

Wesley Chin, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

Telephone (617) 993-2720
Facsimile (617) 993-2721
wchin@belmont-ma.gov

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



BOARD OF HEALTH
ADRIENNE S. ALLEN, M.D., M.P.H.
DONNA S. DAVID, R.N., M.N.
JULIE C. LEMAY, M.P.H.

P.O. BOX 56, 19 MOORE STREET
BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS 02478

PUBLIC HEALTH WEEKLY UPDATE:
COVID-19
August 20, 2021

Below is a summary related to the Town of Belmont's response to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. The Town of Belmont is committed to providing information including this weekly update on the COVID-19 situation. Numbers related to COVID-19 and other pertinent information are updated regularly on the [Town's website](#).

The Town of Belmont currently has 1226 *cumulative* confirmed cases of COVID-19, which is an increase of 22 cases over the past week since August 13, 2021. There have been a total of 80 COVID-19 related deaths to date for the Town of Belmont, all of which are confirmed by filed death certificates with the Town Clerk's Office. Over the past two weeks, our average daily incidence was 10.7/100k, with 1.58 percent positivity. Per the CDC's color-coded Community Transmission metrics (7 Day case count per 100k), Middlesex County is in the **High** category.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) continues to provide weekly reports of COVID-19 data by city or town as part of its [Dashboard for COVID-19 Cases, Quarantine and Monitoring](#). MDPH updates this list once a week on Thursdays.

Belmont Town-Level COVID-19 Dashboard

Find the full Data Dashboard at the top of the town COVID-19 Page: <https://www.belmont-ma.gov/home/urgent-alerts/covid-19-information-for-the-town-of-belmont-find-all-updates-here>

Booster Shot Information

The CDC recently reported that booster shots for COVID-19 would be recommended for certain groups of people now, and others in the future. There have been lots of questions since this was announced. Some answers to frequently asked questions can be found below, and full information can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/immuno.html>

- **Currently**, CDC is recommending that moderately to severely immunocompromised people receive an additional dose. This includes people who have:
 - Been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood
 - Received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
 - Received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system



- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response
- MDPH let us know that residents can call their primary health care provider to discuss if it's appropriate for them to receive a booster shot. If appropriate, residents can search for COVID vaccine locations through <https://vaxfinder.mass.gov/>
- MDPH has not announced plans for local towns to be involved in COVID booster dose vaccine clinics at this time.
- Booster shots don't apply to those who received J&J vaccine at this time (There is not enough data at this time to determine whether immunocompromised people who received the Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine also have an improved antibody response following an additional dose of the same vaccine.)
- MDPH has requested that any resident interesting in receiving a homebound COVID-19 vaccine call MDPH toll-free at (833) 983-0485 to be vaccinated by the State Homebound Vaccine Provider.

Town Wide Indoor Mask Order – Updated 8/16/2021

On Monday, 8/16/21, the Board of Health met and voted to amend the face covering order, for further clarity. Face coverings are required for all individuals aged two years and above in all indoor public or private spaces open to the public, or where individuals from different households can gather, except where an individual is unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability. This excludes private residences.

This indoor mask order will be in effect whenever the [Level of Community Transmission](#) data from the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for Middlesex County is categorized as either “**Substantial**” or “**High**” over a consecutive two week period. The mandate will be paused whenever this data is categorized as either “**Low**” or “**Moderate**” over a consecutive two week period. Please note this is a different metric than the weekly statistics provided by the MA Department of Public Health.

The full order can be viewed on the Town's website:

[https://www.belmont-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf6831/f/uploads/2021-08-16 - indoor_mask_mandate - amended.pdf](https://www.belmont-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf6831/f/uploads/2021-08-16_-_indoor_mask_mandate_-_amended.pdf)

Board of Health Contact Form

The Board of Health has been working on creating a streamlined method of communication so that residents may reach out directly to our board members if they so choose. This communication option will be found on the town's website shortly, and the email address is as follows:

BelmontBoardofHealth@belmont-ma.gov

Vaccine Data

- Link to full vaccination reports and data: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-vaccination-data-and-updates>
- Vaccine data can also be found in the Dashboard, updated weekly

CDC COVID-19 Data and Information

COVID Data Tracker: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#datatracker-home>

Info for fully vaccinated individuals: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

Personal Protective Measures to Keep Up

Get vaccinated- COVID-19 vaccines have been demonstrated to be safe and highly effective at preventing severe COVID-19 disease. Some vaccines require two doses, and it takes two weeks after your last dose to be considered fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated individuals who do not have symptoms do not need to quarantine or pursue testing if they are exposed to a known case of COVID-19.

Stay home when you are sick- Be a good neighbor to your co-workers, friends, classmates, or other community members and pursue testing if you are concerned that you may have COVID-19.

Increase ventilation indoors when able- This could be opening the windows when it's nice out, or using a fan that exhausts to an open window (pushes inside air to the outside).

Consider wearing a mask indoors when you are unable to physically distance from others- While the Governor's Mask order has changed, you are always welcome to wear a mask whenever you like.

Hand Hygiene- Keep hand sanitizer handy and/or wash your hands throughout the day.

Finding a COVID-19 Vaccine Appointment

All residents 12+ are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Residents can register to book an appointment at a mass vaccination site at mass.gov/COVIDVaccine. Appointments will be offered based on eligibility and available appointments nearby. It is expected that more sites will come continue to come online.

To accommodate residents who are unable to use the form, the registration form allows family members, caregivers or other companions to fill out the form on behalf of someone else. Residents who do not have internet access or someone to fill the form out for them can call **2-1-1** to register.

A complete list of vaccine locations, including retail pharmacies, health care providers, and other can be found here: <https://vaxfinder.mass.gov/> or by searching via map here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccination-locations#map-of-vaccination-sites->

Mask Reminders

Here are some tips about how to properly wear your face coverings, and what type of face coverings are recommended.

CDC Mask Guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

COVID-19 Testing

You should get a test for COVID-19 if:

- You develop *any* symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild, or

BELMONT IS HOME TO THE



**MASKED
MARAUDERS**



- You are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or
- You have traveled and are returning to MA, or
- You are planning to travel to a state that requires testing prior to arrival

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild, please contact your healthcare provider and a test site near you to schedule a test. You can also [check your symptoms online](#).

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and may include:

- Fever, chills or shaking chills
- Signs of a lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, lowered oxygen saturation)
- Fatigue, sore throat, headache, body aches/myalgia, or new loss of sense of taste or smell
- Other less common symptoms can include gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g. nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea), rash, and inflammatory conditions such as “COVID toes”.
- In elderly, chronically ill, or debilitated individuals symptoms of COVID-19 may be subtle such as alterations in mental status or in blood glucose control

Where can I get a test?

Please visit this page to enter your zip code and find a testing site near you: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/find-a-covid-19-test>

Information continues to evolve quickly, so we encourage all those looking to be tested to contact the site prior to arrival. Many sites may also require pre-screening, a referral and/or an appointment.

Belmont Helps: Ways to Help Our Community

[Donate](#) | [Volunteer](#) | [Ask for Help](#) | [Find Resources](#) | [Request or Help Sew Masks](#)

Belmont Helps, a Winn Brook Parent Teacher Association Committee, is a 100% volunteer organization founded on March 14, 2020 to connect Belmont area community members in need during the COVID-19 outbreak to resources and volunteers. More information can be found at www.belmonthelps.org. Contact belmonthelps@gmail.com or leave a message at (617) 993-0162 for a call back from a team member.

COVID-19 Informational Call Center

For general COVID-19 questions, all Massachusetts residents encouraged to call the state’s 2-1-1 hotline that is staffed by operators 24/7 and with translators available in multiple languages. Residents with questions can dial 2-1-1 from any landline or cellphone or use the live chat option on the [Mass 2-1-1 website](#).

Please call 9-1-1 in the event of an emergency. Calls should not be made to 9-1-1 to obtain information about COVID-19.