

Wednesday, May 27, 2020

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

The Command Center Situation Report is issued Monday-Friday.

State Actions in Today's Report:

- Daily Case Update (link in sidebar)
- Governor Baker Provides Daily Update in Visit to Maverick Station
- Command Center Releases New Nursing Home & Community Data
- Nationwide Unemployment Scam Targets Massachusetts
- Update on Mobile Testing Numbers
- Update on Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes



Helpful Links:

- [Jobs Available to Assist Long Term Care Facilities](#)
- [Get Involved: Community Contact Tracing Collaborative](#)
- [Mass.Gov/covid19](#)
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [Unemployment & COVID-19](#)
- [Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal](#)
- [FrontlineMA.org](#)
- [Emergency Childcare Site](#)
- [MBTA.com/covid19](#)
- [COVID-19 Cost Eligibility and Tracking Guidance](#)
- [Complete List of Emergency Orders & Guidance](#)

Background on the Command Center

The COVID Command Center, under the leadership of Secretary Marylou Sudders and reporting to Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, is the Commonwealth's single point of strategic decision making and coordination for the Administration's comprehensive COVID-19 response.



Situation in Numbers

Massachusetts **current as of 5/27**

94,220 Total Cases ([click here for more information](#))

6,547 Deaths

552,144 patients tested to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

United States **Last Updated 5/27**

Case numbers are updated regularly at noon. Saturday/Sunday reports are preliminary and have not been confirmed with state/territorial health departments.

Total Cases Reported to CDC:

1,678,843 Total Cases

99,031 Deaths

55 Jurisdictions Reporting Cases (50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Marianas, and US V.I.)

Social Distancing Basics:

- ✓ Stay Home
- ✓ Call/Facetime/online chat with friends and loved ones.

If you go out for essential needs:

- ✓ Avoid crowds
- ✓ Stay 6 feet away from others
- ✓ Don't shake hands or hug
- ✓ Wear a face covering or mask if physical distancing is not possible.

State Actions Today

Today, Governor Charlie Baker joined Secretary of Transportation Stephanie Pollack and MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak to tour ongoing accelerated construction on the Blue Line at Maverick Station, and provided an update on Coronavirus. ([See video here](#)).

Daily Update on Testing, Hospitalizations, and PPE Distribution

Testing:

- Yesterday (May 26th) approximately 4,920 new tests were reported in Massachusetts. 545,481 total tests have been completed to date.
 - Yesterday's 7-day weighted average of positive test rate was 11%. Positive test rates have been around 9% for the past week.

Hospitalizations and Capacity:

- As of May 26st, the number of hospitalizations continues to trend downward.
- 2,108 individuals are reported hospitalized.

Personal Protective Equipment:

- To date, the Commonwealth has delivered over 12.3 million pieces of PPE; this includes masks, gloves, gowns, and ventilators distributed to health care workers, first responders and others.
- The Command Center continues to aggressively pursue all supply chain avenues.

Administration Highlights Accelerated Blue Line Work

Today, Governor Charlie Baker, Transportation Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack, General Manager Steve Poftak, and other officials toured ongoing [accelerated infrastructure work taking place on the Blue Line at Maverick Station](#). A full closure of the Blue Line between Bowdoin and Airport Stations began Monday, May 18, with shuttle buses replacing service for 14 consecutive days, including both weekdays and weekends, through the end of service on Sunday, May 31.



“This Blue Line work is part of our administration’s plan to invest \$8 billion in a safer and more reliable MBTA by replacing over 400 cars across the Red and Orange Lines, modernizing stations, and upgrading track, signal, and other key infrastructure across the system,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “These infrastructure upgrades on the Blue Line, including important flood resilience work within the harbor tunnel, will provide faster, more reliable service for travelers and commuters.”

This work comes as part of the MBTA’s plan to quicken the pace of infrastructure projects in 2020 and the MBTA is assessing whether other projects can be further accelerated. This Blue Line work was previously scheduled to be accomplished through a series of weekend diversions later this year, and doing the work now allows its completion at a time when both transit ridership and traffic on the roadways that shuttle buses use is much lower than it is likely to be by the fall.

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In compliance with the [Commonwealth's Reopening Massachusetts Report](#), riders are also reminded that face coverings are required while onboard shuttle buses. Additionally, in an effort to promote social distancing and protect the health and safety of MBTA riders and bus operators, ridership on shuttle buses is limited to 20 passengers. The MBTA is also operating additional shuttle buses than originally planned with a robust fleet of shuttles on standby to accommodate ridership demands as needed. ([Read More](#))

COVID-19 Public Health Data

Today, the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center today announced additional data that will be reported on a daily and weekly basis related to COVID-19.

This data includes:

- Results of a major initiative aimed at increasing COVID-19 testing in nursing homes, a critical component of the Commonwealth's Nursing Home Accountability and Supports package announced on April 27, 2020. Between April 8 and May 25, over 97% of nursing homes tested at least 90% of all residents and staff.
- Self-reported nursing home deaths by facility
- City and Town COVID-19 tests and test rate and percent positivity
- COVID-19 testing results of state-operated health and human services facilities and congregate care programs across the Commonwealth

"Massachusetts produces one of the most comprehensive public data reports in the nation during the COVID-19 pandemic," said COVID-19 Command Center Director and Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders. "Today we continue our commitment to improved data and transparency by releasing new information that will add to the public's understanding of this public health crisis."


New Schedule & Format For COVID-19 Public Health Reporting

The COVID-19 Command Center reformatted the various data streams and produce both daily and weekly reports found [here](#), including:

1. A **Daily Dashboard**: Continued high-level, state and county metrics on cases, testing, hospitalizations and deaths.
2. A **Weekly Public Health Report**: Including enhanced, more granular information that is updated on a weekly, or biweekly basis, including town-by-town case and testing information, continued reporting on cases, and deaths in Long Term Care Facilities, along with biweekly updates on nursing facility audit results, and PPE distribution.
3. A **State Facility COVID-19 Report**: The Executive Office of Health and Human Services posted for the first time a dashboard containing COVID-19 testing results of state-operated facilities and congregate care programs across the Commonwealth. This data is current as of May 27 and will be updated weekly on Wednesdays.

For more information on the new data released today see the [News Release](#).

The Department of Public Health continues to make available the underlying data for download. ([Find the Data Files Here](#)). **Key data reflected in today's report is provided below:**



Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard - Wednesday, May 27, 2020

Dashboard of Public Health Indicators

Starting on May 18, the COVID-19 Command Center will give updates on six key public health indicators. Before and during reopening, these metrics must continue to show progress.

Below is the status as of 5/18/2020. Status will be updated weekly or as metrics indicate.

Indicator	Measure	Status
1	COVID-19 positive test rate	●
2	Number of individuals who died from COVID-19	●
3	Number of patients with COVID-19 in hospitals	●
4	Healthcare system readiness	●
5	Testing capacity	●
6	Contact tracing capabilities	●

Legend

- Positive trend
- In progress
- Negative trend

Newly Reported Cases Today

527

Confirmed Cases

94,220

Newly Reported Deaths Today

74

Deaths of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

6,547


New Tests Reported Today

6,663

Total Tests Performed

552,144

1

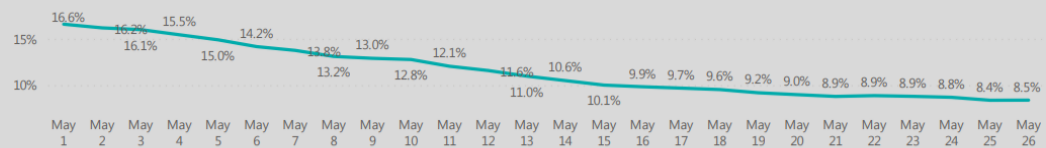


Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard - Wednesday, May 27, 2020

Dashboard of Public Health Indicators

Percent Change Since April 15th

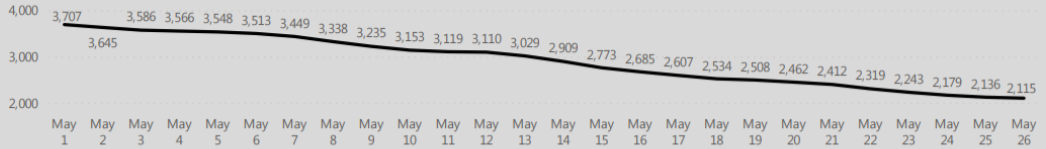
7 Day Weighted Average of Positive Test Rate



Date	May 1	May 2	May 3	May 4	May 5	May 6	May 7	May 8	May 9	May 10	May 11	May 12	May 13	May 14	May 15	May 16	May 17	May 18	May 19	May 20	May 21	May 22	May 23	May 24	May 25	May 26
Rate	16.6%	16.2%	16.1%	15.5%	15.0%	14.2%	13.8%	13.2%	13.0%	12.8%	12.1%	11.6%	11.0%	10.6%	10.1%	9.9%	9.7%	9.6%	9.2%	9.0%	8.9%	8.9%	8.9%	8.8%	8.4%	8.5%

-71 %

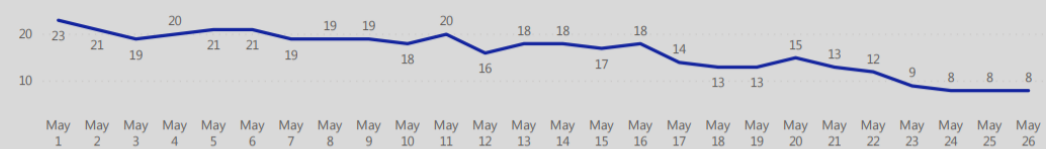
3 Day Average of Number of COVID-19 Patients in Hospital



Date	May 1	May 2	May 3	May 4	May 5	May 6	May 7	May 8	May 9	May 10	May 11	May 12	May 13	May 14	May 15	May 16	May 17	May 18	May 19	May 20	May 21	May 22	May 23	May 24	May 25	May 26
Patients	3,707	3,645	3,586	3,566	3,548	3,513	3,449	3,338	3,235	3,153	3,119	3,110	3,029	2,909	2,773	2,685	2,607	2,534	2,508	2,462	2,412	2,319	2,243	2,179	2,136	2,115

-41 %


Number of Hospitals using Surge Capacity



Date	May 1	May 2	May 3	May 4	May 5	May 6	May 7	May 8	May 9	May 10	May 11	May 12	May 13	May 14	May 15	May 16	May 17	May 18	May 19	May 20	May 21	May 22	May 23	May 24	May 25	May 26
Hospitals	23	21	19	20	21	21	19	19	19	18	20	16	18	18	17	18	14	13	13	15	13	12	9	8	8	8

-62 %

3 Day Average of COVID-19 Deaths



Date	May 1	May 2	May 3	May 4	May 5	May 6	May 7	May 8	May 9	May 10	May 11	May 12	May 13	May 14	May 15	May 16	May 17	May 18	May 19	May 20	May 21	May 22	May 23	May 24
Deaths	159	152	151	136	135	135	134	125	114	112	116	118	115	106	106	98	93	85	79	79	71	71	62	54

-65 %

2

Important Updates

Nationwide Unemployment Scam Targets Massachusetts Claimants

Criminal enterprises in possession of stolen personal information from earlier national data breaches have been attempting to file large amounts of illegitimate unemployment claims through the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) system. This is part of a national unemployment fraud scheme.

The Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) has begun implementing additional identity verification measures that will temporarily delay the payment timeframe for many unemployment claims in Massachusetts. As a result of these measures, certain unemployment claimants may be asked to provide additional identity information in order to verify the validity of their claim.

“Protecting the integrity of the unemployment system and ensuring benefits are going only to valid claimants is the top priority of the Department of Unemployment Assistance,” said Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Rosalin Acosta. “While the program integrity measures we are taking will unfortunately mean that some claimants will experience temporary delays in payment, we believe these steps are necessary to respond to this unemployment scam. We are working rapidly to respond to this scheme and urge individuals who may have had a false unemployment claim filed in their name to contact the Department.”

Individuals who believe they may have had a false unemployment claim filed using their identity are urged to utilize the Department of Unemployment Assistance fraud contact form at mass.gov/unemployment-fraud or to call the DUA customer service department at [877-626-6800](tel:877-626-6800).

Update on Mobile Testing Numbers for Long Term Care, Assisted Living Residences and EOHHS Sites

Note: Beginning this week, the hours of operation for the Nursing Home/Long Term Care Family Resource Line have changed. **The Family Resource Line is now available Monday-Friday, from 9 am to 5 pm.**

Onsite Testing

Date	Number of Tests Completed	Unique Facilities Visited
5/26	112	3
Total (as of 5/26)	47,266	442

COVID-19 Cases in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities (as of 5/26)	
Residents/Healthcare Workers of LTC Facilities	20,267
LTC Facilities Reporting at Least One Case of COVID-19	348
Deaths Reported in LTC Facilities	4,041

Mobile Testing at EOHHS Group Homes & Care Sites (as of 5/27 by Fallon Ambulance Service)

DDS, DMH, DCF and DPH Facilities	
Clients	11,549
Staff	16,478
Total Tests	28,027
Number of Locations	1,827



**NURSING HOME
FAMILY RESOURCE LINE
617-660-5399**

CALL US MONDAY THRU FRIDAY FROM 9AM-5PM



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Holyoke Soldiers' Home Update

- On Tuesday, Holyoke Board of Trustees members, Holyoke Administrator Val Liptak, and EOHHS Deputy Secretary Dan Tsai toured the facility.
- Staff continue to work with veterans on iPad training, and have started to individualize iPads for veterans with contacts and apps.
- This week, the Holyoke Soldiers' Home is resuming onsite speech therapy and evaluations, and an Interim Social Work executive will be onsite this week to consult with the team and leadership.
- The Holyoke Soldiers' Home has been intently focused on following infection control procedures and maintaining best practices for the safety of veteran residents and staff, and to support the recovery of veterans as the health status of many stabilizes. All veteran residents' health is being monitored and retesting is being conducted for veterans both on- and off-site as clinically appropriate. As results are received, veteran residents are being cohorted and further monitored. Recovery units are being identified and readied for residents.
- Regular family communication continues from Holyoke Soldiers' Home staff through video chat, using donated iPads, and the Family Hotline is available for ad hoc updates with support from social work and clinical staff.
 - Families can call the Family Hotline at 413-552-4764 Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Families can also request updates via email at CommunicationsMailbox-HLY@Mass.gov.
 - Please note the Soldiers' Home can only share medical information about a resident with the authorized health care proxy on file. If a family member requests an update and is **not** the health care proxy, the name of the health care proxy will be shared and it will be suggested that the health care proxy should call and request the update.
- The Holyoke Soldiers' Home Clinical Command continues to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, monitoring staffing levels, while bringing on additional management staff for nursing, facilities, and administration staff to build capacity for resuming regular operations and moving to the recovery phase.
- Governor Charlie Baker has advised flags be lowered to half-staff until the end of the public health emergency at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, Soldiers' Home in Chelsea, as well as the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Agawam and Winchendon due to the fact Military Honors are unavailable during this public health crisis.
- On Friday evening, the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke presented a virtual Memorial Day service, as part of the state's efforts to hold Memorial Day events virtually this year to honor military who have sacrificed for our country, and veterans who have passed in the last year. The program will continue to be available for viewing on their [Facebook page](#) following the stream.
- **The total numbers at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home as of Wednesday May 27:**
 - 93 veteran resident deaths (76 positive, 16 negatives, 1 unknown)
 - Today's update includes the death of 1 veteran resident who had tested negative, was DNR and DNH, and was receiving care at the skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center.
 - Testing results of all residents:
 - 75 veteran residents have tested positive
 - 56 veteran residents have tested negative
 - Resident locations:
 - 103 residents are onsite
 - 28 residents are offsite
 - 28 residents are at a dedicated skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center
 - 0 residents are receiving acute care offsite
 - 84 employees have tested positive

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Chelsea Soldiers' Home Update

- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home continues to receive generous donations from businesses and community partners, and most recently received a large donation of masks from SpinMaster.
- Chelsea Clinical Command continues to monitor and enforce staff use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Staff have been provided PPE core competency training, the entire facility is rounded on daily for infection control quality assurance checks, all units have been provided with educational materials, and there are daily cleanings throughout the facility in addition to frequent terminal cleaning.
- The Chelsea Soldiers' Home clinical command continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including regular coordinating calls with the VA Health Care System. The Home continues to review its infection control and clinical operations with experts.
- Veteran residents' health is being monitored and retesting is being conducted for veterans both on- and off-site as clinically appropriate. As results are received, veteran residents are being cohorted and further monitored. Additional isolation space has been identified and is being readied.
- Video visits between veteran residents and their loved ones are continuing with support from the Chelsea Soldiers' Home Social Work team and staff. Families can request updates on their loved ones by contacting the Home at CSH@mass.gov and through phone and video conversations. Medical information can only be shared with an authorized health care proxy.
- Governor Charlie Baker has advised flags be lowered to half-staff until the end of the public health emergency at the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea, Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, as well as the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Agawam and Winchendon due to the fact Military Honors are unavailable during this public health crisis.
- Last week, the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea presented a virtual Memorial Day service, as part of the state's efforts to hold Memorial Day events virtually this year to honor military who have sacrificed for our country, and veterans who have passed in the last year. The 24 minute program is still available for viewing on the Home's [Facebook page](#).
- **The total numbers at the Chelsea Soldiers' Home as of Wednesday May 27:**
 - 40 veteran resident deaths (31 tested positive, 9 tested negative)
 - 36 veteran residents who have tested positive
 - 178 veteran residents who have tested negative
 - 59 staff tested positive

Resources

MA COVID-19 Test Site Locator

MEMA, in coordination with the COVID-19 Command Center, has launched a [website](#) featuring an interactive map with information about COVID-19 test sites in Massachusetts, including contact information, address, hours of operation, website link, type of site, insurance coverage, and other important information. It also includes a downloadable full list of test sites.

COVID-19 Isolation and Recovery Sites

The Commonwealth's COVID-19 Command Center and MEMA have stood up regional isolation and recovery sites located in hotels across the state.

Providers or individuals from Boston can access isolation sites at Boston Hope or Newton Pavilion by calling (617) 534-5050.

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Individuals who do not live in Boston can access Isolation & Recovery Sites in Lexington, Everett, Taunton, Northampton, and Pittsfield by calling (617) 367-5150 between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

More information, to include clinical and financial eligibility, can be found [here](#).

Disaster Recovery Information

On March 27, the President [declared](#) a Major Disaster Declaration for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts related to the COVID-19 pandemic response. Through this declaration, federal aid will be made available to cities and towns, state agencies, and certain non-profits in all Massachusetts counties to help pay for emergency protective measures (response costs) related to the COVID-19 pandemic. MEMA's Recovery Unit has developed a [webpage](#) with information and guidance on, but not limited to, disaster declaration, eligibility criteria, and the application process.

COVID-19 Public Resources Map

MEMA, together with MA VOAD and other partners, has developed a [COVID-19 Public Resources Map](#) showing the location of resources available to the public, such as food banks, houses of worship, and Project Bread site locations. Please note that this map is not inclusive of all resources and is only as accurate as the information that has been provided to MEMA.

Massachusetts COVID-19 Response Dashboard

MEMA has developed and maintains a public-facing COVID-19 ArcGIS Online dashboard, available [here](#). This dashboard is continuously updated and captures information about current COVID 19 case counts, cases by age, cases by county, hospital status, hospital bed status, death tolls, and deaths by age. Users should refresh the dashboard on a daily basis as enhancements are continuously being added.

Stay Informed

- Get information from trusted sources. Visit <https://www.mass.gov/covid19> for the latest news, case counts, and lab testing results. Call 2-1-1 with questions. Text the keyword **COVIDMA to 888-777** to receive notifications to your phone. To receive these notifications in Spanish, text **COVIDMAESP to 888-777**
- Take care of your emotional health:
- Call 2-1-1 and choose the "CALL2TALK" option.
- Samaritans is continuing operations 24/7, as always. During this unprecedented time, it can feel overwhelming to receive constant messages about COVID-19. Call or text their 24/7 helpline any time at 877-870-4673.
- 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 United States and its territories.

Please share our Communications Resources

NEW: The DPH video *“How to Safely Cover Your Face Outside of Home”* is now available in Spanish, Portuguese, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Haitian Creole and Vietnamese. Please share! ([Find The Videos Here](#))



Infographics

- [Stop the Spread of Germs](#)
- Social distancing: for [youth](#) for [general audience](#)
- [Coping](#) with stress or fear
- What to do [if you are sick](#)
- 10 tips for at-home [quarantine or self-monitoring](#)

Short videos:

- [How to Safely Cover Your Face Outside of Home](#)
[10 Tips for at home quarantine or self-monitoring](#)
- [Stop the Spread of Germs like Seasonal Flu and COVID-19 \(:30\)](#)
- [Help Prevent COVID-19 with Social Distancing \(:30\)](#)
- [How Young People Can Help Prevent COVID-19 with Social Distancing \(:30\)](#)
- [Coping with Stress and Fear from COVID-19 \(:30\)](#)
- [Stay Home - Save Lives \(:06\)](#)

Spanish Radio Spots (available on request):

- Prevent the Spread of Germs
- Social Distancing
- Stay Home. Stay Safe. Save Lives.

How to Help Out

- [Donate](#) to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund.
- Volunteer opportunities for health professionals: [Please click here.](#)
- Get involved with the new Community Tracing Collaborative: [Please click here.](#)
- Donate or sell personal protective equipment: [Please click here.](#)
- Health care facilities can learn more about [requesting personal protective equipment here.](#)
- Apply for Jobs at COVID-19 Temporary Care Sites ([Details Here](#)).

The Need for Blood Donations Continues, and Recovered Covid-19 Donors Can Help Save Lives

In coordination with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Red Cross is seeking people who are fully recovered from the new coronavirus to sign up to donate plasma to help current COVID-19 patients. People who have fully recovered from COVID-19 have antibodies in their plasma that can attack the virus. This convalescent plasma is being evaluated as treatment for patients with serious or immediately life-threatening COVID-19 infections, or those judged by a healthcare provider to be at high risk of progression to severe or life-threatening

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condition. Interested individuals can visit [RedCrossBlood.org/plasma4covid](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org/plasma4covid) to learn more, and if eligible, sign up to help.

We are also encouraging people who have not had COVID-19 to schedule and keep appointments to donate blood or platelets to ensure a stable blood supply during this pandemic. Donating blood products is essential to community health and the need for blood products is constant. As part of our nation's critical infrastructure, healthy individuals can still donate in areas that have issued shelter in place declarations. The Red Cross follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and volunteer donors are the only source of blood for those in need. To make an appointment to donate, please visit www.RedCrossBlood.org

Requests for Red Cross Emergency Response

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross (ARC) of Massachusetts is committed to fulfilling our Mission of providing emergency relief to our neighbors following a home fire or other disaster. We have implemented temporary changes to our response protocols. ARC we will be responding to your requests for service with a virtual response and ask your assistance in sharing this information with your Incident Commanders and Dispatch Center personnel.

Notification: Continue to request a response by contacting our long-standing emergency line **800-564-1234**.

When calling: Please have contact information for the head of household for each displaced family unit. A point of contact from the Fire Department or Emergency Management on-scene that we can coordinate with if needed. Quick assessment as to extent of damage.

What we will do:

- Contact each head of household by phone or video chat. Open a virtual case for each affected family.
- Arrange for lodging if needed.
- Deliver a Client Assistance Card (financial assistance) to hotel, family member's home, etc.
- Provide Recovery guidance and assistance in the days following the incident.

If a virtual response is not possible, we will send a minimal number of Red Cross volunteers to the scene to orchestrate the virtual intake process. We value our partnership with your department and encourage you to contact us with any questions.