



TOWN OF BEDFORD
97 MCMAHON ROAD
BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730

Bedford Public Schools Update on COVID-19

May 30, 2020

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The Bedford COVID-19 Task Force met May 30, 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, May 30, 2020, there have been a total of two hundred fifteen (215) 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 thirteen (113) 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.

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.

Sixty-three (63) 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>

Nice Weather Gets More People Outside

With the nicer weather upon us and residents' strong desire to get outside and enjoy it all, the Bedford Board of Health and the COVID-19 Task Force, who have been working so diligently to keep you informed and protected during these past several months, caution residents to be mindful that a slow and steady approach to regaining normalcy in our lives will indeed help us get to the other side of this epidemic. Just because something is allowed, or restrictions are loosened, doesn't mean you have to jump into the fray at full speed. Please be mindful of the posted signage around town at our trail heads, bike path and on our fields reminding you to use social distancing, wear a face covering when leaving your home, Dispose of waste (gloves and masks) properly to reduce disease transmission, avoid locations that are crowded, avoid common touch surfaces (including playground equipment), and do not gather in large groups. Heeding this advice in addition to washing your hands often for 20 seconds and not touching your face are all measures that will continue to slow the spread.

Update on Outdoor Activities Now Permitted

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs has developed additional guidance for outdoor activities included in Phase 1 of the Massachusetts Reopening Plans. Parks, athletic fields and courts are allowed to open for non-contact activities such as tennis and catch. Businesses interested in offering outdoor classes are allowed to do so under specific conditions. Organized outdoor educational programs, outdoor activities such as gym, yoga, dance, personal fitness, and outdoor public art installations may occur in private outdoor spaces only if the program does not require individual participants to share equipment or make physical contact in order to engage in the activity. All outdoor activities are subject to the following guidelines:

Guidelines for Businesses with Outdoor Class Offerings:

- 6 feet of separation between participants
- 12 feet of separation between activity stations and/or building doorways that are shared with others
- Face coverings must be worn at all times
- No shared equipment, tools or materials
- Gathering must be less than 10 people, including staff/instructors
- Class must have pre-registration process
- Temporary signage needs to be in place for public health guidelines and standards
- Signage should be posted at entrance points and on website
- All equipment must be disinfected after use
- Before and after sessions, participants should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer

Guidelines for the Use of Outdoor Parks, Fields and Courts:

- Parks, Athletic Field and Courts may be used for non-contact sports only (tennis, catch, etc.)
- Public courts or fields are only to be used for non-organized activities. Pick-up games, scheduled lessons, organized games or tournaments are not allowed

- Bleachers, dug-outs and other seating areas must be closed
- When engaged in play, users should avoid touching other users' equipment
- Users waiting to utilize a section or area of the field or court should wait outside the area of play or gate/fence until previous users have vacated the area to ensure proper social distancing and prevent accidental contact of other users' equipment
- No shared equipment - wipe down equipment before and after use, sanitize hands before and after activity
- Face coverings required – masks must be worn when social distancing cannot be maintained in accordance with the Governor's Order #31

Businesses looking to expand such activities outdoors must receive permission from the owner of the property prior to doing so. The outdoor area must be deemed safe for such activities. As a reminder, participants should not be entering the building or facility at this time. Additional guidance and details can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/executive-office-of-energy-and-environmental-affairs-eea-covid-19-guidance-documents#parks,-open-space,-and-outdoor-education-programs->