



TOWN OF BEDFORD
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BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730

Bedford Public Schools Update on COVID-19

April 2, 2020

If you need this document translated, please call your child's school principal - Si necesita este documento traducido, por favor comuníquese con la escuela de su hijo - Se você precisa este documento traduzido, entre em contato com a escola do seu filho - Si vous avez besoin de traduire ce document, s'il vous plaît contacter l'école de votre enfant - 如果你需要这份文件翻译，请联系您的孩子的学校 - إذا كنت تحتاج /تحتاجين إلى ترجمة هذه ، الوثيقة إلى اللغة العربية يرجى الاتصال بمدرسة طفلك/طفلاتك

Dear Families, Faculty and Staff,

Per several requests, for ease of access I am reverting back to pasting the message here rather than linking the PDF. PDF's will also be linked when there are visuals attached as this platform doesn't work well for visuals.

Jon

The Bedford COVID-19 Task Force met Thursday, April 2, 2020 to review the latest guidance from the Department of Public Health (DPH), the office of Governor Charlie Baker, and Town Legal Counsel.

The COVID-19 Task Force is comprised of the following Town officials:

Sarah Stanton, Town Manager
Jon Sills, Superintendent of Schools
Heidi Porter, Director of Health and Human Services
Robert Bongiorno, Police Chief
David Grunes, Fire Chief
Taissir Alani, Facilities Director

Active Cases

As of today, April 2, 2020, there have been a total of eleven (11) presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 reported to the Town of Bedford Board of Health by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA DPH). Three (3) of these cases have already recovered and have come off of isolation and quarantine, and there are zero (0) Person(s) Under Investigation. It is likely that there are other individuals impacted by COVID-19 in the community that have not sought medical attention, and/or have not been tested and are isolating at home regardless. Those individuals do not appear on the surveillance reports the Town receives from the MA DPH.

The Board of Health continues to do the appropriate follow-up and outreach to those residents and close contacts known to us. Many of the identified close contacts of the initial cases never exhibited symptoms, have completed their required quarantine period and have been released from quarantine by the Board of Health. The Town has also been informed of two (2) presumptive positive cases at Hanscom Air Force Base. One individual has been released from isolation, and has no contacts that the Town of Bedford is required to follow up on.

Anyone exhibiting flu-like symptoms should immediately self-quarantine, isolate from household members and contact their healthcare provider for further guidance on whether testing is warranted.

Town Update

To assist and support Bedford residents in need, the Town of Bedford has established a temporary food bank at John Glenn Middle School (JGMS).

This week, the Food Bank will be held Friday, April 3, 2020 from 1-4 PM at John Glenn Middle School. As a reminder, the Food Bank is for the following groups: school-aged children/families of the Bedford Public Schools in need of food support at this time (including, but not limited to, students currently on free or reduced breakfast and lunch), previously identified vulnerable seniors and veterans, and existing clients of the Bedford Food Pantry. For more information on the Food Bank, please visit www.bedfordma.gov/bedfordfoodbank.

When picking up food from our drive through food bank at JGMS on Fridays, Town and School officials will now be asking if you have a child in the Bedford public schools and, if so, what the child /children's name(s) is/are. This is not specific to families on free or reduced lunch status, but pertains to any family of school-age children receiving food. This is necessary for the District to receive federal reimbursement for a substantial portion of the meals' cost.

There will be a separate food bank delivery system for homebound seniors and disabled residents. If you are homebound resident, and in need of food assistance, please e-mail bedfordfoodbank@bedfordma.gov.

School Update

Technology If you and your child have technological challenges accessing our remote learning, please send your inquiries to tech_support@bedfordps.org. If you are having difficulty with Seesaw, please send your inquiries to Beth_benoit@bedfordps.org. We will be sending some "how to" information home in the next few days.

Privacy Concerns We have received some questions about the hacking of Zoom accounts following some reports of Zoom hacking mischief in the news. Because we have a membership, Zoom protects students' privacy, and it has advised us of steps we can take to protect against hacking. These include putting students in a "waiting room" first before adding them to the conference, and locking down the meeting. Teachers are also advised to end the meeting immediately should someone hack in. Of course, there are never ironclad guarantees against hacking, but we feel confident that our safeguards will make it highly unlikely.

General Guidance

For previous updates on COVID-19, please review the COVID-19 News and Announcements Page at on the Town website (www.bedfordma.gov).

It is important to remember that while the COVID-19 outbreak is evolving quickly, influenza is currently circulating in the area. Many of the things you do to help prevent colds and the flu can help protect you against other respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean things that are frequently touched (like doorknobs and countertops) with household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or your inner elbow, not your hands.
- Stay home if you are sick and avoid close contact with others.
- Employ social distancing if you are not otherwise required to be in quarantine and must go out.
- For those at home, a little moderate exercise or meditation goes a long way. Get up, stretch, and maybe have a short walk.

The best source of guidance and recommendations is the DPH website: www.mass.gov/covid19

Alternatively, if you are without internet capabilities, please call the State hotline: 2-1-1

You can also the Town of Bedford website for local updates and actions: www.bedfordma.gov

Town and School officials, and the Bedford Health Department, remain in continuous communication about this issue, and further updates will be provided to the community as we receive them.