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**Town Manager’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update
July 24, 2020**

COVID-19 Numbers

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is reporting that as of July 23, 2020 there are:

- 107,683 cases statewide
- 25,123 Middlesex County
- 8,265 deaths statewide

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

Watertown has a total of 439 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 413 community members have recovered from the virus. Four Town employees have had confirmed cases. Watertown has recorded twenty-three 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
20	60	96	54	65	63	80	1	439

Transition to Third Phase of Four-Phase Approach

Phase III of the Commonwealth’s reopening plan began on July 6th and updates on gatherings will be in effect. For the City of Boston, Phase III and the gatherings order will take effect on Monday, July 13.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) also issued updated guidance to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Step One of Phase III:

On May 18, the Baker-Polito Administration released a four-phased plan to reopen the economy based on public health data, spending at least three weeks in each phase. Key public health data, such as new cases and hospitalizations, have been closely monitored and have seen a decline allowing for Phase III to begin, Phase III will begin on July 13 in the City of Boston.

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).

Since mid-April, the 7-day average for the positive COVID-19 test rate is down 94 percent, the 3-day average of hospitalized patients is down 83 percent and the number of hospitals in surge is down 95 percent. More than 1,000,000 total COVID-19 tests have been administered, and testing continues throughout the state.

The following businesses will be eligible to reopen in Step One of Phase III, subject to industry-specific rules concerning capacity and operations:

- Movie theaters and outdoor performance venues;
- Museums, cultural and historical sites;
- Fitness centers and health clubs;
- Certain indoor recreational activities with low potential for contact;
- Professional sports teams, under the authority of league-wide rules, may hold games without spectators

Full guidance and list of businesses eligible to reopen in Step One of Phase III can be found at www.mass.gov/reopening. Businesses and sectors set to begin opening in Phase III are subject to compliance with all mandatory safety standards.

Revised Gatherings Order:

Under the updated gatherings order, indoor gatherings are limited to eight people per 1,000 square feet, but should not exceed 25 people in a single enclosed, indoor space. Outdoor gatherings in enclosed spaces are limited to 25 percent of the facility's maximum permitted occupancy, with a maximum of 100 people in a single enclosed outdoor space. This includes community events, civic events, sporting events, concerts, conventions and more. This order does not apply to outdoor, unenclosed gatherings if proper social distancing measures are possible. This revised order does not supersede previously issued sector guidance, and became effective Monday, July 6th. It will be effective Monday, July 13th in the City of Boston.

New Travel Order

Today, Governor Baker announced that effective August 1st, all travelers entering Massachusetts - both out of state residents and Massachusetts residents returning home - must comply with a new travel order. This includes students returning to campuses for the fall semester.

The [new travel order](#) requires all visitors and returning residents to fill out a "Massachusetts Traveler Form" unless they are coming from a state that has been designated a lower risk COVID-19 state or fall into an exemption category. The new travel order also provides that visitors and returning residents arriving in Massachusetts from any place other than a COVID-19 lower-risk state must quarantine for 14-days unless they can produce a negative COVID-19 test result administered on a sample taken not more than 72-hours prior to arriving in Massachusetts.

Baker-Polito Administration Extends Moratorium on Evictions and Foreclosures to October 17

Governor Charlie Baker [extended the pause on evictions and foreclosures for 60 days](#), until October 17, 2020, through the authority granted to the governor by Chapter 65 of the Acts of 2020, *An Act providing for a moratorium on evictions and foreclosures during the COVID-19 Emergency*, which was signed into law on April 20, 2020. This law's limitations on evictions and foreclosures have allowed many tenants and homeowners impacted by COVID-19 to remain in their homes during the state of emergency, and this extension provides residents of the Commonwealth with continued housing security as businesses cautiously re-open, more people work, and the state collectively moves toward a "new normal." The moratorium was set to expire on August 18, 2020.

[Click here to read the extension letter.](#)

Vote by Mail for 2020

Recently, Chapter 115 of the Acts of 2020 was enacted relative to voting options in response to COVID-19. One such option is **VOTE BY MAIL**, also known as no excuse voting, which allows for the voter to submit a “Vote by Mail” application to the local Election Department. Watertown voters received a mailing last weekend from the Elections Division of the MA Secretary of State’s Office that provided a post card application to be filled out and mail back (postage included) to the Town Clerk’s Office. The application can also be faxed (617-972-6595) or emailed (townclerk@watertown-ma.gov), as long as the signature is visible and is signed in a substantial manner as a handwritten signature including applications signed with a mouse, stylus, or finger. Applications with typed signatures are still not accepted. The deadline to submit a Vote by Mail application or absentee ballot application for a mailed ballot for the September 1, 2020 State Primary is Wednesday, August, 26th.

2020 Saltonstall Park Concert Series

Great news! Concerts are still happening! This year marks twenty-one years that the Saltonstall Park Concert Series has provided free music and entertainment in Watertown’s historic Saltonstall Park. The concerts will be a very different experience this summer. We are requesting that everyone follow the latest State and Town guidance in regards to masks and social distancing. The Saltonstall Park Concert Series Committee will take steps to help make the process easier, such as social distancing squares. We are very excited to invite our concert-goers back!

Concerts are as follows:

Wednesdays – starting at 6:30 PM

July 29 - The Blues Dogs is a collection of Boston mutts that all love to play the blues. They've got a lot of influences in their blood streams: a little South Side Chicago, a little Texas boogie, a little uptown urban sophistication, and even a little jazz. Their complex vocal harmonies really add to the mix.

August 5 - The Band from U.N.C.L.E. There isn't enough room here to list everywhere these musicians have gigged, recorded and toured. Now they're on a secret mission to bring 50s-60s rock & roll, garage rock and girl group/soul music to the masses. They'll probably leave behind their exploding briefcases, fountain pen missiles and flame-throwing umbrellas, but they will rock the house for sure.

August 12 - Southbound Train is a seven-piece group, including fiddle and steel guitar, that covers all the top country hits: old, new, and everything in between.

August 19 - Gainsville Road is a female fronted dance/party band with a great song list, excellent musicianship, powerful vocals and genuine stage presence.

August 26 – Lightning Rose. Good friends and Palfrey Street neighbors, John Copeland and David and Dawn Scaltreto, found that one of the hardest parts of quarantine was not being able to play live music with their respective bands, or play live in clubs and restaurants. When the Scaltretos heard John playing one day on his front steps, they wanted to join in the fun! That weekend they began playing concerts in the backyard over the fence. Appreciative neighbors came out with their lawn chairs to listen, and everyone loved it! With the addition of Watertown native David Donnelly on drums, the band was complete. John’s adorable 5 year-old daughter, Natalie, came up with the name for the new ensemble, and “**Lightning Rose**” was born! They play a selection of popular classic rock tunes with a bluesy-jazzy-country spin and lots of beautifully layered vocals.

The 2020 concert series is sponsored by the Watertown Savings Bank, Eversource, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Graphic Connections and Town of Watertown

Town Re-Opening Plan Update

As indicated in the May 22nd Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update, the Town is preparing to reopen Town buildings and facilities. We are determining the best ways to responsibly and safely reopen Watertown. The following is an update on the Town's Re-Opening Plan:

- **The Watertown Recycling Center is open on Fridays and Saturdays from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM**
- **As of June 1st, the Department of Public Works Administrative offices has opened to the public for issuance of permits and for other Public Works related services.**
- **The Watertown Senior Center will remain closed as we continue to review best ways to responsibly and safely reopen. We will provide more information once available in COVID-19 Updates, on social media and on the Town's website.**

Town Hall

Town Hall is open to the public by appointment only. Under this initial reopening, 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

Town Hall Summer Hours through Friday September 4th will be as follows:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Tuesday 8:30 AM – 7:00 PM

Friday 8:30 AM – 2:00 PM

The Building Inspectors' Offices are open at 7:30 AM

Parks and Recreation

On Wednesday, June 3rd, the following opened:

- **Parks and Athletic Fields (except Victory Field Turf)**
- **Victory Field Track**
- **Community Gardens**

On Wednesday, June 17th, the following opened:

- **Dog Parks**
- **Tennis & Pickle Ball Courts (singles play only - no doubles play)**

On Wednesday, June 24th, the following opened:

- **Playgrounds & Tot Lots**
- **Basket Ball Courts**
- **Picnic Tables & Grills (permit only)**

On Saturday July 11th, the following opened:

- **Victory Turf Field – Hours of operation will be 8:00 AM – 10:00 PM**
- **Spray pads at Arsenal and Filippello Parks – Hours of operation will be 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM. Capacity at the Arsenal Spray Pad is 8 users at a time; and 15 users at a time at the Filippello Spray Pad**

Watertown's recreational facilities and activities' rules and regulations will be guided by the Governor's Phase III reopening plan, which began on July 6th. Please refer to these documents for detailed instructions.

Parks-Open-Outdoor Education – Phase III

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/safety-standards-for-parks-open-space-and-outdoor-education-programs-phase-iii-step-1-0/download>

Safety Standards for Playgrounds-Spray Parks and Outdoor Fitness – Phase III

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/executive-office-of-energy-and-environmental-affairs-eea-covid-19-guidance-documents#playgrounds,-spray-decks-and-outdoor-fitness-areas->

Youth and Adult Amateur Sports: Phase III

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/safety-standards-for-youth-and-adult-amateur-sports-activities-phase-iii-step-1/download>

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

The Recreation Department began a summer programming schedule on Monday, July 13th.

Click here for the [Summer Program Offerings Brochure](#)

The Watertown Free Public Library will reopen on Monday, July 27 for browsing only, at reduced capacity, and shortened hours in compliance with the State's phased reopening guidance.

Emergency Order Mandating Face Coverings

The Watertown Board of Health adopted an Emergency Order on April 30th mandating face coverings effective Monday, May 4th.

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 went into effect on May 6th.

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](#)

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

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.

Four (4) electronic sign boards have been placed around Town with the message: "Wear Face Coverings". Further message updates will be provided as needed.

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 Public Schools (WPS)

The Watertown Public Schools continues considering three scenarios for reopening safely this fall: in-person every day, remote learning, or a hybrid of the two. The Superintendent and her team will be presenting the three options at the Watertown School Committee meeting on Monday, July 27 at 7:00 PM.

Anyone who is interested in learning more about the options can attend the meeting via Zoom at the following link: <https://watertown-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/94621169656>. Throughout next week, the Superintendent will provide opportunities for parents and teachers to provide input and feedback before the final plan is submitted to the State on August 10. Please check the Watertown Public Schools Website for more information about upcoming forums.

The School Nutrition Department continues to provide breakfast and lunch for families on Tuesdays and Fridays from 11:00-1:00 in the Watertown High School parking lot. This service continues through the end of August.

Watertown Free Public Library

The Watertown Free Public Library will reopen for browsing only on Monday, July 27. Hours open will be Monday through Thursday from 10am -7pm with 9am -10am reserved for the elderly 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 will continue and expand. For more information visit <https://www.watertownlib.org/537/Curbside-Pickup>

Hatch Makerspace continues 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.

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>.

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) (18) [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!