hashtag.
- DPH issued a Health Alert regarding Cases of Cerebral Venous Sinus Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia after Receipt of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine.
- DPH Epidemiology Line received 453 COVID calls and 86 non-COVID-19 calls for a total of 539 calls from 4/5 through 4/11.
- Time-Sensitive Funding Opportunity- Supporting Community-based Organizations to Increase Vaccination Coverage Across Different Racial and Ethnic Adult Populations Currently Experiencing Disparities.
  - [View CBO Vaccination Coverage RFP](#)
  - [View Funding Restrictions](#)
  - Release Date: Monday, April 12, 2021
  - Applicant Conference Call: Monday, April 19, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
  - Response Due Date: Monday, April 26, 2021, 12:00 p.m. EDT
- As of 4/15, the Academic Public Health Volunteer Corps has 306 volunteers supporting 43 local boards of health.

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

- There were 8 deliveries made on Thursday (4/15) (1 testing supplies, and 7 BinaxNOW kits) and 5 deliveries have been scheduled for Friday (4/16) (2 testing supplies and 3 BinaxNOW kits).
- DPH issued updated guidance about monoclonal antibody therapies: [Updates for Patients Receiving COVID-19 Monoclonal Antibodies Therapeutic Infusions, Bamlanivimab/Etesevimab and REGEN-COV \(Casirimab/Imdevimab\)](#)
- DPH issued updated guidance to long-term care (LTC) facilities: [Update to Vaccination of Long-Term Care Residents and Staff following the Federal Pharmacy Partnership Program](#). LTC pharmacies may now request COVID-19 vaccine for LTC residents and staff.
- 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: 51 individuals are currently housed in the program.
  - The last guests are scheduled to leave Hilton Garden Inn in Pittsfield on 4/19. Hotel will close and be fully demobilized by the end of next week.
  - Statewide census: 52
  - Top 5 referring cities:
    - Boston (433)
    - Worcester (198)
    - Springfield (185)
    - Quincy (127)
    - Cambridge (120)
  - To date, a total of 2,344 residents have been placed in these hotels for safe isolation and recovery, an increase of 41 since last week.

**Community Food Box Program Update 4/9-4/15:**

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. 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
2,070	1,150	4

**Logistics (including Personal Protective Equipment and Supplies)**

- 78 orders prepared for shipment or delivery from the MEMA State Logistics Warehouse from 4/9-4/15

# COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER

## WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

- As part of these orders, MDPH Community Health Centers, MDPH Community Grant Programs, and Command Center Vaccine Equity Programs are being supported
- Orders are also being processed to support Housing Authorities and School Districts, in coordination with both DHCD and DESE.

### 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 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: 4/9/2021

### 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 (Best Available Estimate)	Submitted (Eligibility & Cost Review)	Approved* (by FEMA)	Paid (by MEMA)
<b>\$1.5B</b> <span style="color: green;">+\$27.11M</span>	<b>\$1.2B</b> <span style="color: green;">+\$14.31M</span>	<b>\$618.4M</b> <span style="color: green;">+\$1.72M</span>	<b>\$294.6M</b> <span style="color: green;">+\$1.53M</span>
<b>1,005 Projects</b> <span style="color: green;">+14</span>	<b>700 Projects</b> <span style="color: green;">+8</span>	<b>200 Projects</b> <span style="color: green;">+7</span>	<b>134 Projects</b> <span style="color: green;">+29</span>
<b>Approved Applicants: 655</b>			

- FEMA RPA Requests: 664
- Technical Assistant Requests: 524 (+2)
- TOTAL New project obligations (17): \$20,317,514.10, including two new State Agency PW’s: MEMA – Mass Fatality; DCR – Signage.
- Provided technical assistance to all entities with active FEMA vaccination projects to ensure they submitted the required equity reporting documentation by 4/14/21.
- Distributed updated guidance on Public Assistance audit considerations and COVID-19 vaccination project requirements.
- Updated COVID webpage on [Vaccination cost reimbursement](#).

### Funeral Assistance

- FEMA began processing applications for funeral assistance starting on 4/12. FEMA will provide financial assistance for COVID-19-related funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020 ([learn more here](#)).

#### FEMA COVID Funeral Assistance Program registration as of 4/14/21:

Disaster	State	Registrations	In Process	Eligible	Award Amount	Withdrawn	Ineligible
4496	MA	1,201	1,201	0	\$0.00	0	0

## COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

**NOTE:** The Soldiers' Homes are continuing regular reporting on the status of COVID-19 cases at the facilities but are transitioning the weekly reporting to the EOHHS State Facility Dashboard which is published every Wednesday afternoon. Cases will be reported weekly each Wednesday [on this dashboard](#) beginning next week.

### **Holyoke Soldiers' Home Weekly Update (current as of 4/13/21)**

- The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke raised its iconic United States Flag to full staff as a symbol of hope for all on Wednesday, March 31.
- 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. The Home continues to onboard staff, and last week brought on an additional recreational therapist, and infection control nurse, 2 CNAs, a ward clerk, and a lead staffing coordinator.
- After a public interview on Tuesday, March 30, the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke Board of Trustees voted to appoint a Superintendent on Thursday, April 1, and the executive branch is working to onboard the selection.
- This week, the Commonwealth is submitting its initial grant application to the VA State Home Construction Grant Program, the first step in the process to apply for up to 65% project reimbursement.
  - The expedited capital project is 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.
- Concurrently, 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, continues to move forward, having passed favorably out of the Joint Committee Bonding and Capital Authorization.
  - The sooner the bond bill is passed, the longer the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance has to complete the design development phase (usually a 9-12 month process) by the deadline of August 1, 2021 to be eligible for this cycle of the grant program.
  - 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](http://www.mass.gov/HolyokeSHProject)) for a future Soldiers' Home in Holyoke.
  - 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 in Holyoke has been intently focused on following infection control procedures and maintaining best practices for the safety of veteran residents and staff and is adopting new surveillance testing guidance.
  - 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. 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.
  - All veteran residents' health is being monitored and testing 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.
- Last Wednesday, the Home was notified that two staff members (one direct care, one non direct care) tested positive for COVID-19 through the surveillance testing program. Upon notification of the results,

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the individuals were immediately directed to isolate at home per CDC and DPH guidance and Veterans and families on the affected units were notified.

- Following updated guidance from the Department of Public Health for long term care facilities, as staff testing result indicated positive COVID-19 test results, the Home increased frequency testing of all residents and staff and had to temporarily pause visitation until full house testing was complete.
- The Home will be doing increased testing until there are no new positive COVID-19 test results for 7 days.
- As of Friday, April 9, Visitation is open on all but 2 units. Visitation is suspended on these 2 units for 14 days per DPH guidance.
- The recreation department has increased activities with veterans during these two weeks and encourages families and loved ones to schedule video or phone calls by calling your Social Worker or the Family Line at 413-552-4764.
- The Soldiers' Home 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 741 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 surfaces 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](mailto: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 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 vaccinated received individual outreach to provide education and encourage vaccination. All educational materials are available in both English and Spanish.
- 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.
- 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

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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 April 13 is as follows:
  - Status:
    - 0 veteran residents are positive and not clinically recovered
    - 2 veteran residents are negative
    - 113 veteran residents have a pending test, due to increased testing frequency following staff positive.
      - All 71 veteran residents who are clinically recovered have pending tests this week due to increased testing
    - 0 veteran residents have refused testing
  - Resident locations:
    - 111 veteran residents are onsite
    - 4 veteran residents are offsite
      - 2 are receiving acute care offsite
      - 2 domiciliary veterans are on an extended leave of absence
  - Since March 1, 2020, there have been 77 deaths of veteran residents who tested positive
  - Following the most recent staff surveillance testing
    - 2 are positive
    - All others who previously tested positive are clinically recovered

### **Chelsea Soldiers' Home Weekly Update (current as of 4/13/21)**

- 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 266 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.
  - 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](mailto: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 continues to follow infection control procedures and maintaining best practices for the safety of veteran residents and staff and is adopting new surveillance testing guidance following updated Guidance from the Department of Public Health.

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- 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. 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 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 April 13 is as follows:
  - Residents
    - 0 veteran residents are positive
    - 124 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, 2020, 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

### 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' PSAs

Our latest videos come from [Grant Williams of the Boston Celtics](#) and [Kim Janey, Mayor of Boston](#). Please share these posts 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.

### 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.

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## 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.

- [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](mailto: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:

**COVID-19 Vaccine**  
Your need-to-know details about the COVID-19 Vaccine\*

- It is SAFE**  
The available COVID-19 vaccines are approved and recommended by the FDA and the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices following standard testing and approval processes. By prioritizing resources and efforts, the vaccines were developed quickly and never at the expense of safety. For more on vaccine safety visit [mass.gov/COVIDVaccineSafety](https://mass.gov/COVIDVaccineSafety)
- It is FREE**  
The COVID-19 vaccine is being administered free of charge to all individuals by the federal government. Insurance information may be asked for by those administering the vaccine in order to bill-back to insurance. However, you will not be charged. If you do not have insurance, you are still eligible to receive the vaccine free of charge.
- You need TWO doses to be FULLY vaccinated**  
Until you are fully vaccinated, you can still contract and spread COVID-19. Not everyone will be vaccinated when you are. And while we know it dramatically reduces severe cases and symptoms, we are still learning about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions. Continue to wear a mask, wash your hands, keep distance and avoid groups between doses and even after your second dose.
- Your two doses need to be administered from the SAME SITE**  
You must receive your second dose of the same vaccine at the same site as your first.
  - Pfizer vaccine: 21 days following first dose
  - Moderna vaccine: 28 days following first doseBefore leaving your first dose appointment, schedule or confirm how to setup your next appointment.
- Find out when you can get vaccinated at [mass.gov/covidvaccinephases](https://mass.gov/covidvaccinephases)**  
Massachusetts developed a phased COVID-19 vaccine distribution timeline focused on equity and safety. The timeline focuses on maintaining health care system capacity, addressing inequities in health care access and the COVID-19 burden, and protecting vulnerable populations. Each phase has priority groups within them. For regularly updated priority groups and eligible jobs and medical conditions, visit [mass.gov/COVIDVaccinePhases](https://mass.gov/COVIDVaccinePhases)

\*This information was last updated 1/14/21 and applies to the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines.  
For more information on the COVID-19 vaccine, phases, and more visit [mass.gov/COVIDVaccinePhases](https://mass.gov/COVIDVaccinePhases)

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- 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 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

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**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](https://www.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](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org)