

TOWN OF LUNENBURG MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER



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Town Manager

COVID-19 Update
September 1, 2020

UPDATES FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Here are a number of updates specific to Lunenburg that will also be posted on the town website, town Facebook page, the “townwide” listserv, sent to the Lunenburg Ledger and to Public Access:

COVID-19 in Lunenburg and Board of Health Notices:

The Board of Health issued their weekly update and as of August 28th there are 77 confirmed positive cases in Lunenburg and one death.

The COVID-19 Information Center page can be found [here](#).

Town Buildings:

Town Facilities, excluding the Library and Eagle House, are currently open to the public from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. and by appointment outside of those hours.

The Council on Aging has a variety of in person programs going and reservations are required for most programs. Mondays are weekly reservation days and can be made by calling (978) 582-4166 to sign up for that week’s events. Once per month programs can be reserved at any time. All COVID-19 Protocols will be followed for indoor activities including wearing a mask and having temperatures taken. Starting in September will be some events under the tent. On September 11th at 1 p.m. there will be Sea Songs and Stories and on September 25th at 1 p.m. there will be live music with Dan Kirouac.

Starting Tuesday, September 1, the Lunenburg Library will be open for limited browsing by appointment only. Patrons will be able to reserve one of a limited number of appointments for 30 minutes of browsing in the library building. Reservations can be made through the library website’s calendar at lunenburglibrary.org. There will be two blocks of appointments for up to 10 visitors each day Mondays through Thursdays and on Saturdays. The first set of appointments each day is reserved for high-risk and vulnerable patrons.

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As a reminder, anyone entering a town facility will be required to wear a face mask and use the hand sanitizer in the entry way of the building. Visitors to the Town Hall and Ritter building will need to enter through the front door and exit through the rear entrance.

UPDATES RECEIVED FROM THE STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNEMENT:

The Baker-Polito Administration continues to take steps to limit the spread of COVID-19 in Massachusetts. A comprehensive list of emergency orders and guidance is available at mass.gov/covid19 (click [here](#)).

COVID-19 in Massachusetts (as of 8/27/20):

As of August 13th there are 117,450 COVID-19 cases and 8,777 deaths and 1,649,836 patients have been tested to date by the MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

This information is now posted on the Department of Public Health COVID-19 website, with a breakdown of coronavirus cases by city and town. The page can be accessed by going to: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting#covid-19-cases-by-city/town->. The Department of Public Health has created a dashboard as well with comprehensive, detailed COVID-19 data, including trend data, case rates, testing, and breakdowns by age, sex, race, ethnicity and geography. <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-dashboard->

Current Status: Step One of Phase III:

Due to the recent increase in positive cases, step two of phase III of the Commonwealth's reopening plan has been postponed indefinitely.

Flu Mandate:

State public health officials announced on August 19th that influenza immunization will be required for all children 6 months of age or older who are attending Massachusetts child care, pre-school, kindergarten, K-12, and colleges and universities. Students will be expected to have received a flu vaccine by December 31, 2020 for the 2020-2021 influenza season, unless either a medical or religious exemption is provided. Also exempted are K-12 students who are homeschooled and higher education students who are completely off-campus and engaged in remote learning only. This new flu immunization requirement to enter school in January is in addition to existing vaccine requirements for all those attending child care, preschool, K-12, and colleges and universities in Massachusetts. Elementary and secondary students in districts and schools that are using a remote education model are not exempt.

Executive Order to Increase Child Care Options:

Gov. Charlie Baker has issued an executive order to increase child care options for families with students in hybrid or remote learning when schools reopen in September, some of which adds a new municipal responsibility to inspect and approve remote learning enrichment programs.

The governor's order provides three new options to increase child care settings for school-aged children:

1. Authorizes the Department of Early Education and Care to expand the services that can be offered by currently licensed school-aged child care programs, allowing these entities (such as YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs) to serve students during the normal school day, in addition to their existing extended-day or after-school programs.

2. Authorizes Remote Learning Parent Cooperatives, allowing up to five families to coordinate the supervision of their school-aged children during the school day, as long as a parent is present at all times. Parent cooperatives must follow the state's [restrictions on gatherings](#), cannot employ a teacher or professional without a parent present, and are "strongly encouraged" to follow Department of Early Education and Care and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education health and safety guidelines to the extent feasible.
3. Allows the Department of Early Education and Care to waive state licensure requirements for Remote Learning Enrichment Programs offered by private entities, as long as these programs receive approval from the municipality in which they are located, and follow state guidelines jointly set by Department of Early Education and Care and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Department of Early Education and Care and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have published the process for obtaining a Remote Learning Enrichment Program license exemption and the guidelines for municipalities [at this link](#).

Travel Order:

The Travel Order that went into effect on August 1, 2020 requires that all visitors and returning residents entering Massachusetts follow new travel orders. Unless you are traveling to or from a lower-risk state designated by the Department of Public Health or meet an exemption, you must complete the [Massachusetts Travel Form](#) prior to arrival and Quarantine for 14 days or produce a negative COVID-19 test result that has been administered up to 72-hours prior to your arrival in Massachusetts. If your COVID-19 test result has not been received prior to arrival, visitors, and residents must quarantine until they receive a negative test result. Failure to comply may result in a \$500 fine per day.

Currently the low risk states are Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and West Virginia.

Stop the Spread Initiative:

As part of the Stop the Spread Initiative launched by the Baker-Polito Administration, there are 21 free testing sites in higher risk communities. All residents in these 21 communities, including asymptomatic residents, are urged to get tested and these free testing sites are also open to all Massachusetts residents.

For a list of the free testing sites visit: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/stop-the-spread>.

Helpful Links:

- [Mass.gov/findfoodhelp](https://www.mass.gov/findfoodhelp)
- [Stop the Spread](#)
- [Reopening Massachusetts](#)
- [Mass.Gov/covid19](https://www.mass.gov/covid19)
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [Unemployment & COVID-19](#)
- [Dept. Of Transitional Assistance Online Portal](#)
- [FrontlineMA.org](https://www.frontlineMA.org)
- [Emergency Childcare Site](#)
- [COVID-19 Cost Eligibility and Tracking Guidance](#)

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.

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.