



TOWN OF BEDFORD
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BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730

Bedford Public Schools Update on COVID-19

April 20, 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 Friday, April 20, 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, April 20, 2020, there have been a total of eighty-eight (88) positive cases of COVID-19 and three (3) deaths reported to the Town of Bedford Board of Health by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA DPH). 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 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>.

Sixteen (16) of the total Bedford cases to date have already recovered and have come off of isolation and there is currently zero (0) known Person 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.

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.

By all accounts, the country, state and Town of Bedford are on the brink of a surge in cases. In conjunction with this, the MA Department of Public Health is promoting a program for long term care facilities to do wide-scale testing of staff and residents, due to the vulnerability of the population these facilities serve. Given the presence of these types of facilities in Bedford, there is a possibility that this testing will result in an increase in the number of positive COVID-19 residents in Bedford in the coming days and weeks. The Board of Health will continue to work with these facilities to ensure proper isolation of any impacted residents or staff while they receive any necessary treatment and will continue to promote enforcement of use of proper personal protection and hand hygiene.

To continue to make strides towards slowing the spread of COVID-19, it is imperative to strictly adhere to all the proper personal hygiene and protective practices that have been presented and encouraged 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. Thank you for your anticipated support and diligence in taking the necessary precautions to slow the spread.

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

Town and Schools Update

Mental Health Support Seminar for Parents and Caregivers of Bedford Teens and Tweens

Tonight, the Town of Bedford Health and Human Services Department, in collaboration with the Bedford Public Schools, is offering a special presentation to the parents and caregivers of John Glenn Middle School and Bedford High School parents. Please read your school newsletters for information on how you can join tonight's (Monday 4/20) free webinar at 7 pm presented by Jon Mattleman: Teens, Tweens & Quarantines - helping your child navigate during COVID-19. Jon will discuss how the current crisis impacts the mental health of our youth and how parents and caregivers can be supportive. Questions? Email: Carla Olson at colson@bedfordma.gov.

General Guidance

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

- Comply with the Governor's Stay at Home Order and non-quarantined residents should only leave the house for grocery shopping, doctor's appointments or some socially distanced fresh air. Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- While fresh air and exercise are important components to staying healthy during the COVID-19 epidemic, please be mindful that if you are using the Minuteman Bikeway or the Bedford Trails, it is important to maintain social distancing of 6 feet from others and you are encouraged to cover your face when out in public.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean things that are frequently touched (like doorknobs, countertops, cell phone, television remote, computers, sink faucets, etc.) with household cleaning spray or disinfecting 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 and keep 6 feet apart from others 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.