



TOWN OF BEDFORD
97 MCMAHON ROAD
BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730

Bedford Public Schools Update on COVID-19

May 5, 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

The Bedford COVID-19 Task Force met May 5, 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 5, 2020, there have been a total of one hundred and forty-two (142) positive cases of COVID-19 reported to the Town of Bedford Board of Health by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA DPH) and twenty (20) deaths of Bedford residents 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.

Twenty-nine (29) of the total Bedford cases have already recovered and have come off of isolation and there are currently no known Persons Under Investigation. 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>

Town Update

Helicopter Spraying for Mosquitoes – Tomorrow, May 6, 2020

Tomorrow, while you are out of doors for some socially distanced fresh air, you may see a helicopter flying low overhead. This is the annual work of the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project conducting an application of the biological larvicide, Bti, to control mosquito larvae over large wetlands located in Bedford near Davis Rd. and South Rd at Town Forest. The Bti will be applied in a granular formulation by a helicopter flying low directly over the wetlands. Residents do not need to take any special precautions for this application. For more information please view the spraying announcement on the Board of Health website at www.bedford.ma/health or contact the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project at 781-899-5730.

Mask and Face Covering Order

The Baker-Polito Administration has ordered all residents over the age of two to use a face covering or mask in public places where maintaining proper social distancing measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are not possible. This statewide order goes into effect on May 6th and supersedes previously issued guidance relative to mask use. This order applies to all workers and customers of businesses and other organizations that are currently open to the public and permitted to operate as COVID-19 Essential Businesses, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and other retail stores. Residents are also required to wear a mask or face covering at all times when using any means of transportation service or public mass transit.

This order also applies outdoors if you cannot keep a safe distance from others. In practice, this means that, even if you are seeking some fresh air or exercise by going outside for a walk, run or bike ride in a place where you don't expect to see anyone else, you still need to wear a face covering. You can keep it around your neck if no one is around. But when you see someone else you should raise your face covering up over your nose and mouth while you are in the same vicinity. Navigate to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtUJPizQVPI&feature=youtu.be> to See New DPH PSA on How to Safely Cover Your Face Outside of Home.

A face covering may include anything that covers the nose and mouth, including a mask, scarf, or bandana. Health care masks (such as surgical or N-95 masks) should not be used and should be preserved for health care workers and first responders. Cloth masks should not be worn by young children under the age of two, persons with difficulty breathing, or those who are unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. Instructions on how to make a cloth mask are available from the CDC by navigating to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth...>

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) advise that cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance. The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Face coverings should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use. Individuals should remove the face covering from ear loops or from the tied area away from the face and avoid touching the front of the face covering. Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing the cloth face covering and wash hands immediately after removal.

Stay At Home Advisory is STILL in effect

Wearing a face covering does not make it OK to gather and/or socialize with others. This action is meant to protect others from your respiratory droplets when you must leave your home for necessary errands and activities. Remember people may have the virus and be asymptomatic and contagious all at the same time. Staying home and avoiding close contact with others is still the BEST and most protective option to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Seek help with any medical or health issues

If you experience any medical issues during this time, please call your doctor. If you have an emergency, please go to the ER. Medical offices and hospitals are abiding by strict protocols to keep patients safe. Please don't let fear of this virus prevent you from seeking needed medical care and potentially exacerbating an issue that may cause you harm. You should call 9-1-1 for any serious medical or mental health emergency.

Answer the Call!

The Bedford Board of Health asks Bedford Residents to be part of the COVID-19 solution and "Answer the Call!" If you have tested positive for COVID-19 or if you've been in close contact with someone who has tested positive, the COVID Community Team, including the Bedford Community Health Nurse and the School Nurses, will be reaching out via phone to you and your close contacts to slow the spread. We will help support you and will help to keep track of symptoms to move you through isolation and quarantine appropriately.

The Caller ID on your phone will show the call is coming from one of the following phone numbers: (781) 999-2093, (781) 999-4209, (781) 999-4223, (781) 999-4236, (833) 638-1685 or (857) 305-2728.

Your name will not be publically released but the information you can provide to us is imperative in slowing the spread so we can get to the other side of this outbreak. Bedford Residents, Answer the Call!

Please do not use the above phone numbers for general inquiries on COVID-19. For information on COVID-19 and the COVID-19 response in Bedford, instead please call the Bedford Board of Health at 781-275-6507 or visit the BOH COVID-19 website.

Slow the Spread

To continue to do our part to slow the spread, it is imperative to strictly adhere to all the proper personal hygiene and protective practices that have been presented since the start of this outbreak: abide by social distancing, stay home except for necessary, essential and allowable errands, don't touch your face, engage in frequent handwashing, use sanitizer, regularly sanitize common-touch surfaces and wear a face covering when you must go out in public.