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Town Manager

TOWN OF
WATERTOWN
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Town Manager's Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update
October 30, 2020

Watertown has a total of 585 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 526 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
34	96	124	77	79	82	92	1	585

Updates on the Weekly Public Health Report

Each week, in the Department of Public Health's weekly public health report, 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth are given a risk designation based on their average daily case rate per 100,000 residents over the last two weeks. The designation for all communities is available beginning [on page 3 of this week's edition of the report](#). 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, their risk level color will be identified with an asterisk if one of these identified institutions has more than 10 cases and results in 30% of the municipality's total cases over the past 14 days.

Tips for a Safe and Healthy Halloween During COVID-19

As a reminder, the following COVID-19 prevention and mitigation standards apply to all activities in Massachusetts, including Halloween activities. Residents should adhere to each of the following:

- Wear a face mask or face covering. For more information on face masks and face coverings, please see the state's [Mask Up MA](#) webpage.
- Observe good hand hygiene, including hand washing and use of alcohol-based sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol. Carry hand sanitizer and use it often, especially after coming into contact with frequently touched surfaces and before eating candy.
- Refrain from touching your face.

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).

- Stay home and refrain from Halloween activities, including handing out Halloween treats, if:
 - you feel unwell;
 - you have tested positive for COVID-19;
 - you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19; or
 - you have traveled to or from a state that is not classified as lower risk within the last 14 days. For more information on lower risk states, please see the state's COVID-19 [Travel Order](#) webpage.
- Maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet of physical distance from all other participants who are not members of the same household.

Residents and communities should follow the [Halloween activity guidance released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) to understand alternative ways to participate in Halloween that may limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19. As a reminder, any Halloween activities are subject to the current [gathering size limits](#) as well as applicable [sector-specific workplace safety standards](#).

Ballot Drop Box Closed for Halloween

Massachusetts Secretary of State William Galvin has asked that ballot drop boxes be secured on Saturday, October 31st to avoid any Halloween pranks. The Town of Watertown will lock its ballot drop box, located on Saltonstall park side of Town Hall, at 5:00 p.m. on Halloween and will reopen at 8 a.m. the following morning. The ballot drop box will then remain open until polls close at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, November 3rd. Please contact the Town Clerk's Office with any questions at 617-972-6486.

Vote in Person on Tuesday, November 3rd State Election

Voting on Election Day will still be available for those who may want to vote at the polls. Polling places will be open from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. on Election Day. You must vote at your assigned polling location.

FIND YOUR POLLING PLACE

Voters should wear a face mask or covering in the early voting locations and on Election Day at the polling sites and adhere to social distancing requirements to help mitigate public health risks. In addition, hand sanitizer will be available for use by voters upon entering and exiting the voting area. The Town of Watertown encourages all our citizens to exercise their right to and take advantage of the voting options available.

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.

Saturday, November 7th, 9am- 2pm

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED!

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

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.

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.

Watertown Public Schools (WPS)

The State released the weekly COVID-19 metrics last week, which indicated that Watertown remained in the ‘yellow’ status and our positivity rate is low. Therefore, Watertown elementary students crossed 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/gxjcj>

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.

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 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

Homebound Delivery If you are stuck at home due to a medical necessity, we can deliver books to you. Sign up here: watertownlib.org/delivery

Print from Home Don't have a printer? You can send up to 10 pages to us and pick up the next day at WFPL. Learn more: watertownlib.org/print

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) (31) [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!