



TOWN OF BEDFORD
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BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730

Town of Bedford Update on COVID-19

March 19, 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,

Today's message contains important information regarding food support and home learning.

The Bedford COVID-19 Task Force met Thursday, March 19, 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, March 19, 2020, there are four (4) presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 in the Town of Bedford, and three (3) People Under Investigation. The Board of Health continues to do the appropriate follow-up and outreach.

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.

Board of Health-Local Public Health State of Emergency Declaration

Given Governor Baker's declaration of a state of emergency, the declaration of a COVID-19 Pandemic by the World Health Organization, the increasing numbers of presumptive positive and confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Massachusetts and Bedford, the Bedford Board of Health declared a Public Health Emergency issued March 19, 2020.

In the interest of protecting public health during the Coronavirus pandemic, effective 12:01 am, Friday March 20, 2020, gatherings and services/activities offered to the public are prohibited at, but not limited to, the following locations:

- Hairdressers and barbers
- Nail salons

- Massage services
- Body work services
- Gym, health clubs, athletic facilities (including outside courts/fields), ice rinks, indoor swimming pools and yoga studios
- Spa-type services for cosmetic purposes that are not deemed medically necessary
- Private instruction classes such as, driving and tutoring schools
- Entertainment venues
- Houses of worship

This prohibition is in place due to concern that activities associated with these gatherings and services/activities cannot be provided/engaged in: safely, at a distance of at least six (6) feet at all times, without engaging with high-touch surfaces, without sweating and/or without heavy breathing. This does NOT include services that are medically necessary and provided by a licensed health care provider such as, but not limited to, physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, chiropractors, and mental health providers or one-on-one consultation with clergy, using social distancing.

This Emergency Order shall remain in effect until notice is given pursuant to a determination by the Bedford Board of Health and consultation with state and national guidance that the Public Health Emergency no longer exists.

School Update- Remote Learning

This week, principals have been sending messages concerning enrichment opportunities for all of our students during our schools' closures. For the time being, per State guidance, this needs to be enrichment as opposed to formal online learning. Tomorrow, late afternoon, our home learning webpage will go live to make access easier for families.

At the same time, we are in the process of determining how to support families without access to devices or who are otherwise having difficulty accessing the enrichment opportunities or helping their children engage with them. As this is determined, we will be able to provide families in need with loaner devices and, where feasible, more specific directions/support.

Town/School Update-Temporary Food Bank

To assist and support Bedford residents in need, the Town has established limited temporary food bank at John Glenn Middle School (JGMS). Today, Town staff, and members of the Bedford CERT team, bagged food in anticipation of tomorrow's launch. A special thank you to all who helped today!

At this time, the Bedford Food Bank will serve the following population: 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.

- Families seeking support for school-aged children: bags will include five days' worth of children's breakfast and lunch fixings, and a few additional items to support the entire family, and will be distributed by school administrators at the JGMS drive-thru Food Bank.
- Vulnerable seniors and veterans, and existing clients of the Bedford Food Pantry: bags will contain goods for meal preparation.

To learn more about the food bank, **including directions on how to access with in your vehicle**, and the ways to financially donate, please check out: <https://www.bedfordma.gov/bedfordfoodbank>

Town Update- March 18, 2020

- Although closed, a friendly reminder that the Bedford Free Public Library has plenty of digital services available from home. Now would be a great time to take-out a book you've been dying to e-read!
- Additionally, across the Massachusetts Library Network, no fines will be assessed during the dates of the library closures, due dates are extended until April 16; card expiration dates will be extended to May 31 at the earliest. And! Most importantly, for those wondering- Murphy the Library Turtle is vacationing at the home of a staff member.

General Updates- March 18, 2020

- Town officials continue to urge residents to deploy social distancing, and limit social gathering. Go for a socially distanced walk, order take-out, get your coffee to-go, pick up a gift certificate, and support the local business communities from a distance.
- Public health officials strongly discourage activities that promote gathering of people, including play dates, sleepovers, parties, social visits, and other activities where closer contact is the norm.
- The Town has stated and continues to advise that those — including municipal employees, residents, or students — who are feeling sick with fever or flu symptoms should stay home, self-quarantine, not report to work or school, and contact their medical provider to determine if they should be tested for COVID-19.
- 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.

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

Or, 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.