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Town Manager

TOWN OF
WATERTOWN
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**Town Manager’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update
October 2, 2020**

Watertown has a total of 519 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 482 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
27	85	112	67	71	70	86	1	519

Community-Level COVID-19 Data Reporting

The Commonwealth is reporting enhanced community-level data on key COVID-19 metrics as part of the Baker-Polito Administration's [efforts](#) to partner with cities and towns to slow the spread of the virus.

[Use this map](#) to learn about key COVID-19 metrics. Watertown currently has less than 4 cases per 100k.

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 clinics for Watertown Residents 15 and older.

Drive Thru Dates: (For residents age 15+)
Saturday, October 10th, 9am- 2pm
Saturday, November 7th, 9am- 2pm

Walk Thru Dates: (For residents age 65+):
Saturday, October 10th, 9am-12pm
Saturday, October 24th, 9am-12pm

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).

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED!

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

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/flu-vaccine-walk-in-clinic-tickets-120442477693>

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.

Small Business Grant Update

Please spread the word to the Watertown business community. Watertown has a grant program with funding up to \$10,000 for certain small businesses (5 or less employees with medium/low income). The first round was closed on September 25th but the good news is that there is a second round of grants which starts today and will have a three week window to apply. We encourage qualified businesses to apply as soon as they can. The details of what is needed and who qualifies is within the link to the application. The big change is that with documentation, round two will allow the consideration of 2020 Income projections to determine qualifications.

- Round 2 Grant Dates: October 2 through October 23, 2020 (please try to apply as soon as you can)
- How to apply (starts on 10/2): <https://massgcc.submittable.com/submit>

Questions about the application, required documentation and other aspects of the program should be sent to the email with the webpage of the application after reviewing their guidance information. If there are general questions about the program or your business in Watertown, you can reach out to me, Gideon Schreiber at gschreiber@watertown-ma.gov or by phone at 617-972-6417.

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](https://www.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.

Transition to Step II of Phase III for Lower Risk Communities

Effective Monday, October 5th, lower risk communities will be permitted to move into Step II of Phase III of the Commonwealth's reopening plan. All other communities will remain in Phase III, Step I. Governor Charlie Baker also issued a revised gatherings order. Industry specific guidance and protocols for a range of Phase I, II, and III businesses will also be updated.

Read more: [Governor's COVID-19 Order #52](#)

Watertown Public Schools (WPS)

The Watertown Public Schools have reopened with most students learning remotely until a decision is made to return to hybrid. Elementary students may begin the hybrid model as early as October 27th, with our secondary students starting hybrid at some point in November. We will continue to monitor the data in order to determine the most appropriate time to move to hybrid. At this time, students in our specialized programs are receiving services in person. Staff working in person with students have been offered COVID-19 PCR testing weekly, which began on October 1st.

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. Families are provided with 7 days of free breakfast and lunch. These meals are available for any student or family who could benefit from this service.

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

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 in the Philip Pane Hearing Room, park side of Town Hall. 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 Needs

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) (27) [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!