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Town Manager

TOWN OF
WATERTOWN
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Town Manager's Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update
October 23, 2020

Watertown has a total of 552 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 511 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
29	89	116	73	78	76	90	1	552

COVID-19 Weekly Public Health Report

Over the past several months, the Command Center has continued to enhance the COVID-19 data, public reporting, and analysis, which enables a more targeted approach to providing guidance. The Command Center is continuously refining, enhancing and adding to this public data, some of the most comprehensive in the nation, to further strengthen the information and analysis we provide to local communities to guide their decisions.

Effective yesterday, [with the Thursday, 10/22 weekly report](#), the Command Center will identify if a municipality's positive cases have been significantly impacted by a clearly identified cluster in a long-term care facility, higher education institution or correctional facility.

Watertown Public Schools (WPS)

The State released the weekly COVID-19 metrics yesterday, which indicate that Watertown remains in the 'yellow' status and our positivity rate is low. Therefore, Watertown elementary students will be crossing the Bridge to Hybrid beginning on Tuesday, October 27th for our Cohort A students and Wednesday, October 28th for our Cohort B students. Elementary students will attend school in person two days a week. WPS is also considering moving our Watertown Middle School students from remote to hybrid beginning the week of November 9th, based on continued monitoring of the data and the school's readiness. Watertown High School is scheduled to start in the hybrid model on November 30th. For more information, please see the Superintendent's October 22nd Update at the following link: <https://www.smore.com/gxycj>

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).

The Watertown School Nutrition Department received a waiver to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students until the end of the school year in June. Starting on Monday, October 26th, the Grab and Go meal site located at Watertown High School will be open every Monday from 12:00-1:30 pm and 4:30-6:00 pm. Breakfast and lunch for the whole week will be provided at the pick-up. Students in the hybrid model will be able to pick up meals at their school based on their cohort days.

John A. Ryan Skating Arena Closed for Two Weeks Due to Coronavirus Spiking

Due to rising cases of COVID-19 connected to indoor ice hockey, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health issued a new public health [Order](#) yesterday prohibiting indoor ice rinks and ice skating facilities from operating from October 23rd to November 7th.

The shutdown will allow for the development of stronger COVID-19 protocols to further protect players, families, coaches, arena staff and other participants, as well as communities surrounding hockey rinks.

Three ways to cast your ballot for the November 3rd State Election

Vote by Mail

Deadline to request a mail-in ballot is Wednesday, October 28th at 5:00 PM. Mail your ballot back in the postage paid envelope, or return your ballot anytime 24/7 in the exterior official ballot drop off box **located on Saltonstall park side of Town Hall** up to 8:00 PM Tuesday, November 3rd.



Early Voting – Through October 30th

Early Voting is in person at the Town Clerk's Office, 149 Main Street.

Saturday October 24 th	12:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Sunday October 25th	12:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Monday October 26 th	8:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Tuesday October 27 th	8:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Wednesday October 28 th	8:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Thursday October 29 th	8:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Friday October 30 th	8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Vote in Person on Election Day

Vote at your regular polling location on Tuesday, November 3rd from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM. Saturday, October 24th is the last day to Register to Vote in person. The Town Clerk's Office will be open for registration from 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM and from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM.

Watertown Flu Vaccine Clinics

Getting a flu vaccine is more important than ever during 2020-2021 to protect yourself and the people around you from flu, and to help reduce the strain on healthcare systems responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Health Department is offering flu clinic for Watertown Residents 15 and older. The Drive-Through-Clinic will be held in the parking lot behind the Watertown Free Public Library, 123 Main Street. The Walk-In-Clinic will be held on the same day inside the Watertown Free Public Library for those **65 years of age and older with a preregistration and an appointment.**

Walk Thru Date: (For residents age 65+):

Saturday, October 24th, 9am-12pm

Drive Thru Date: (For residents age 15+)

Saturday, November 7th, 9am- 2pm

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/flu-vaccine-clinic-drive-thru-tickets-118961291425>

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/flu-vaccine-walk-in-clinic-tickets-120442477693>

For more information and required forms please visit:

<https://www.watertown-ma.gov/1019/Seasonal-Influenza-and-Clinics> or call the Health Department at 617-972-6446.

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Partnerships for Recovery, \$774 Million Economic Recovery

The Baker-Polito Administration announced a \$774 million comprehensive plan to stabilize and grow the Massachusetts economy. The plan focuses on getting people back to work, supporting small businesses, fostering innovation, revitalizing downtowns and ensuring housing stability. Yesterday, Partnerships for Recovery directed \$115 million in new funding to small businesses and Main Streets hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and for workforce training efforts. Additionally, the Administration is aligning multiple funding sources, both existing and proposed, to appropriately respond to the crisis

[Click here](#) for more information.

Amendment to Emergency Order Mandating Face Coverings

On September 16th, the Watertown Board of Health amended its Emergency Order to align with the one issued by the Governor. This Amendment is also consistent with guidance that is being put out by State agencies on reopening.

#MaskUpMA Initiative Launched

On Friday, July 31st, 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.

Town Hall is open to the public by appointment and drop-off transactions only.

All payments may be placed in the silver box next to the Library book drop-off labeled “Payments Drop-off” located on Thaxter Street. You may also drop-off transactions in person at the corner window of Town Hall on Thaxter Street. 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 remains closed 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. Please refer to this [link](#) for detailed instructions.

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. The library is open Monday through Thursday from 10 am to 7 pm, Friday from 10 am to 5 pm and Saturday from 9 am to 12 pm. Monday through Friday from 9 am to 10 am is reserved for patrons 65+ and with high risk health conditions. 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>

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.

Laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots are available for a 2 week loan period from the Watertown Free Public Library. For more information visit www.watertownlib.org/laptops or call 617-972-6431

Watertown Council on Aging/Senior Center/Food Pantry

The Watertown Senior Center **remains 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 Senior Shuttle Bus is running again on a limited, by-appointment basis to the Stop and Shop on Watertown Street. Call the Senior Center on Fridays from 8:30 AM -1 PM to reserve your ride for the following week.

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.

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) (30) [Updates/Statements](#)

We are in this together

We are living in an unprecedeted 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!