



TOWN OF BEDFORD
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BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730

Bedford Public Schools Update on COVID-19

June 3, 2020

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The Bedford COVID-19 Task Force met June 3, 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

Current Case Report

As of today, June 3, 2020, there have been a total of two hundred twenty-three (223) positive cases of COVID-19 reported to the Town of Bedford Board of Health by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA DPH), of those, one hundred seventeen (117) are Bedford residents not living in a healthcare/long term care setting. Forty (40) deaths of Bedford residents have been attributed to COVID-19. The total case number includes residents of the Town of Bedford, including but not limited to those in: single-family homes, apartments, the VA campus, Hanscom Air Force Base, special needs group homes and any and all other larger assisted living/care facilities in Bedford as reported to us by the MA DPH. Please see "Data Reporting Explained" below for detailed information on why Bedford experienced an increase in positive case counts today.

As you may be aware, long-term care facilities serving the elderly and congregate care facilities, house susceptible populations with underlying conditions who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. Increased testing occurs at these facilities and results in more positive cases being identified. As such, cities and towns with these facilities, like Bedford, experience elevated positive case counts and, unfortunately, deaths due to the vulnerability to COVID-19 of the populations within those facilities.

Seventy-one (71) of the total Bedford cases have already recovered and have come off of isolation and there may other Bedford residents who would be considered persons under investigation in that they are symptomatic, have undergone testing but have not yet received results. 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 and the VA is conducting follow-up and contact tracing of the Veteran's under their care. Many of the identified close contacts of some of the Bedford cases never exhibited symptoms, have completed their required quarantine period and have been released from quarantine by the Board of Health.

Please note, in part to alleviate the community concern, the VA does do a daily report of their numbers, which includes inpatients, outpatients and staff, many of whom do not call Bedford home. The information can be found here: <https://www.accesstocare.va.gov/Healthcare/COVID19NationalSummary>

Reopening-Phase 2

On June 1, 2020 the Governor provided an update which allowed businesses included in Phase 2 of the re-opening plan, to open their physical workplaces and facilities to workers for the purpose of preparing and planning for the re-opening. As occurred in Phase 1, all businesses will be required to comply with the General Workplace Safety Standards at all times, and specific sectors will have additional requirements.

The COVID-19 Task Force, and Board of Health staff, are currently working on gathering all Phase 2 protocols and details released by the State of Massachusetts. This information will be sent to sector specific businesses, or programs, in an effort to help them better understand the requirements that must be met prior to re-opening. This will support those included in Phase 2 to be prepared when the timeline for reopening is announced, which is anticipated to be as early as next week.

Businesses or programs currently listed in Phase 2 include retail stores, outdoor dining at restaurants, hotels, organized sports and youth programs, personal services, funeral home services, outdoor recreational facilities, day camps, and public libraries. These sectors will be allowed to open on a specific date in Phase 2, in a limited fashion, or limited operations, with specific conditions that must be met. Our internal team of stakeholders have been working for weeks to prepare a "restaurant toolkit" to help our local establishments adhere to the state regulations, apply for temporary expanded outdoor seating, and ensure a successful transition in reopening. Stay tuned for more details!

Exciting news for the Town of Bedford, Phase 2 will allow Town programs to re-open such as Summer Adventures day camp, Kids Club childcare, and limited outdoor recreation programming! Additional information will be released as specifics are received from the State of Massachusetts. If you are a business not currently receiving COVID-19 phase re-opening emails from the Bedford Board of Health, please contact them 781-275-6507 to be added to our outreach.