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Town Manager

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**Town Manager’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update
September 11, 2020**

COVID-19 Numbers

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is reporting that as of September 10, 2020 there are:

- 121,759 cases statewide
- 25,931 Middlesex County
- 8,957 deaths statewide

For more state data, visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-updates-and-information>

Watertown has a total of 486 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 458 community members have recovered from the virus. Seven Town employees have had confirmed cases. Watertown has recorded twenty-four COVID-19 fatalities. Our thoughts go out to the families as they mourn the loss of their loved one.

Watertown COVID-19 Case age Distribution¹

19 and Under	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70 and over	Unknown/no age recorded	Total
24	75	107	61	68	65	85	1	486

New Weekly Public Health Data Report Released

The Command Center released the comprehensive [COVID-19 Weekly Public Health Report](#), including community-specific COVID-19 case and testing data. The report also includes risk categories for each city and town based on the average daily incident rate over the past 14 days. Communities in the high-risk category will receive additional support from the Commonwealth through a cross-agency COVID Enforcement and Intervention Team.

DPH has also posted an archive of previously released city and town data dating back to April on the COVID-19 reporting page. The Weekly Public Health Report includes also includes data on recoveries, along with detailed case and death data related to long term care facilities. The report also includes information on new nursing facility staff baseline testing, infection control audits, and more. You can also find information related to contact tracing by local boards of health, and the Community Tracing Collabora orts, and raw data files, are available by visiting the [COVID-19 Response Reporting page](#).

¹ There is a difference between the Commonwealth’s reported numbers and what the Watertown Board of Health can confirm through the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN).

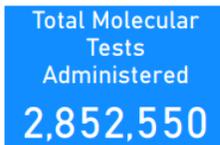
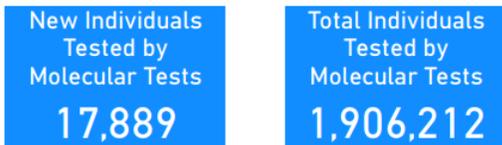
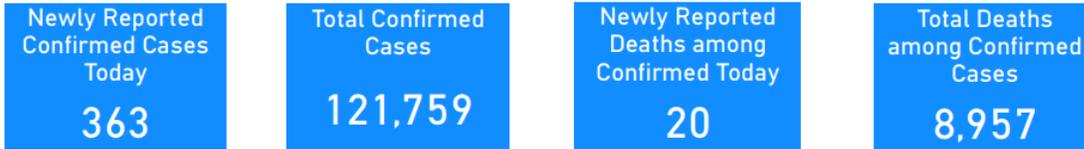
Latest Data: COVID-19 Public Health Update

Testing Update: Over 17,000 new individuals tested by molecular (viral) tests were reported in Massachusetts with 363 newly reported confirmed positive cases. The total molecular tests administered to date is more than 2.8 million. **Hospitalizations & Capacity Update:** 355 people are hospitalized, with 59 reported to be in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Key indicators from today's Daily Dashboard are below.



Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard- Thursday, September 10, 2020

Dashboard of Public Health Indicators



- Legend**
- Positive trend
 - In progress
 - Negative trend

Below is the current status:

Measure	Status
COVID-19 positive test rate	●
Number of individuals who died from COVID-19	●
Number of patients with COVID-19 in hospitals	●
Healthcare system readiness	●
Testing capacity	●
Contact tracing capabilities	●

The front page of the dashboard has been reformatted. Antibody tests (individual and total numbers) can be found on page 18.

1

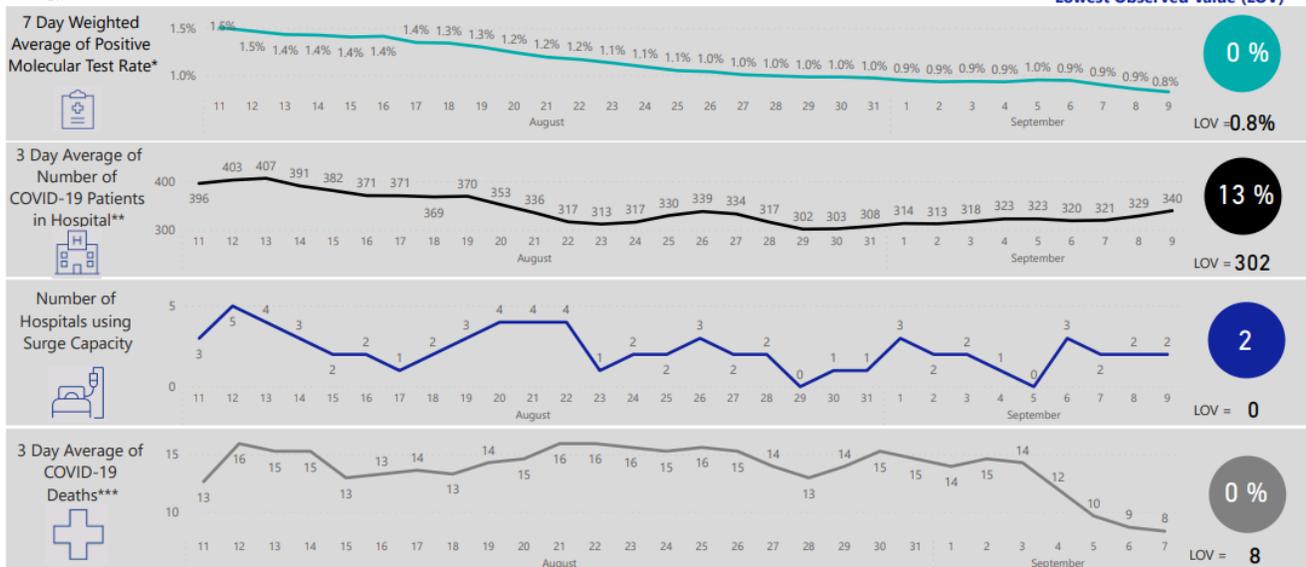


Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard- Thursday, September 10, 2020

Dashboard of Public Health Indicators

Thursday, September 10, 2020

Percent or Count of Change Since Lowest Observed Value (LOV)



*Calculated from total molecular tests; **Includes both confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19; ***Includes deaths in only confirmed cases of COVID-19

Note: Hospital-reported data included here reflects a transition to new federal reporting standards imposed as of 7/22. As a result, data may not be directly comparable to hospital data previously reported. As of 9/8/20, patients on an observation stay with confirmed or suspected COVID are included in total COVID hospitalization figures in addition to patients who are admitted. This update will create consistency in reporting and provide a more complete picture of total COVID hospitalizations. Most hospitals were already including observation status patients in their reporting, so this update is not expected to have a significant impact on daily trends. LOV = Lowest observed value, i.e. the lowest value the public health indicator has been since tracking started.

2

Administration Announces Added Funding for Shared Streets and Spaces Program

Governor Baker announced an additional \$5 million in CARES and State funding for the Shared Streets and Spaces Program. This initiative provides assistance for communities to conceive, design and implement tactical changes to curbs, streets, on-street parking spaces and parking lots in support of public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce. To find out more about the program, visit MassDOT's [Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program website](#).

The Governor also announced Phase III reopening modifications to support businesses and communities to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. The modifications, contained in an [Executive Order](#), will extend the municipal permitting timeframe for expanding outdoor dining, and allow indoor and outdoor arcades to open next week.

WATERtown Task Force for Substance Use Disorder Virtual Event

Virtual Event & Panel Discussion on Erase the Stigma of Substance Use Disorder-Recovery is Possible. **Sunday, September 13th, 4:00-5:30 PM via Zoom. See [flyer](#).**

Watertown Offers Microenterprise Business Grants

[Microenterprise Grant Opportunity](#)- Applications are now being accepted for microenterprise business grants to be utilized to address emergency needs of up to \$10,000 for microenterprise businesses (a commercial enterprise that has 5 or fewer employees). [CLICK HERE](#) to connect directly to the online application. The application process will be open till 5 PM on September 25th. Businesses interested in applying must apply online, filling out the online [application](#). For further questions refer to the [FAQ](#)

Emergency rental assistance available for income-qualified Watertown renters

The Watertown Housing Partnership has set up an Emergency Rental Assistance Program for Watertown renters who have lost income and are having trouble paying rent as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This assistance is temporary and will provide assistance for up to three months to Watertown renters not receiving other government rental assistance and earning below 80% of Area Median Income. Assistance is for up to \$750 for a 1-bedroom apartment, \$950 for a 2-bedroom apartment, and \$1,150 for a 3-bedroom apartment. Anyone interested in applying should contact Robyn Rufo at Metro West Collaborative directly for an application (robyn@metrowestcd.org or 617-923-3505 ext. 5). Applications are due to Metro West Collaborative by Thursday, September 24. For more details, see [this flyer](#) and the [program guidelines](#).

Emergency Order Mandating Face Coverings

The Watertown Board of Health adopted an [Emergency Order](#) on April 30th mandating face coverings effective Monday, May 4th. Exceptions include children under the age of 5 and those not otherwise exempt per CDC guidelines.

#MaskUpMA Initiative Launched

On Friday, July 31, the Baker-Polito Administration [launched #MaskUpMA](#), an effort to continue to remind residents to wear masks and face-coverings in public to stop the spread of COVID-19. The effort underscores the importance of wearing masks across multiple channels including video testimonials on social media, a new PSA, and a website, [Mass.Gov/MaskUp](#)

In May, Governor Baker [issued an order](#) requiring residents to wear face-coverings in public where social distancing is not possible. This applies to both indoor and outdoor spaces. Exceptions include children under the age of 2 and those unable to wear a mask or face covering due to a medical condition.

Watertown Public Schools (WPS)

Faculty and staff kicked off the 2020/2021 school year on September 1 with 13 full days of professional learning, family meet and greets, technology distribution, and COVID training. WPS teachers are diligently preparing their remote learning lessons, as we begin our year on the Bridge to Hybrid on September 22. Several of our teachers and staff will begin the year working with our specialized populations in person while the majority of our students will start the year remote as we continue to monitor the COVID 19 data.

The School Nutrition Department will continue to distribute breakfast and lunch out of the high school parking lot on Tuesdays and Fridays from 11:00-1:00. All families are welcome to pick up meals during these hours

The Watertown Farmers' Market is open weekly through October 14th!

Wednesdays, 2:30 – 6:30pm, Saltonstall Park, 149 Main Street, next to Town Hall

The market is open as an essential food access point offering a wide variety of farm fresh, locally grown and produced foods. The market offers safe and efficient on-site shopping as well as pre-order options. Volunteer Shoppers are available for those with medical, mobility, or transportation needs. Market flyer with SNAP information ([HERE](#)).

Visit our website for more information: www.watertownmarket.com

Town Hall

Town Hall is open to the public by appointment only. Any member of the public must wear a face covering while in the building. Additionally, the public is asked to maintain physical separation from employees and other visitors of at least six feet.

Many departments offer residents and businesses the ability to conduct transactions by phone, online or by mail. Individuals should check with their intended departments to see if there are options for service.

[Visit the Department directory for phone numbers.](#)

This includes the following Town Offices:

- Town Manager, TownMgr@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6465
- Health Department, Health@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6446
- Senior Center, SeniorCenter@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6490
- Recreation Office, Recreation@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6494
- DPW Administrative, DPW1@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 617-972-6420
- Inspectional Services, buildinginspector@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6480
- Treasurer/Collector, Treas&Collectors@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6450
- Assessor, Assessor@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6410
- Town Clerk/Vital Records, TownClerks@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6486
- Veterans Services, PGeorge@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6416

All Departments are open 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM Monday – Friday. The Building Inspectors' Offices are open at 7:30 AM.

Recreation Department

Filippello (Grove) Field will be closed effective today, Friday, September 11th to the public and all users until the completion of the installation of the new field lighting system for safety reasons. The lighting project is expected to be completed mid-November. The Grove Street entryway, dog park, hard court surface, parking lot, playground, picnic tables, spray park and the walkway remains open during the construction period.

Watertown's recreational facilities and activities' rules and regulations are guided by the Governor's Phase III reopening plan, which was updated on August 13. Please refer to this [link](#) for detailed instructions.

Face coverings are mandatory at all times in the Town's recreational facilities in accordance with the Watertown Board of Health's Emergency Order.

Health Department

The Health Department has created a portal for COVID-19 Information: COVID-19 Resource Center where all COVID-19 related information will be posted: <https://www.ci.watertown.ma.us/978/Coronavirus>

Watertown Free Public Library

The Watertown Free Public Library is open for browsing. Hours open are Monday through Thursday from 10am -7pm with 9am -10am reserved for seniors and at risk patrons, and Saturday from 9am to 12pm. Every person entering the building must wear a face covering and staff will monitor capacity. In addition, every patron will be asked to sign in with their contact information as required by the State of Massachusetts for contact tracing purposes. That information will be kept confidential and only turned over upon request from the state or local health department. The information will be destroyed after 14 days.

For more information on what to expect when returning to the library, please follow this link <https://www.watertownlib.org/514/COVID-19-Library-Updates>

Curbside service continues and has been expanded. For more information visit <https://www.watertownlib.org/537/Curbside-Pickup>

Museum passes are back! The Watertown Free Public Library Museum Pass Program has resumed with passes available for the Discovery Museum, Institute of Contemporary Art, Isabella Steward Gardner Museum, and MA Audubon. Due to each museum's COVID-19 precautions, the procedures for using museum passes have changed. Patrons are advised to carefully review the instructions before visiting museums. For more information and reserve passes visit www.watertownlib.org/museumpasses.

The Red Leaf Café is now open from 9am to 3pm for takeout only.

Hatch Makerspace is open by appointment only. For more information visit <https://www.watertownlib.org/576/Book-an-Appointment>. Hatch will continue to offer curbside pickup for 3D prints and laser cut original work on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10 am and 4 pm. Print and cut jobs must meet certain eligibility requirements for this service. For more information, visit watertownlib.org/hatchpickup.

Watertown Council on Aging/Senior Center/Food Pantry

The Watertown Senior Center and the Senior Shuttle Bus **remain closed, but Senior Center staff are available to connect you to their Zoom programs and to provide other assistance.** Senior Parking Permits can be renewed over the phone by calling the Senior Center and new permits can be purchased by calling the Senior Center and making an appointment. The monthly Watertown Senior News can be found at <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/150/Activities-during-COVID-19>.

The Watertown Food Pantry continues to be open Tuesdays, 10 AM until 2 PM at 80 Mt. Auburn Street, rear. When going to the Food Pantry, please wear a mask or other face covering to protect your own self and those around you in the parking lot and at the Food Pantry. Food donations (canned goods, cold cereals,

peanut butter and other shelf-stable items) are accepted at the Food Pantry on Tuesdays starting at 9:00 AM until 2 PM. For more information about the Food Pantry or any senior issues, call the Senior Center at (617) 972-6490 or send an e-mail to SeniorCenter@watertown-ma.gov.

FOOD PANTY NEED:

The Food Pantry is in need of healthy kid-sized snacks like granola or fruit bars, raisin boxes, fruit or pudding cups, cookie and cracker mini packs, and drinks like juice boxes or pouches for our families. Our goal is to send each family home with a week's worth of "School Snacks." Donations accepted at the Food Pantry on Tuesdays from 8:00 AM – 1:30 PM at 80 Mount Auburn Street, Rear.

Watertown Veterans' Services

Watertown Veterans' Services is closed to the public but is still available to assist with administering and applying for benefits. Families and Veterans may reach out to inquire about applying for benefits.

Watertown Veterans' Services, in partnership with the Greater Boston Veterans' Collaborative has a detailed spreadsheet with benefits and services—including but not limited to: financial, mental health, transportation, and food resources—available to Veterans and others during this pandemic. The list is constantly being updated and interested Veterans and families should contact Patrick George, Veterans' Services Officer (VSO) for the most up to date list. Please contact the VSO at: PGeorge@watertown-ma.gov or (617) 972-6416 (Office) and (781) 645-9127 (Cell)

Emergency Management Team

The Town of Watertown Emergency Management Team is meeting to monitor the developments in the outbreak of the coronavirus. We have used these meetings to keep an organized flow of information and to develop strategies to best respond to the needs of our community. We will continue to update the community through the Watertown Health Department's web page. <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/965/CORONAVIRUS>.

How will you find out about local emergencies?

To get Emergency Alerts from the Town of Watertown text WATERTOWNMA to 888-777. Your cell phone number will be in the system without having to establish an Everbridge account. You also have the opportunity to add your email address into the system at this time. You would then receive all emails and/or texts from the system. If you already have an Everbridge account, this is not necessary, as you will continue to receive the notifications sent by the Town.

Watertown COVID-19 Informational Call Center and Email

For general COVID-19 questions not specific to the Town of Watertown, all Massachusetts residents are encouraged to call the State's **2-1-1 Hotline** that is staffed by operators 24/7 and with translators available in multiple languages. Residents with questions can dial 2-1-1 from any landline or cell phone or use the live chat option on the **Mass 2-1-1 website (mass211.org)**.

The Town of Watertown has established a COVID-19 informational call center to allow residents and business owners to ask non-medical questions specific to COVID-19 in Watertown. The call center will be staffed Monday through Friday from 8am to 4pm and the number for the call center is **# 617-972-6565**. Questions can also be emailed to **COVID19@police.watertown-ma.gov**.

Please call 9-1-1 in the event of an emergency.

Calls should not be made to 9-1-1 for questions regarding COVID-19.

Please continue to take the following actions to limit the spread of COVID-19:

- Stay safe, stay home
- Practice social distancing – when in public spaces try to remain at least 6-feet away from others.
- Stay home if you are sick – and avoid close contact with others.
- Cover your mouth – when you cough or sneeze use a tissue or your inner elbow, not your hands.
- Wash your hands – with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based sanitizing gel.

Helpful Links:

- [COVID-19 Travel Order](#)
- [Mass.gov/findfoodhelp](#)
- [Stop the Spread](#)
- [Reopening Massachusetts](#)
- [Mass.Gov/covid19](#)
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [Unemployment & COVID-19](#)
- [Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal](#)
- [Emergency Childcare Site](#)
- [COVID-19 Cost Eligibility and Tracking Guidance](#)
- [Watertown COVID-19 Resource Guide](#)

Town Manager's Coronavirus (COVID-19) (24) [Updates/Statements](#)

We are in this together

We are living in an unprecedented time where our world, our nation and our community, is faced with the threat of an international pandemic known as COVID-19.

All of our Town employees are incredibly committed to ensuring the Town can safely meet the needs of our community while we are also protecting our employees' safety. All departments have implemented vigorous social distancing and hygiene protocols. I am so grateful for all of our employees' efforts under difficult circumstances.

The members of the Honorable Town Council continue to be available to help all residents and to provide updates/information to protect the health and safety of all the residents of Watertown.

I want to thank all of the members of our community for your cooperation and efforts to date; and for your continued actions to limit the spread of COVID-19. **Additionally, please check on your neighbors who may live alone. If you have any concerns, please email us at COVID19@police.watertown-ma.gov or call the Police Department at (617) 972-6500; and we will follow up.**

Watertown is a resilient community and we are all in this together. We will continue to support each other and stay strong, Watertown Strong!