

B . C . B . O . H . A .

BERKSHIRE COUNTY BOARDS OF HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Pittsfield, MA May 1, 2020

Update on COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and Local Boards of Health (LBOH)

Please note: This is a rapidly evolving situation. Cases continue to rise in Berkshire County, although the rate of rise is flattening, and all non-essential personnel should be staying at home except for essential services. BCBOHA will continue to provide updates and coordinate public messaging on the situation on a regular basis. Please share this information with your other municipal officials, boards and departments.

Latest News:

Extension of Closure of Non-essential Businesses and Reopening Advisory Board

On April 28, 2020 the Baker Administration extended the essential services emergency order to May 18th. The Department of Public Health's Stay at Home Advisory remains in effect and gatherings of 10 or more people remain prohibited until May 18th. In addition to the extension of the emergency order, Governor Baker announced the formation of the Reopening Advisory Board, which will be Co-Chaired by Lt. Governor Karyn Polito and Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy. The Board consists of public health officials, leaders from the business community, and municipal government from across the Commonwealth, and is charged with advising the administration on strategies to reopen the economy in phases based on health and safety metrics. A report will be produced by May 18th that will include DPH workplace safety standards, industry frameworks and customer protocols and guidelines, including enforcement mechanisms and coordination with municipal leaders. The Administration emphasizes that while the report will be completed by May 18th, public health data and guidance from health care experts will dictate the timeline of the re-opening process. More information can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/news/baker-polito-administration-extends-non-essential-business-closures-to-may-18th-announces>

Essential and Non-essential Services:

The state has a continuously updated list of specific questions regarding what services are or are not considered essential. These FAQs are updated frequently in response to questions: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-essential-services-faqs>. You can also email covid19.biz@ma.gov with any questions about essential versus non-essential businesses.

Farmers Market Orders

The Commissioner of DPH has released a set of 17 orders for the operation of farmers markets across the Commonwealth. The orders provide guidance related to numbers of customers within the market at one time, social distancing protocols, signage, enforcement, cleaning and disinfecting procedures, bagging of produce, and more. In addition, market managers, staff, and vendors **MUST** use face coverings or masks, as well as disposable gloves at all times during market operations. The order can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/farm-stand-order/download>.

Limiting Access to Senior High-Rise and Mid-Rise Developments

The Department of Housing and Community Development has released guidance on restricting access to senior housing to help minimize the spread of COVID-19. The guidance acknowledges that Local Housing Authorities do not have the authority to restrict people with a legitimate purpose from entering

the housing development, however, the Local Board of Health have the authority. Local Housing Authorities should follow the steps outlined in the guidance, and work with their LBOH to implement the restriction of visitors. Guidance from the Department of Housing and Community Development will be shared by BCBOHA by email.

Local Board of Health Liability

The Massachusetts Association of Health Boards (MAHB) released guidance on whether the emergency orders entered by the Governor confer any additional immunities to LBOHs on April 22. The guidance document from MAHB was developed for educational purposes only, and LBOH should contact their city or town attorney. This guidance will be shared by BCBOHA via email.

KN95 Masks

Note that some masks received from DPH between 4/4 and 4/10 did not meet the standards of a N95 respirator mask, despite labeling suggesting that they did so. The first type of mask, the SDI respirator mask demonstrated a filtration level above 90%. If you do not have access to N95 respirators then you can consider using these masks as an alternative. The second type of mask, labelled “KN-95 Disposable Face Mask” in white packaging demonstrated a lower filtration level when tested. Accordingly, the DPH recommends that these products should be used as a facemask only.

Extension of School and Non-Emergency Childcare Facility Closures

The Baker Administration announced on April 21, 2020 an extension of the closure of all public and private schools in the commonwealth through the end of the school year, and an extension of the closure of all non-emergency childcare programs until June 29, 2020. Emergency Child Care programs approved by the Department of Early Education and Care (ECC) will continue operating. In addition, ECC and Care.com have partnered to assist currently unemployed childcare workers and families to provide skilled in-home care. You can find more information on this emergency order here: <https://www.mass.gov/news/baker-polito-administration-announces-extension-of-school-and-non-emergency-child-care-0>

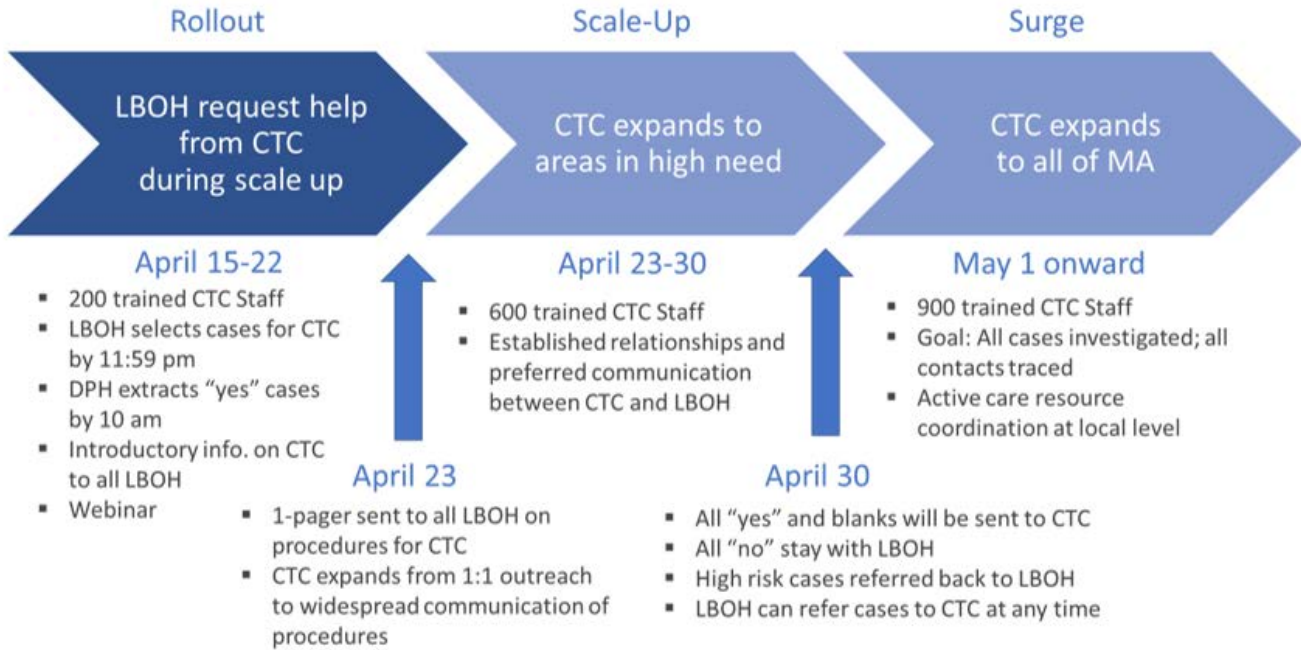
Advisory Regarding Face Coverings and Cloth Masks

The Baker Administration released guidance for the public regarding the use of face coverings and cloth masks to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 on April 10, 2020. Face coverings are defined to include anything that covers a person’s nose and mouth, including dust masks, scarves, and bandanas, and people are advised to use these coverings in situations where it is difficult to maintain a social distance of six feet from others such as at the grocery store or pharmacy. People are also advised specifically to not use healthcare worker masks such as N-95s that should be preserved for use by healthcare workers. Additional guidance, including how a face covering should fit and how to safely put on and remove the covering from one’s face can be found in the advisory, linked here: <https://www.mass.gov/news/advisory-regarding-face-coverings-and-cloth-masks>

Partners in Health Community Tracing Initiative (CTC)

The Baker Administration is partnering with Partners in Health to develop a state-wide strategy to address the increasing need for assisting municipalities with contact tracing of COVID-19 cases and contacts. By May 1 it is expected that all municipalities will be connected to the CTC. Current plans are to allow local Public Health Nurses until midnight each evening to claim cases; unclaimed cases or cases where assistance is requested will then automatically go to the CTC for follow-up. A diagram of the timeframe for the rollout of the CTC is below. If it works as planned, this initiative will be an important surge capacity partnership with local boards of health for case investigation and contact tracing, which will hopefully help keep the number of new cases lower and allow the state economy to open up sooner.

What's Ahead? | Roll-Out Timeline



Grocery Store Guidance

Further guidance on the operation of grocery stores was provided by the Department of Public Health and Baker Administration on April 7, 2020 to reduce the exposure of shoppers and employees to COVID-19. New guidelines place a stricter maximum on store occupancy at any point in time, limiting store occupancy to 40% of its maximum permitted occupancy level on record with the municipality.

This occupancy includes shoppers and employees of the store. The full order can be found here:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/order-grocery-stores-40-percent/download>

Updates regarding enforcement and guidelines are expected from the State DPH.

Campgrounds / RV Parks

The state has clarified that RV Parks which house people year-round are considered essential and may stay open. People who live there year-round may continue living there. However, campgrounds/RV parks, etc., that are only open seasonally are not considered essential and may not open. This includes situations where people rent the space year-round and leave a vehicle there in the off-season. These are not considered second-homes and the sites may not be opened for the season until the order on non-essential businesses is rescinded. BCBOHA released updated guidance to LBOHs on April 10, 2020 and plans to release a BOH Job Aid in the near future via the BCBOHA list-serv.

Expansion of Resources for Health Care Providers and Long-Term Care Facilities

The state, in conjunction with the National Guard has rolled out a program to test residents and staff of long-term care facilities. In Berkshire County, Berkshire Health Systems, in conjunction with County Ambulance, has agreed to take on this role, and can be contacted to conduct testing in any long-term care or other congregate living facility. This allows facilities in Berkshire County to be tested on a more timely basis.

New Data Reporting from DPH

The DPH Covid-19 webpage is now providing case data broken down by city/town updated every Wednesday. This change in publicly displaying case data by city/town reflects requests made by individuals across the Commonwealth as well as the increase in testing and data available to the state. Case data will only be available by municipality if there are five or more cases per 50,000 residents in order to maintain privacy of patients. Please note that these are the cases reports according to DPH records; occasionally this may differ from municipal reports due to confusion on addresses (particularly where towns share a common zip code) or where someone is incorrectly reported in a municipality they do not live in. In addition, DPH is now providing patient census by hospital daily. Access reports at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-cases-quarantine-and-monitoring>. Berkshire County community-level data, updated on April 22, 2020 can be found in the table below:

Adams	32	New Ashford	0
Alford	0	New Marlborough	<5
Becket	11	North Adams	42
Cheshire	<5	Otis	<5
Clarksburg	7	Peru	<5
Dalton	6	Pittsfield	131
Egremont	<5	Richmond	5
Florida	<5	Sandisfield	<5
Great Barrington	46	Savoy	<5
Hancock	<5	Sheffield	11
Hinsdale	<5	Stockbridge	10
Lanesboro	5	Tyringham	<5
Lee	15	Washington	<5
Lenox	12	West Stockbridge	<5
Monterey	0	Williamstown	79
Mount Washington	0	Windsor	0

DPH COVID-19 Dashboard

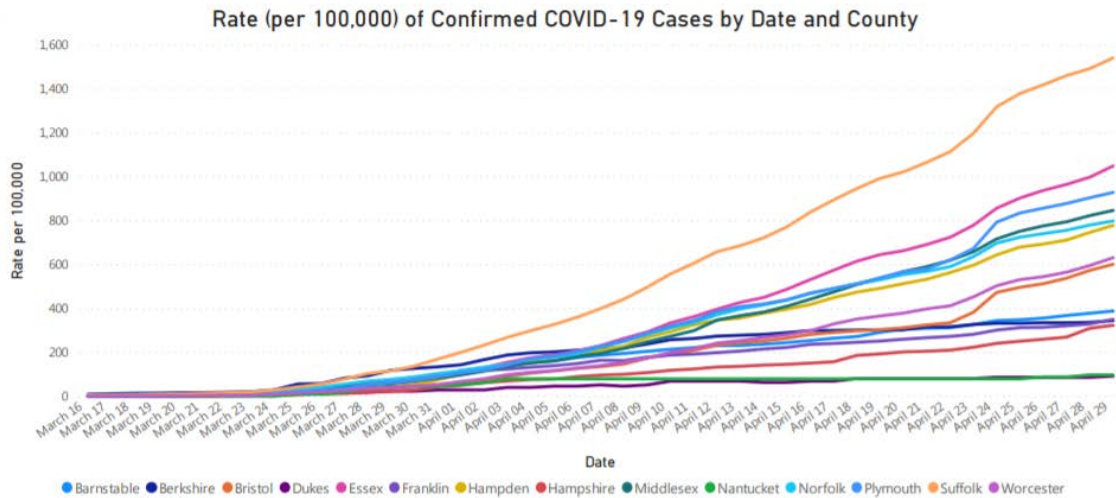
In addition to reporting city/town specific data, the Department of Public Health has begun posting new tables, graphs, and other data points related to COVID-19 found here: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-dashboard-april-29-2020/download>. The Dashboard features data such as daily confirmed cases, testing, hospitalizations, deaths, data broken down by age group, PPE distribution, and data related to nursing homes. The dashboard will be updated daily.



Cases and Case Growth by County

Count by County

County	Count
Middlesex	13,799
Suffolk	12,539
Essex	8,380
Norfolk	5,700
Worcester	5,300
Plymouth	4,871
Hampden	3,698
Bristol	3,429
Barnstable	842
Hampshire	531
Unknown	457
Berkshire	440
Franklin	252
Dukes	16
Nantucket	11
Total	60,265



Data Sources: COVID-19 Data provided by the Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences; County Population Estimates 2011-2018; Small Area Population Estimates 2011-2020, version 2018, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Environmental Health; Tables and Figures created by the Office of Population Health.

Note: all data are cumulative and current as of 10:00am on the date at the top of the page.

Updates from Last Week (with additional updates as needed):

Non-COVID Emergency and Urgent Medical Care

Local reports, as well as reports from other parts of the county and around the world, suggest that people with emergent medical conditions not related to COVID-19, including heart attacks, strokes, appendicitis, diabetes complications, gall bladder inflammation and other conditions are not seeking medical assistance in a timely manner. Members of the public should be encouraged to seek emergency and urgent medical care if needed from their providers and local hospitals. Protocols to protect the safety of non-COVID patients are in place, and members of your community should be encouraged to seek care if and when it is needed.

Public Records Request for Town/City COVID-19 Positive Case Numbers

If you received a public information request to release town-specific COVID case numbers for your community, please note that that request has been withdrawn due to the DPH releasing town-based data. You do not need to respond to this request. Contact us if you would like a copy of the email from MAHB withdrawing the request.

Updated Quarantine and Isolation Notices in 10 Languages

DPH has updated Quarantine and Isolation resources. They can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-information-for-local-boards-of-health#quarantine-and-isolation->

Berkshire County Volunteer Opportunities

The Berkshire United Way (BUW) has implemented an online volunteer reception center, as well as a virtual donation center for monetary donations. Individuals in your communities who are interested in

volunteering for the COVID-19 response, but aren't sure where to start, can be directed to the BUW's volunteer sign up form, found here: <https://www.berkshireunitedway.org/volunteer-advocate>.

Volunteers Available! The Berkshire Medical Reserve Corps is Here to Help You.

If your community or Board is in need of volunteer assistance related to COVID-19, please contact the Medical Reserve Corps. Volunteer Coordinator, Carmela Lanza-Weil at carmela.lanza.weil@gmail.com. You can also fill out and submit the volunteer request form here: <https://wmmrc.org/info-for-emdslboh/>. The MRC volunteers are ready and eager to assist you. Volunteers are background checked and trained and may be available for things such as:

- Deliveries of food or prescriptions, and other items
- School lunch programs
- Hot lines or calling centers
- Distribution of masks, supplies, and other items
- Any BOH special projects

Updated Guidance for Discontinuation of Home Isolation

Revised guidance for discontinuation of home isolation was released on April 2, 2020. Currently, there are two approaches for discontinuing home isolation. The non-test-based approach states that individuals with COVID-19 who have symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions: at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms; **and**, at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. The second approach is a test-based strategy for individuals with COVID-19 who have symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home. These individuals may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions: resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms **and** negative results for COVID-19 from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected \geq 24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens). Note that those who were asymptomatic upon testing positive should still isolate for 7 days following the positive test.

Weekly Conference Calls for Local Boards of Health and the State

DPH continues to hold weekly calls with local boards of health across the Commonwealth on Tuesdays at 3:00 PM. These calls have DPH staff from a variety of departments available for answering questions including Epidemiology, Emergency Preparedness and Environmental Health. The number for this call is 888-390-5007 and the participant code is 6137873.

The Governor's Command Center also holds a weekly call for the LBOH every Friday at 9:00 AM. Boards of Health are asked to only have one person dial in as phone lines are limited. Dial in information is: 888-390-5007 with Passcode 4847016.

In addition, DPH has been holding a weekly call related to MAVEN that the public health nurses have been participating in.

Information for Local Boards of Health

MDPH has created a page for COVID-19 information specific to Local Boards of Health at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-information-for-local-boards-of-health> which includes emergency directives, resources for public communication, and frequently asked questions. DPH also holds weekly conference calls for Local Boards of Health on Tuesdays at 3:00 PM. Dr. Dan Doyle from Berkshire Medical Center and the Dalton BOH is also holding weekly conference calls with the LBOH

of Berkshire County, especially the medical personnel who are also on Boards of Health and chairs and other representatives.

Emergency Sheltering in Berkshire County

MEMA has recently contracted with the Hilton Garden Inn on South Street in Pittsfield to provide non-congregate housing for COVID positive homeless individuals. Additional sites are opening across the state. In addition, the former St. Joe's school has been retrofitted as a shelter for homeless individuals and is now operational. It is being operated by Service Net with medical assistance from Community Health Programs (CHP) and also contains locations suitable for quarantined individuals.

Hotel/Motel and Short-Term Rental Guidance

In addition to the updated essential businesses list, the Department of Public Health released new guidance on March 31, 2020 regarding the operation of hotels, motels, inns, bed and breakfasts, and other short-term residential rentals. The guidance states that hotels, motels, and short-term rentals may only be used for efforts related to fighting COVID-19, such as housing front line health care workers or individuals, or for Massachusetts residents who have been otherwise displaced from their residences. All other rentals are banned. Guidance can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/march-31-2020-hotel-motel-guidance>.

Public Health Advisory

On March 24, 2020 the MA Department of Public Health issued a public health advisory strongly urging those who are 70 years and older and those with underlying health conditions to stay-at-home with the exception of essential trips for food, medicine, and focused time for exercise and fresh air. Those not providing essential services are also strongly advised to stay at home at this time to help protect those who are providing essential services. The DPH also urges keeping at least six feet between individuals who do not live in the same household at all times. Grocery stores and pharmacies must provide at least one hour per day for shoppers 60 years of age and older. Additionally, these establishments must include strategies to reduce COVID-19 exposure to their employees, including access to handwashing facilities, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, disinfecting wipes, and procedures to ensure both employees and customers remain at least six feet apart at all times. Employees who are sick should not report to work and if they do come to work they must be sent home. The full advisory can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/news/dph-public-health-advisory-stay-at-home-advisory-for-individuals-over-70-and-for-those-with>.

Traveler Quarantine

The Federal Government has recommended that all those leaving New York for other locations self-quarantine for 14 days as a precaution. Berkshire municipalities with large numbers of second-home owners should be aware and pay attention to short term rentals and hotels. This guidance will be displayed as posters at service plazas along 1-90 eastbound, distributed as flyers at major transportation hubs and on posted on highway message boards. Visitors are instructed not to travel to Massachusetts if they are displaying symptoms. Health care workers, public health workers, public safety workers, transportation workers and designated essential workers are exempt from this requirement.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks, gowns, eye shields and gloves remain in short supply throughout the Commonwealth and the country. On March 29, the Baker-Polito Administration announced an online portal where individuals and companies can donate or sell personal protective equipment (PPE) and volunteer to support the COVID-19 outbreak in Massachusetts. This portal allows companies and organizations to sell or donate protective equipment that is in short supply and is expected to bolster current efforts to leverage traditional and emergency supply chain channels. The program also

provides an entry point for local manufacturers to get more information on adapting their businesses to produce more equipment in Massachusetts, an effort being led by the administration's recently established Manufacturing Emergency Response Team.

For providers and responders looking for PPE, currently, PPE requests for health and public health are going through the Health and Medical Coordinating Coalitions (HMCC) while those for public safety and first responders are being directed through MEMA.

Guidance on Prioritization of PPE: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidance-for-prioritization-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe-in-massachusetts/download>

PPE Request Process Chart: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/ma-covid-19-ppe-request-process-chart/download>

Funding Update

The Baker-Polito Administration has made money available to local municipalities to address public health costs incurred in responding to this outbreak. Funds will flow directly to the 14 largest cities in the state (only Springfield in Western Mass) and through the 15 existing health districts known to DPH, including the Berkshire Public Health Alliance and Tri-Town Health in Berkshire County. Municipalities that do not fit into either category will be aligned with a regional entity across the state, including several regional planning agencies, MHOA and MAHB. In Berkshire County, if your town is not part of either district, you will be aligned with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Money has begun to go out to municipalities that have expressed need. If you have received an Agreement, as soon as that signed agreement is returned the check will be sent. If you have not yet received an Agreement, and have financial needs that fit with the guidance, please contact us as soon as possible. Allowable expenses include: Surveillance and case identification (including, but not limited to, public health epidemiological investigation activities such as contact follow-up), monitoring of travelers, Public Health Nurses, data management, isolation and quarantine (including, but not limited to, housing; wrap-around services; security; environmental control, clean-up and waste management; and behavioral health services), surge public health staffing, risk communications support, public health coordination with healthcare systems. Non-applicable funding areas include City/town municipal activities (law enforcement etc.) and food and other sundries.

In addition, significant federal funding is expected in Massachusetts by April 24, 2020 due to the CARES Act. This funding will include funding for municipal operations, including first responders, among other eligible expenses. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

Routine and other Board of Health Inspections

Information on BOH inspections and other functions can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-information-for-local-boards-of-health#frequently-asked-questions>

Housing Inspections

Given the State of Emergency, the LBOH has discretion to delay non-emergency inspections. Inspections should resume as normal at the termination of the State of Emergency.

Food Inspections

A LBOH has discretion to decrease the frequency of food inspections under the retail food code. (105 CMR 590.008(H); FC 8-401.10.) During the declared State of Emergency, LBOH are not required to

submit a risk-based facility inspection plan for approval. The Food Protection Program will provide technical assistance to review any emergency inspection plans for LBOH, upon request.

All food contact surfaces, equipment, and utensils used for the preparation, packaging, or handling of food products must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before each use. Additionally, food establishments are strongly urged to frequently clean non-food contact surfaces, such as doorknobs, tabletops, chairs and menus. The EPA has a list of registered sanitizers labeled for use against the novel coronavirus which can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>. Additional guidance on inspecting food establishments has been sent out under separate cover.

Note that when food establishments closed due to COVID begin to reopen, pre-opening inspections are at the local Board of Health discretion and are not required.

Swimming Pools & Adult Tobacco Establishments

Swimming pools, adult tobacco establishments are not considered essential services and must be closed.

COVID-19 Testing in Berkshire County:

The drive-through testing facility at Berkshire Medical Center is currently operational. All testing requires a physician order. Symptomatic individuals may call the BMC hotline at 855-BMC-LINK, OR 855-262-5465. After hotline screening, those qualified will be referred for a telemedicine appointment with a physician, and if appropriate, given an order and a time for testing.

Berkshire County Emergency Operations:

The Northern Berkshire Operations Center, the Southern Berkshire REPC, and the Central Berkshire COVID-19 Coordinating Center are activated, and jointly working together to address needs across the County.

North Berkshire Operations Center

Operations Hotline: 413-662-3614 (8-5 weekdays, leave msg after hours).

Email: nbcovid@gmail.com

Central Berkshire Covid-19 Coordinating Center

Phone: (413) 770-7663 (weekdays, not yet taking calls from the public or the media).

Email: cbcovidOC@gmail.com

Southern Berkshire Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC)

The Southern Berkshire REPC is stood up and participating in information sharing with the Central County Coordinating Center and the North Berkshire Operations Center. The SBREPC is not taking inquiries from the public or media. The SBREPC can be reached at sbrepc@gmail.com.

COVID-19 Response Command Center

On March 14, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the creation of a new COVID-19 Response Command Center. Secretary Marylou Sudders is leading the cross-secretariat response to the outbreak. The Command Center is the Commonwealth's single point of strategic decision making and coordination for the Administration's comprehensive COVID-19 response.

Calls to your BOH

If your BOH receives a call from someone experiencing respiratory symptoms or if a provider in your area receives a call from someone experiencing symptoms, please call the Massachusetts Department of

Public Health (MDPH) 24/7 Epidemiology line at (617) 983-6800 for assistance and the latest recommendations for managing a Person Under Investigation (PUI). Individuals experiencing symptoms of a respiratory illness can also call the Berkshire Health Systems Hotline at 855-262-5465 between the hours of 7am and 7pm, 7 days/week.

Questions from the General Public and Worried-Well

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and United Way 211 call and information service is now operating 24/7, and is answering calls for community members who are not sick, but would like to receive information related to COVID-19. Residents across the state can also sign up for the new text notification system including updates, news and prevention information by texting COVIDMA to 888-777. Also encourage your residents to sign up for your municipalities outgoing-911 alert system (such as code red or similar).

For those needing emotional support during these stressful times:

- o Call 2-1-1 and choose the “CALL2TALK” option.
- o Call or text Samaritans 24/7 helpline at 877-870-4673.
- o The Disaster Distress Helpline, 1-800-985-5990, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster, including disease outbreaks like COVID-19. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the US and territories.

Public Messaging

On March 24, 2020 the Berkshire Eagle published an open letter from the Mayors of North Adams and Pittsfield, Berkshire Health Systems and BCBOHA for the 32 local boards of health urging all residents to stay at home as much as possible to slow the spread of COVID-19. This letter is available for posting on municipal websites or to be used in any other messaging, either in whole or part. Thank you to Dr. Dan Doyle for taking a suggestion on the Friday conference call and turning this letter into a reality. Please let us know if you would like a copy.

Communication resources for the public available from the MA DPH include:

New DPH Flyer/Infographic on reducing stress & coping with fear of COVID-19:
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/coping-with-stress-and-fear-from-covid-19/download>

DMH resources on maintaining Emotional Health & Well-Being: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/maintaining-emotional-health-well-being-during-the-covid-19-outbreak>

New Social Distancing (youth and general) infographic: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/how-young-people-can-prevent-covid-19-with-social-distancing/download>
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/help-prevent-covid-19-with-social-distancing/download>

Social Distancing messages are now on billboards and will soon be available on public transit (including the BRTA).

New video on Social Distancing specifically targeted specifically at youth:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DwOdh_wNi4&feature=youtu.be

COVID-2019 infographic for posting in all public places: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/stop-the-spread-of-germsrespiratory-diseases-like-flu-and-covid-19/download>

A short video for social media, waiting rooms, and other locations: <https://youtu.be/HhUpkGxyjS4>

Situation Report:

Recently, a new strain of coronavirus—2019 Novel (new) Coronavirus (COVID-19)—was detected in Wuhan, China. This novel coronavirus causes a respiratory (lung) infection. This new virus is related to, but different from, other coronaviruses that cause the common cold and diseases such as SARS and MERS. Common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough, shortness of breath and in severe cases, pneumonia (fluid in the lungs). Cases range from very mild to severe.

As of April 29, there have been 60,265 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Massachusetts, of which 440 are in Berkshire County. Although Berkshire County has a high number of cases per capita, for the past couple of weeks, the number of cases has been rising more slowly than in other parts of the state. There are signs that the number of cases is flattening throughout the state at this time, although it is still too early to say if the peak has passed. The number of people tested in Massachusetts has increased to approximately 236,100. There have been 2,899 deaths in Massachusetts. There have been 981,246 reported cases in the United States as of April 29, and 55,258 deaths.

Updated daily information on Massachusetts' case reports can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-cases-quarantine-and-monitoring>.

Updated daily information (Monday-Friday) on US cases can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs):

The CDC is recommending personal preparedness and protective measures, including Personal Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs). NPIs are measures taken to help prevent the spread of diseases that do not include medications. Currently, there are no medications or vaccinations available to prevent COVID-19, however, everyone should practice these respiratory illness prevention protocols:

- diligent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- cover your mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
- stay home from school, work and other people when you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever or a cough
- avoid close contact (within 6 feet) of people who are sick
- if you are over the age of 60 or have underlying health conditions you should stay home as much as possible.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/personal/index.html>

With questions, Please Contact Allison Egan by email at aegan@berkshireplanning.org.

Please only use reputable sources for information gathering. Further information can be found at the following links. We recommend that you do not make multiple copies of fact sheets for your BOH office at this time as they are changing on a daily basis.

MDPH Information on COVID-19: <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19>

HMCC Resources: <https://region1hmcc.org/>

CDC General Information Page on COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

CDC Communication Resources: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/index.html>

MDPH Printable Fact Sheets: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/information-on-the-outbreak-of-2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19#-printable-fact-sheets->

CDC Response Page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html#cdc-response>

CDC Cases in the US: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>

CDC Guidance for Medical Professionals: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/index.html>

CDC Information on Travel: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

CDC Information for Businesses & Travelers: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html)

[groups/guidance-business-](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html)

[response.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidance-business-response.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidance-business-response.html)