

# Thursday, May 20, 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, 5/27/21.



On Monday, Governor Baker & Lt. Governor Polito announced that the Commonwealth will lift all remaining COVID-19 restrictions effective May 29. New guidance on face coverings issued. (See story below.)

#### In This Week's Report:

Latest Data: Public Health & Vaccine Data Update

- Week in Review: Key State Actions
  - Baker Administration to Lift COVID Restrictions
  - #JustAsk Mental Health Campaign for Young Adults Launched
  - DPH, Emergency Management, and Disaster Recovery Updates
  - Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes Update
  - New Communication Resources

#### Helpful Links:

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



#### Situation in Numbers

Massachusetts **current as of 5/20**

658,441 Total Confirmed Cases ([click here for more information](#))

17,442 Deaths among confirmed cases

22,539,180 tests for the virus conducted to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals, and commercial laboratories.

United States **Last Updated 5/20**

Case numbers are updated daily.

#### Total Cases Reported to CDC:

32,855,010 Total Cases

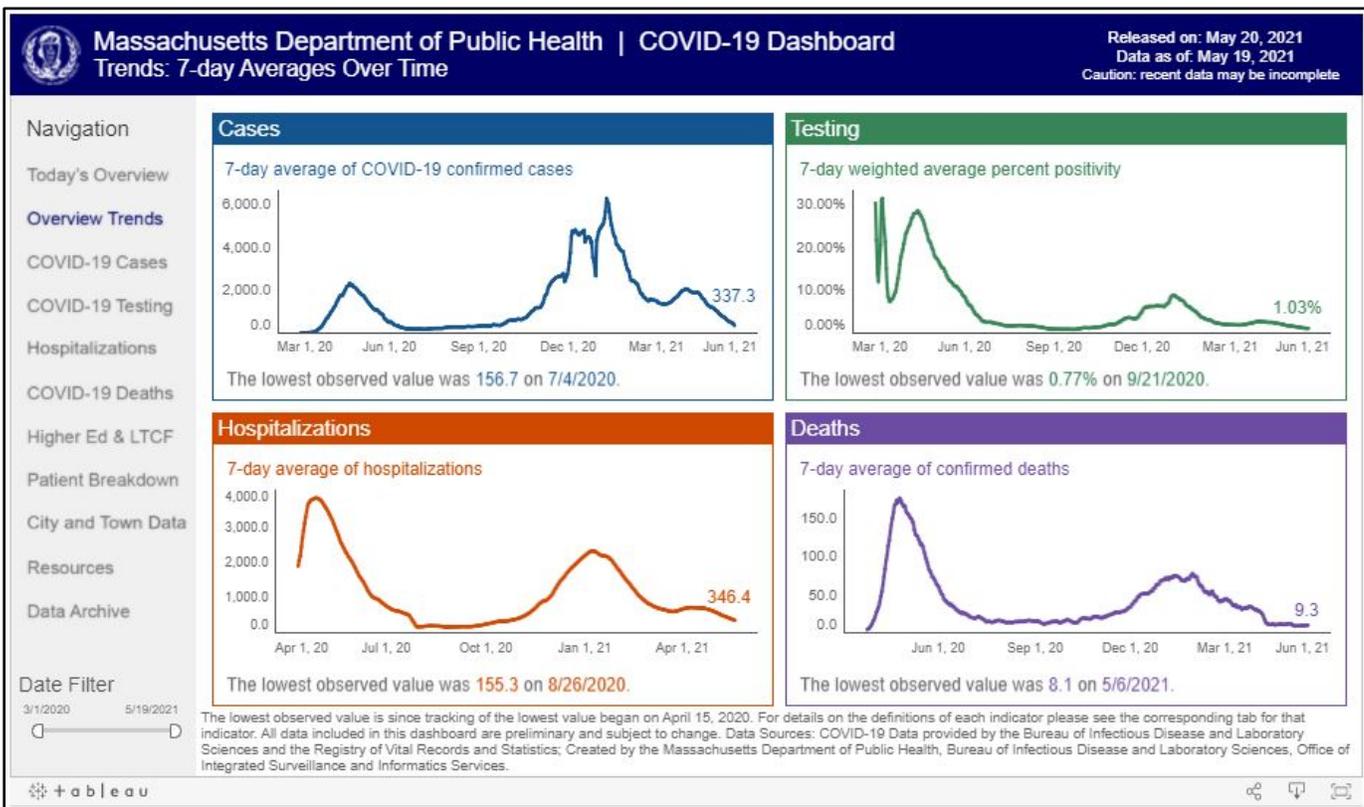
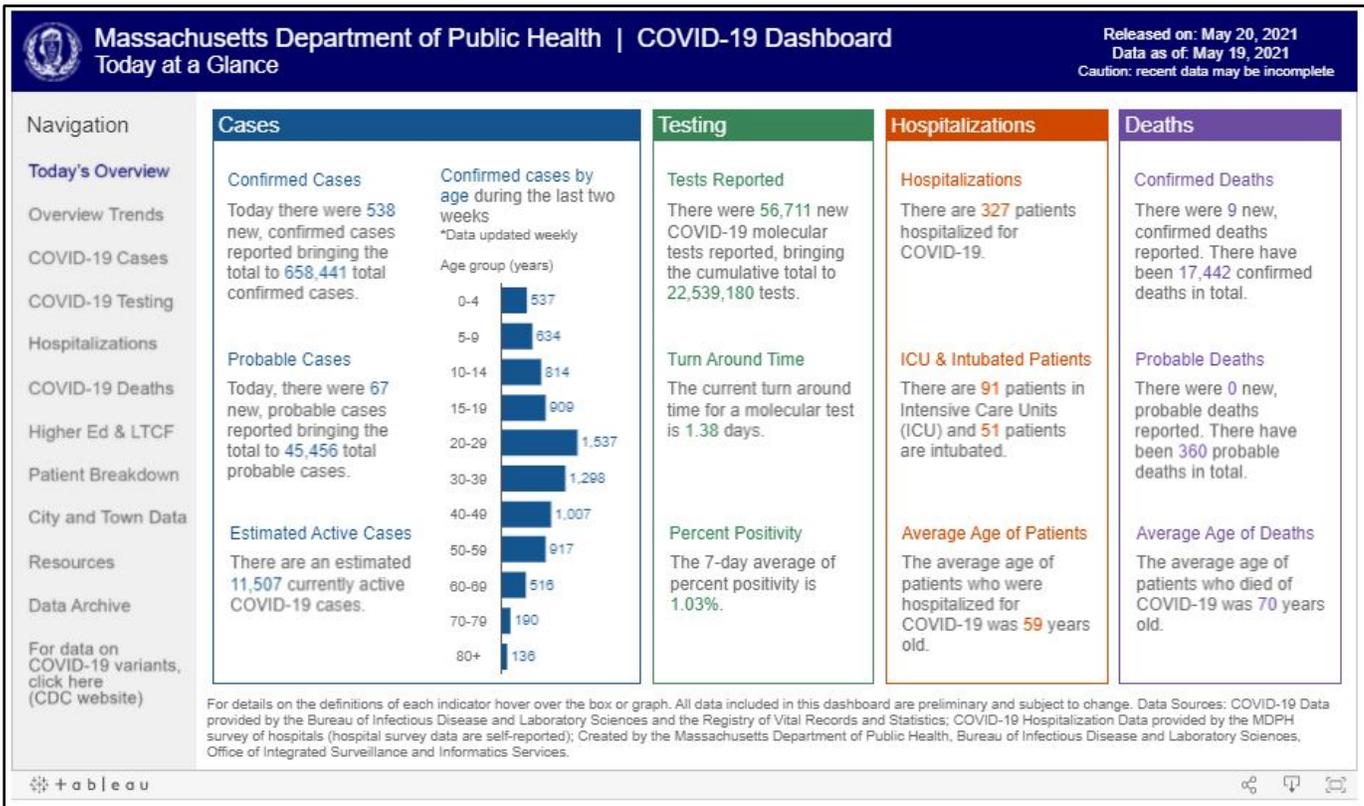
584,975 Deaths

57 Jurisdictions Reporting Cases (50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Marianas, Marshall Islands, American Samoa, and US V.I.)



Mass.Gov/CovidVaccine

## Latest Data: COVID-19 Public Health Update



# COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

## Weekly Public Health Report:

The Command Center released the [Weekly Public Health Report](#) on Thursday, 5/20. 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](#).

	5/14	5/15	5/16	5/17	5/18	5/19	5/20
<b>DOSES SHIPPED</b>							
Doses Shipped to MA Providers (MIIS)*	5,489,595	5,520,015	5,520,015	5,520,015	5,639,715	5,640,115	5,642,785
Doses Shipped to Pharmacies and Directly by the Federal Government - Including FPPP Providers (Tiberius)	2,841,855	2,845,365	2,851,215	2,856,555	2,888,905	2,985,845	3,061,785
<b>Grand Total Shipped to MA</b>	<b>8,331,450</b>	<b>8,365,380</b>	<b>8,371,230</b>	<b>8,376,570</b>	<b>8,528,620</b>	<b>8,625,960</b>	<b>8,704,570</b>
<b>DOSES ADMINISTERED (MIIS)*</b>							
1st Moderna or Pfizer Doses Administered # of people with at least one dose	3,892,504	3,918,540	3,940,329	3,951,103	3,966,363	3,991,753	4,014,056
2nd Moderna or Pfizer Doses Administered # of people fully vaccinated	2,904,744	2,944,161	2,970,268	2,984,809	3,009,571	3,054,947	3,093,788
Janssen (J&J) Doses Administered (MIIS) # of people fully vaccinated	229,901	231,123	231,898	232,487	233,589	235,125	236,520
<b>Grand Total Doses Administered (MIIS)</b>	<b>7,027,149</b>	<b>7,093,824</b>	<b>7,142,495</b>	<b>7,168,399</b>	<b>7,209,523</b>	<b>7,281,825</b>	<b>7,344,364</b>
<b>Grand Total Fully Vaccinated People with Existing COVID-19 Vaccines**</b>	<b>3,134,645</b>	<b>3,175,284</b>	<b>3,202,166</b>	<b>3,217,296</b>	<b>3,243,160</b>	<b>3,290,072</b>	<b>3,330,308</b>
<b>% of Total Doses Shipped That Have Been Reported as Administered</b>	<b>84.3%</b>	<b>84.8%</b>	<b>85.3%</b>	<b>85.6%</b>	<b>84.5%</b>	<b>84.4%</b>	<b>84.4%</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

## Week in Review: State Actions

### Administration to Lift COVID Restrictions May 29, State to Meet Vaccination Goal by Beginning of June

On Monday, the Baker-Polito Administration announced that all remaining COVID-19 restrictions will be lifted effective May 29.

The Commonwealth's face covering order will also be rescinded on May 29. The Department of Public Health has issued a new face covering advisory consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's updated guidance (see below). Face coverings will still be mandatory for all individuals on public and private transportation systems (including rideshares, livery, taxi, ferries, MBTA, Commuter Rail and transportation stations), in healthcare facilities and in other settings hosting vulnerable populations, such as congregate care settings.



Governor Charlie Baker will end the State of Emergency June 15.

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The Administration also announced updates that will be effective May 18 to revise face covering requirements for youth and amateur sports and other guidance relating to childcare programs and K-12 schools. The Administration will release updated guidance for summer camps effective May 29.

The Commonwealth leads the nation in vaccinating residents, with 75% of adults receiving at least one dose. To date, over 4 million residents have received a first dose, with 3.2 million fully vaccinated.

New cases have dropped by 89% since January 8. COVID hospitalizations are down 88% since January 1 and the positive test rate is down by 88% from peaking at 8.7% on January 1 to 1% today.

### **Effective May 29**

Effective May 29, all industries will be permitted to open. With the exception of remaining face-covering requirements for public and private transportation systems and facilities housing vulnerable populations, all industry restrictions will be lifted, and capacity will increase to 100% for all industries. The gathering limit will be rescinded.

All industries will be encouraged to follow CDC guidance for cleaning and hygiene protocols.

On May 18, 2020, the Administration [published the reopening phases](#), which called for ending restrictions when vaccines became widely available. Today, there are over 975 locations for Massachusetts residents to access vaccines without delay.

### **Face Covering Guidance**

In line with updated CDC face covering guidance, the Administration will rescind the current face covering order and issue a new face covering advisory effective May 29.

Non-vaccinated individuals are advised to continue wearing face masks and to continue distancing in most settings. The advisory will also recommend fully vaccinated individuals no longer need to wear a face covering or social distance indoors or outdoors except for in certain situations.

Face coverings will still be required for all individuals on public and private transportation (including rideshares, livery, taxi, ferries, MBTA, Commuter Rail and transportation stations), healthcare facilities and providers, congregate care settings and health and rehabilitative day services.

Face coverings will also remain required indoors for staff and students of K-12 schools and early education providers.

[Link to mask guidance](#)

### **Youth and Amateur Sports Face Covering Guidance**

Effective May 18, the youth and amateur sports guidance will be updated to no longer require face coverings for youth athletes 18 and under while playing outdoor sports. Effective May 29, all youth and amateur sports restrictions will be lifted. [Link to youth sports guidance](#)

### **K-12, Early Education and Summer Camp Guidance**

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Effective May 18, guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Early Education and Care will be updated to no longer require masks for outdoor activities like recess and to allow for the sharing of objects in classrooms, in both K-12 and childcare settings. This guidance will remain in effect beyond May 29.

The Administration will release updated guidance for summer camps, effective May 29, which will include no longer requiring masks for outdoor activities.

[Link to DESE guidance](#)

[Link to EEC guidance](#)

### State of Emergency Order

Governor Baker will end the [State of Emergency](#) June 15, and the Administration will work with legislative and municipal partners during this period in order to manage an orderly transition from emergency measures adopted by executive order and special legislation during the period of the State of Emergency.

### **May Is Mental Health Awareness Month: New Multimedia Campaign Launched**

To mark Mental Health Awareness Month, this week the Massachusetts Association of Mental Health launched **#JustAsk**, a new public awareness campaign aimed at empowering young adults with information and resources to better support their mental health. Several recent surveys and studies have confirmed the significant mental health impact that the pandemic has taken on young adults.



The **#JustAsk** campaign provides steps for young adults to take charge of their mental health by focusing on a three-tiered approach:

1. Reaching out to trusted friends or family when you need support
2. Learning more and finding support on Network of Care Massachusetts, and
3. Calling Mass 211 for live, in-person help with mental health and related social services needs

EOHHS Secretary Marylou Sudders, Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation President and CEO Audrey Shelton, and Mass211 Vice President Eileen Davis, were among the key partners that helped kick-off the campaign during a virtual event on Wednesday, May 19.

[Visit the #JustAsk campaign website](#)

[Download the #JustAsk toolkit to help spread the word](#)

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## *Important Updates*

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

- Our Vaccine Equity Initiative is encouraging residents to get vaccinated – sharing information about local clinics and mobile vans and walk-in appointments. A [new Highlights page](#) on the Vaccine Equity website includes photos, news clips and details about our community outreach efforts.
- DPH Epidemiology Line handled 254 COVID-19 calls and 72 non-COVID-19 calls for a total of 326 calls from 5/10 through 5/16.
- [DPH Live Q&A on Vaccines on May 24 – Registration link](#)
- As of 5/19, the [Academic Public Health Volunteer Corps](#) has 313 volunteers supporting 36 local boards of health.
- MA211 received 3,193 calls from Monday 5/10 through Sunday 5/16 for a new total of 301,781.
- DPH Coordinated 11 deliveries to health care entities on Tuesday (5/18) (1 testing supplies and 10 BinaxNOW kits); 16 deliveries were made on Thursday (5/20) (4 PPE, 1 testing supplies and 11 BinaxNOW kits) and 6 deliveries have been scheduled for Friday (5/21) (1 PPE and 5 BinaxNOW kits).
- All HMCC Regions were moved to Tier 1 status on May 18, 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 3 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 as well as Homebound individuals. The team is also administering Janssen vaccine at nursing homes and rest homes that have a high number of residents that are unvaccinated while awaiting further recommendations.

### **Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery Updates:**

#### **Mass Care**

- One state contracted isolation/recovery hotel in the City of Everett continues to receive client placements. 25 individuals are currently housed in the program.
  - Top 5 referring cities:
    - Boston (459)
    - Worcester (200)
    - Springfield (197)
    - Quincy (130)
    - Brockton (124)
  - To date, a total of 2,488 residents have been placed in these hotels for safe isolation and recovery.

#### **Community Food Box Program Update 5/14-5/20:**

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. The final delivery of food boxes to MEMA's State Logistics Warehouse was scheduled for April 30. Distribution of food boxes will continue until inventory is depleted. 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).

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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
5,801	0	0

Grocery Card Distribution Program Update 5/14-5/20:

As an extension of the isolation and quarantine food program, the Food Security Task Force has begun coordinating the distribution of grocery cards in addition to or in lieu of shelf-stable food boxes. These grocery cards allow individuals to have greater flexibility of food options and help accommodate unique dietary needs and cultural food preferences.

Store Name	Number of Cards Distributed During the Reporting Period	Total Value of Cards
Stop & Shop	50	\$5,000
Market Basket	87	\$4,300
<b>Total Number of Communities Receiving Cards: 3</b>		

Logistics (including Personal Protective Equipment and Supplies)

- **82 orders prepared for pickup or delivery from the MEMA State Logistics Warehouse from 5/14-5/20.**
  - As part of these orders, Mass Vaccination Sites, MDPH Community Health Centers, and Command Center Vaccine Equity Programs are being supported
  - Orders are also being processed to support Housing Authorities and School Districts across the Commonwealth

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: 5/14/2021			
<b>MEMA COVID-19 EXECUTIVE DASHBOARD</b>			
<b>AGGREGATE PROGRAM VIEW</b>			
<small>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.</small>			
Overall (Best Available Estimate)	Submitted (Eligibility & Cost Review)	Approved* (by FEMA)	Paid (by MEMA)
\$1.5B +\$69.34M	\$1.2B +\$6.97M	\$991.3M +\$1.91M	\$401.6M +\$16.53M
1,061 Projects +15	736 Projects +13	256 Projects +5	173 Projects +9
Approved Applicants: 661			

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- FEMA RPA Requests: 672
- Technical Assistant Requests: 528
- Planning a series of applicant webinars for new Public Assistance applicants to review the updated FEMA guidance on COVID-19. There will be three offerings of the webinar: 5/25, 6/3, and 6/10. Registration details will be available soon.
- Completed a meeting with Northeastern University on 5/17 and FEMA Region partners are now re-evaluating the \$2.9 million COVID-19 response expenses that were initially deemed ineligible
- New project obligations (13): \$79,944,843.00

## FEMA Funeral Assistance as of 5/19/21

FEMA began processing applications for funeral assistance starting on 4/12 ([learn more here](#)).

State	Registrations	In Process	Eligible	Award Amount	Withdrawn	Ineligible
MA	4,139	4,028	108	\$733,357.71	0	3

## Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes Update:

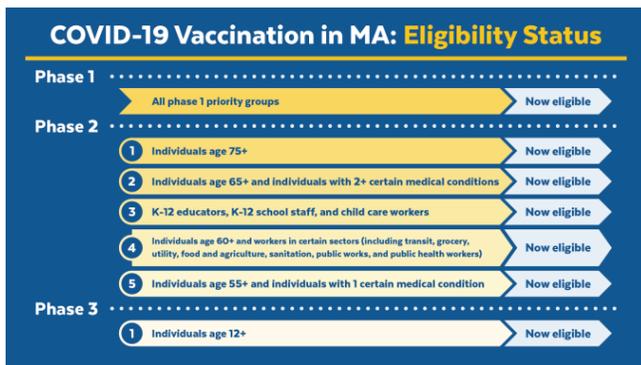
**NOTE:** The Soldiers' Homes are continuing regular reporting on the status of COVID-19 cases at the facilities but are transitioning the weekly reporting to the EOHS State Facility Dashboard which is published every Wednesday afternoon. Cases will be reported weekly each Wednesday [on this dashboard](#).

## Communications Resources

### COVID-19 vaccination for youth ages 12+

Youth ages 12+ can now be vaccinated with the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

- For details, including information on parental consent, and FAQs, visit [mass.gov/vaccinesforYOUth](https://mass.gov/vaccinesforYOUth).
- Youth age 12 and above may be preregistered at <http://VaccineSignup.mass.gov>.
- Download our [youth-related graphics](#) for your messaging.



**The COVID-19 Vaccine & Youth**  
Information for teens & young adults about vaccine eligibility in MA

Vaccine eligibility criteria for youth

- Youth 12+ can receive the Pfizer vaccine
- Youth 18+ can receive the Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson and Johnson vaccines
- Youth living in emergency shelter programs including homeless or domestic violence shelters are eligible

Learn more about your vaccine eligibility at [mass.gov/vaccinesforYOUth](https://mass.gov/vaccinesforYOUth)

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## New Trusted Sources PSAs

Please [share this link](#) of Dr. Robyn Cohen (right), a pediatric pulmonologist at Boston Medical Center, talking about the importance of COVID-19 vaccine for young people – including for her own 12 and 15 year-old kids! On social, please use the hashtag **#TrustTheFacts**.



## Best Practices for Community and Faith-based Organizations

This [two-page overview](#) of strategies from the CDC can be used to ensure access, cultural appropriateness, language sensitivity, community involvement, and support.

## Reminder Fliers, posters, graphics: COVID-19 vaccine need-to-know details

These materials explain the key details about the COVID-19 vaccines, including that the vaccines are safe, free, and that two doses may be required. Download and share [these materials](#) in your community.

## Increasing COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake Among Members of Racial and Ethnic Minority Communities

This CDC [guide](#) includes strategies, interventions, and ready-made messages and materials, as well as information on how to connect with others to increase COVID-19 vaccination confidence and access in racial and ethnic minority communities.



## 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](#)

## 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

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In order to provide support to families and communities who have suffered loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Red Cross has developed a Virtual Family Assistance Center (VFAC), staffed by a team of specially trained mental health, spiritual care, and health services volunteers who are:

- Connecting with families over the phone to offer condolences, emotional and spiritual support, and access to available resources
- Providing support for virtual memorial services for families, including connecting with local faith-based community partners
- Hosting online classes to foster resilience and facilitate coping skills
- Assisting families with access to national, state, or local resources such as grief counseling, legal resources, funeral information, financial information services, or veterans' assistance
- Additional state- and local-specific resources are available.

**People can visit:** <https://www.redcross.org/virtual-family-assistance-center/ma-family-assistance-center.html> to access this resource with special virtual programs, information, referrals, and services to support families in need. People without internet access can **call toll-free 833-492-0094** for help. All Family Assistance Center support will be provided virtually and is completely confidential and free.

### Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) now reports on the number of positive COVID-19 cases as reported to the DESE by school districts (including charter schools), collaboratives, and approved 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,

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and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories.

### *How to Help Out*

- [Donate](#) to organizations supported by the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund

#### **The Need for Blood Donations Continues, and Recovered COVID-19 Donors Can Help Save Lives**

In coordination with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Red Cross is seeking people who are fully recovered from the new coronavirus to sign up to donate plasma to help current COVID-19 patients. People who have fully recovered from COVID-19 have antibodies in their plasma that can attack the virus. This convalescent plasma is being evaluated as treatment for patients with serious or immediately life-threatening COVID-19 infections, or those judged by a healthcare provider to be at high risk of progression to severe or life-threatening condition. Interested individuals can visit [RedCrossBlood.org/plasma4covid](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)