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**Town Manager’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update
September 25, 2020**

Latest Data: COVID-19 Public Health Update

Testing Update: As of September 24th over **18,000** new individuals tested by molecular (viral) tests were reported in Massachusetts with **455** newly reported confirmed positive cases. The total molecular tests administered to date is nearly **3.6 million**.

Hospitalizations & Capacity Update: **376** people are hospitalized, with **75** reported to be in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Key indicators from the latest Daily Dashboard are below.



Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard - Thursday, September 24, 2020

Dashboard of Public Health Indicators

Newly Reported
Confirmed Cases
Today
455

Total Confirmed
Cases
126,863

Newly Reported
Deaths among
Confirmed Today
15

Total Deaths
among Confirmed
Cases
9,150

New Individuals
Tested by
Molecular Tests
18,556

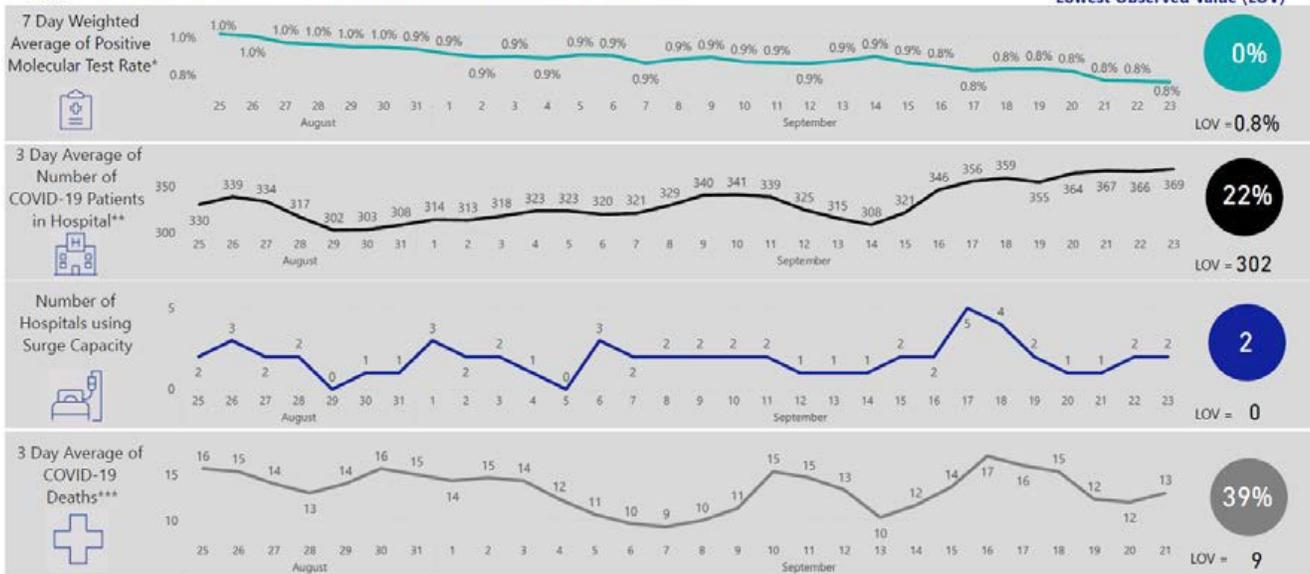
Total Individuals
Tested by
Molecular Tests
2,144,396

Total Molecular
Tests
Administered
3,642,716

- Legend
- Positive trend
 - In progress
 - Negative trend

Below is the current status:

Measure	Status
COVID-19 positive test rate	●
Number of individuals who died from COVID-19	●
Number of patients with COVID-19 in hospitals	●
Healthcare system readiness	●
Testing capacity	●
Contact tracing capabilities	●



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

Watertown has a total of 506 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 477 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
26	83	111	64	70	66	85	1	506

New Weekly Public Health Data Report Released

The Command Center released the comprehensive [COVID-19 Weekly Public Health Report](#), including community-specific COVID-19 case and testing data. The report also includes risk categories for each city and town based on the average daily incident rate over the past 14 days. Communities in the high-risk category will receive additional support from the Commonwealth through a cross-agency COVID Enforcement and Intervention Team.

DPH has also posted an archive of previously released city and town data dating back to April on the COVID-19 reporting page. The Weekly Public Health Report also includes data on recoveries, along with detailed case and death data related to long term care facilities. The report also includes information on new nursing facility staff baseline testing, infection control audits, and more. You can also find information related to contact tracing by local boards of health, and the Community Tracing Collaborators, and raw data files, are available by visiting the [COVID-19 Response Reporting page](#).

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).

Free COVID-19 Testing in 18 Communities is Extended through October

The state's "Stop the Spread" initiative has extended free COVID-19 testing through October 31. The testing is available in 18 high priority communities across the Commonwealth: Brockton, Chelsea, Everett, Fall River, Framingham, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lynn, Marlborough, Methuen, New Bedford, Randolph, Revere, Salem, Saugus, Springfield, Winthrop, and Worcester. The Stop the Spread initiative is a data-driven targeted effort to reduce the prevalence of COVID-19 in communities that are above the state average in total cases and positive test rates.

Residents can visit the initiative's website at mass.gov/stopthespread to find testing locations and additional information. The Stop the Spread program is intended to provide low barrier, free, and easy to access testing to all Massachusetts residents.

New Indoor Visitation Guidance for Nursing Homes, Rest Homes and Assisted Living Residences

New guidance was announced yesterday that allows safe indoor visitation to resume in nursing homes and rest homes, and further expands indoor visitation options in assisted living residences (ALRs) starting today, September 25. The guidance from the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) balances the important role visitation plays in supporting resident emotional health and quality of life, while ensuring necessary infection control measures are in place.

[View the full DPH long-term care visitation guidance](#)

[View the full EOEA ALR visitation guidance](#)

New Restaurant Guidance

Earlier in the week, Governor Baker announced the following changes to food establishments starting on September 28th. For both indoor and outdoor dining, parties can now be up to 10 persons (up from 6). Restaurants may use bar area for food service, while following safety protocols. Bars and nightclubs will remain closed.

Federal Approval for September Pandemic EBT

The Baker Administration announced that it received federal approval to issue additional Pandemic EBT, or P-EBT, benefits in September to promote increased food security for families who participate in the United States Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program (NSLP). These funds will help cover the cost of missed school meals from the month of September due to delayed school opening or remote learning, for over 470,000 students and their families. Benefits will start being available (being distributed) September 30, 2020 for an estimated total amount of over \$40 million of federal dollars. (Press release [here](#)).

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 31, 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 Watertown Public Schools returned to learning on Tuesday, September 22. Most of the students are beginning remotely on the "Bridge to Hybrid" as we continue to monitor the trajectory of the virus and the readiness of our schools to reopen for in-person instruction. Our first checkpoint for beginning hybrid in-person instruction will be on October 22 with a start date for elementary school students on October 27 and secondary students returning at the end of November. Several of our students in specialized programs started school in-person this past Tuesday.

The WPS School Nutrition Department is providing free grab and go meals for families on Tuesday and Fridays from 11-1 or on Wednesday evening from 5:30 -7. This service provides 7 days of free breakfast and lunch for any student or family who could benefit from this offer.

The Watertown Farmers' Market is open weekly through October 14th!

Wednesdays, 2:30 – 6:30pm, Saltonstall Park, 149 Main Street, next to Town Hall

The market is open as an essential food access point offering a wide variety of farm fresh, locally grown and produced foods. The market offers safe and efficient on-site shopping as well as pre-order options. Volunteer Shoppers are available for those with medical, mobility, or transportation needs. Market flyer with SNAP information ([HERE](#)).

Visit our website for more information: www.watertownmarket.com

2020 Saltonstall Park Concert Series

On Wednesday, September 30th, Southbound Train will perform! Concert starts at 6:30 PM, Saltonstall Park. Southbound Train is a high energy, vocal oriented contemporary - seven-piece country band playing the best of country music, past and present.

This year marks twenty-one years that the Saltonstall Park Concert Series has provided free music and entertainment in Watertown's historic Saltonstall Park. 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. Enjoy the show!

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

Town Hall

Town Hall is open to the public by appointment only. 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>

Museum passes are back! 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.

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.

Food Pantry Need

The Food Pantry is in need of healthy kid-sized snacks like granola or fruit bars, raisin boxes, fruit or pudding cups, cookie and cracker mini packs, and drinks like juice boxes or pouches for our families. Our goal is to send each family home with a week's worth of "School Snacks." Donations accepted at the Food Pantry on Tuesdays from 8:00 AM – 1:30 PM at 80 Mount Auburn Street, Rear.

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) (26) [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!