



Michael J. Driscoll  
Town Manager

TOWN OF  
WATERTOWN  
*Office of the Town Manager*

Administration Building  
149 Main Street  
Watertown, MA 02472  
Phone: 617-972-6465  
www.watertown-ma.gov  
townmgr@watertown-ma.gov

**Town Manager’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update  
May 7, 2020**

**COVID-19 Numbers**

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is reporting that as of May 7, 2020 there are:

- 73,721 cases statewide
- 16,676 Middlesex County
- 4,552 deaths statewide

For more state data, visit [www.mass.gov/coronavirus](http://www.mass.gov/coronavirus).

Watertown has a total of 298 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 120 community members have recovered from the virus. Four Town employees have had confirmed cases. Two of those employees are back to work. Watertown has recorded nineteen COVID-19 fatalities. Our thoughts go out to the families as they mourn the loss of their loved one.

**Watertown COVID-19 Case age Distribution<sup>1</sup>**

19 and Under	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70 and over	Unknown/no age recorded	Total
8	35	54	43	42	49	67		298

**Mask and Face Covering Order Took Effect Wednesday, 5/6**

The Baker-Polito Administration has ordered all residents over the age of two to use a face covering or mask in public places where maintaining proper social distancing measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is not possible. This statewide order goes into effect on May 6th and supersedes **previously issued guidance** relative to mask use.

This order applies to all workers and customers of businesses and other organizations that are currently open to the public and permitted to operate as **COVID-19 Essential Businesses**, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and other retail stores. Residents are also required to wear a mask or face covering at all times when using any means of transportation service or public mass transit.

[Read the Order here](#)

<sup>1</sup> 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).

## **Emergency Order Mandating Face Coverings**

The Watertown Board of Health adopted an [Emergency Order](#) on April 30<sup>th</sup> mandating face coverings effective Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.

**In light of the issuance by Governor Baker of COVID-19 Order No. 31 Requiring Face Coverings in Public Places Where Social Distancing Is Not Possible, the Board of Health will be considering an amendment to its April 30, 2020 order mandating face coverings in Watertown. The proposed amendment is intended to make the Town's order consistent with the Governor's order by requiring face covering be used in outdoor places where social distancing cannot be maintained, clarifying the age at which children are required to wear face coverings, and how enforcement will be undertaken. The Board of Health is hopeful that this amendment will eliminate conflicts with the Governor's order while maintaining its primary goal of protecting public health.**

## **Tweet from Watertown Police**

Watertown Police (@WatertownPD) tweeted at 8:43 AM on Fri, Apr 17, 2020:

Please watch this very easy way to make a homemade mask. Protect yourself and others by wearing one in public places. 🤧 #stayhome #StaySafe

<https://twitter.com/WatertownPD/status/1251129053664419846?s=09>

Get the official Twitter app at <https://twitter.com/download?s=13>

## **Thank you, Nurses!**

**National Nurses Day is held annually on May 6<sup>th</sup> which marks the beginning of National Nurses Week. From all of us in Watertown, thank you to all the nurses in our community. We know how hard you work every day, and we appreciate the sacrifices you're making in these very challenging times. We are so grateful for you. Happy Nurses Week!**

## **Watertown COVID-19 Resource Guide**

The Watertown Free Public Library has developed a COVID-19 resource guide for Watertown residents. The guide will be updated frequently. [www.watertownlib.org/covid19guide](http://www.watertownlib.org/covid19guide)

## **Launching of Official Town Social Media Accounts**

**Next week we will launch official Town of Watertown social media accounts on Facebook, twitter, and Instagram. These accounts will be used to share important information and resources about Watertown and particularly related to the COVID-19 response. Existing departmental accounts will share the links on launch day and the links will be announced in the next Town Manager's Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update.**

## **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](mailto: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.**

Four (4) electronic sign boards have been placed around Town with the message: “Stay safe, stay home”. Further message updates will be provided as needed.

### **Mutual Aid Network Established for Volunteers and Those in Need**

The Watertown Mutual Aid Network has been established and is funded by the Watertown Community Foundation in association with Wayside Youth & Family Support Network Multi-Service Center. By following [this link](#), you will find information about how to use mutual aid, links to forms to offer help and request aid from your Watertown neighbors, and additional resources. We hope that most community members would use the online format, but understand that some people might feel more comfortable working with a person. Please reach out to Sophia, the Community Coordinator at [Sophia Suarez-Friedman@WaysideYouth.org](mailto:Sophia.Suarez-Friedman@WaysideYouth.org) or 617-744-9585, if you have any questions or if you wish to offer help or request aid over the phone instead (translation services are available). We hope that this resource will bring our community together during this difficult time.

### **Funds available for Watertown Residents in need**

There are funds available for emergency needs from Wayside, Council on Aging and Springwell. Marshall Home Fund provides funds to each of these agencies to assist Watertown residents in need age 55 and older. Limited grants are available for home heating, car repair, computer repair, dental work, home repair, and other emergency items. The telephone numbers for each agency is as follows:

Springwell	(617) 926-4100
Wayside	(617) 744-9585
Council on Aging	(617) 972-6490

**Non-Essential Business Closures Extended to May 18; Reopening Advisory Board Announced ([News Release](#))** On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Baker-Polito Administration extended the essential services emergency order to May 18<sup>th</sup> and launched a Reopening Advisory Board that will produce a plan to the Governor by May 18<sup>th</sup>. The Administration also announced that the Department of Public Health’s Stay at Home Advisory remains in effect and gatherings of 10 or more people remain prohibited until May 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Governor Eases Some Restrictions on “Non-Essential” Businesses**

Governor Baker revised some of his guidance around the operation of “non-essential” businesses, allowing certain businesses to bring in a small number of employees to remotely fulfill online or phone orders for delivery. Customers are not allowed to enter the business and there are several guidelines that the businesses must follow. Learn more here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-essential-services-faqs>

### **Reopening Advisory Board:**

- The Re-Opening Advisory Board, co-chaired by Lt. Governor Polito and Housing & Economic Development Secretary Kennealy, has been meeting with various employers, business organizations, and municipalities to gather as much data as they can, and to work with DPH and the healthcare community to develop specific guidance for re-opening.

- To date, the Board has engaged with stakeholders from 23 different industry associations and community coalitions. Together, these groups represent over 100,000 businesses, 1.4 million workers and include representatives from retail, high tech, life sciences, restaurants, travel, tourism and lodging, banking, construction, and recreation. The Board also engaged with the Black Economic Council, the Latino Chamber of Commerce, and the NAACP.
- Over the next few days, the Board will meet with representatives from labor, gaming, museums and cultural institutions, and sports organizations, among others.
- Additionally, the Board has received over 475 submissions of written testimony.
- In meeting with the Board, each group has discussed the key issues that their industry or their region expects to face and have emphasized the specific guidance and information that they are looking for from the Commonwealth and local governments in order to re-open safely.

### **Disaster Recovery Information**

On March 27<sup>th</sup>, 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 [website](#) with information and guidance regarding the disaster declaration, eligibility criteria, and the application process.

### **COVID-19 Public Resources Map**

MEMA, together with MA VOAD and other partners, has developed a [COVID-19 Public Resources Map](#) showing the location of resources available to the public, such as food banks, houses of worship, and Project Bread site locations. Please note that this map is not inclusive of all resources, and is only as accurate as the information that has been provided to MEMA.

### **DPH Daily Dashboard Released**

On April 20<sup>th</sup>, the Baker-Polito Administration released an enhanced, comprehensive and detailed COVID-19 data report, including trend data in a variety of areas. The new daily dashboard is 23 pages in length and includes information on cases rates, testing, and breakdowns by age, sex, race and ethnicity, and geography of confirmed cases. It also includes a similar breakdown of death data. Beyond the case data, the report also includes specific information on COVID-19 hospital census information, a list of nursing homes, skilled nursing facilities and rest homes with known clusters of COVID-19 cases and data on PPE distribution by recipient type and geography. ([See the new Daily Dashboard report](#))

### **Update on Mobile Testing Numbers for Long Term Care, Assisted Living Residences and EOHHS Group Homes & Sites**

The Mobile Testing Program can test both symptomatic and asymptomatic residents and staff at nursing homes, rest homes, Assisted Living Residences, and EOHHS group homes and care sites. The program was launched by the Command Center on 3/31 and operates under the auspices of the Massachusetts National Guard, in partnership with the Department of Public Health, Fallon Ambulance, and Broad Institute of Cambridge. See a summary of testing activity on the next page.

### Onsite Testing

Date	Number of Tests Completed	Facilities Visited
5/6	1565	21
<b>Total (as of 5/6)</b>	<b>33,416</b>	<b>589</b>

### Mobile Testing at EOHHS Group Homes & Care Sites (as of 5/5)

DDS, DMH, DCF and DPH Facilities	
Clients	7,452
Staff	10,748
<b>Total Tests</b>	<b>18,200</b>
Number of Locations	1197

### Cases in Long term Care Facilities (as of 5/6)

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	14,680
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	331
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	2,653

### Check Your Symptoms for COVID-19 Online

The state is reminding people that they can now check their symptoms for COVID-19 online through [Buoy.com/mass](https://www.buoy.com/mass). Buoy's online tool is not to be used in place of emergency medical care. If you are experiencing an emergency, call 911 or visit the nearest emergency room. Massachusetts residents can visit Buoy to get advice from an online health assistant safely at home, for free. Buoy will connect you with the appropriate health care resource based on your symptoms and risk factors for COVID-19.

### COVID-19 Testing

The Department of Public Health (DPH) has posted to their COVID-19 website information on testing and mobile testing site locations ([available here](#)). This information is updated twice weekly.

### 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/COVID-19-Resource-Center>

### Watertown Public Schools

Watertown Public Schools will continue to support students, staff members, and parents through its robust Extended Learning Plan through June 16 as Governor Charlie Baker announced that all school buildings in Massachusetts will be closed for the remainder of this school year. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will release guidance to districts shortly and the District will make any necessary adjustments to ensure that our students continue moving forward through the end of the school year. With this announcement, the School Department continues to plan for keeping our students and staff healthy

when school buildings reopen and to ensure that we meet all of our children where they are academically once the Extended Learning Plan comes to an end.

The School Nutrition Department continues to provide Grab n Go meals to any student who could benefit from this service on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in the WHS parking lot from 11am to 1pm. They are currently serving meals to 200+ students.

### **Watertown Free Public Library**

The Watertown Free Public Library will **remain closed until Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**. New virtual programs are added regularly. View the events calendar at [watertownlib.org/events](http://watertownlib.org/events). Subscribe to the newsletter for weekly updates during the closure [watertownlib.org/newsletter](http://watertownlib.org/newsletter).

The COVID-19 community resource guide is available at [www.watertownlib.org/covid19guide](http://www.watertownlib.org/covid19guide).

The Library has added two new streaming services to their elibrary. Qello provides full length concerts and music documentaries. Acorn TV offers streaming British tv, movies, and miniseries. For more information visit [watertownlib.org/elibrary](http://watertownlib.org/elibrary).

**Beginning next week, the Watertown Free Public library will offer curbside pickup of library materials for Watertown residents. This will be a different experience than typical library service with limited item availability, but we hope that access to library materials will provide respite to the isolation created during this pandemic. All items showing as available in the [library catalog](#) will be eligible for pickup. Simply call the library Monday – Friday and the items will be set aside and delivered to your car’s trunk (or outdoor area for walkers and bicyclists). More details will be released next week on the library website [www.watertownlib.org](http://www.watertownlib.org).**

### **Watertown Council on Aging/Senior Center/Food Pantry**

The Watertown Council on Aging/Senior Center will **remain closed for all programs and services** including all activities, exercise classes, AARP tax appointments, SHINE counseling, podiatry and blood pressure clinics, shuttle bus runs and Senior Parking Permits **until Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**. 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.** See above for links about masks and other face coverings. Food donations are accepted at the Food Pantry on Tuesdays starting at 9:00 AM until 2 PM. Senior Center staff are available to answer your questions and to help connect you to resources you may need. Call the Senior Center at (617) 972-6490 or send an e-mail to [SeniorCenter@watertown-ma.gov](mailto: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](mailto:PGeorge@watertown-ma.gov) or (617) 972-6416 (Office) and (781) 645-9127 (Cell)  
[COVID-19 Resource Guide](#)

## **Parks and Recreation**

All programs offered by the Watertown Recreation Department will **remain cancelled until Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**. **All fields, courts, track, tot lots and dog parks in Watertown will remain closed until May 18<sup>th</sup>**. Please adhere to this request and follow all guidelines by the Watertown Health Department and all governmental agencies.

## **Watertown Recycling Center**

In accordance with recently issued guidance from the Governor's Office, the Department of Public Works and Watertown Recycling Center Operator, Republic Services will extend the closure of the Watertown Recycling Center through Sunday, May 17, 2020. Additionally, the Department of Public Works has cancelled the May 30<sup>th</sup> scheduled Recycle Event normally held at the Recycling Center.

**Town Hall will remain closed to the public until Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. Town Hall and the Department of Public Works Administrative Offices remain available only by phone or online.** All calls and emails will be responded to Monday through Friday 8:30am-5:00pm.

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

This includes the following Town Offices:

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

## **Emergency Management Team**

The Town of Watertown Emergency Management Team is meeting daily 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>.

## **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.

**We also recommend the following resources:**

Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Resource Page:

<https://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus>

Center for Disease Control COVID-19 information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Town Manager's Coronavirus (COVID-19) (9) [Statements/Updates](#)

**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](mailto: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!