

Wesley Chin, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

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

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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

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

PUBLIC HEALTH WEEKLY UPDATE:

COVID-19

December 10, 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 1574 *cumulative* confirmed cases of COVID-19, which is an increase of 42 cases over the past week since December 3, 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 13.3/100k, with 1.07 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>

**Links to Wastewater data, state, and county level hospitalization data are now available on page 2 of this dashboard*

New Belmont Public Schools COVID-19 Dashboard

Find the School Year 2021-22 Dashboard here: https://datastudio.google.com/s/ngU-TM0fR_c

Booster Dose Eligibility

Individuals 18+ who received the COVID-19 vaccine are now more widely eligible for booster doses. Booster doses of the COVID-19 vaccine may be mixed. Regardless of whether you got Pfizer, Moderna, or J&J, you can get any brand of booster dose as long as you qualify based on the criteria listed below:

- **Pfizer or Moderna recipients:**
 - All individuals 18 and older who received their second dose of Pfizer or Moderna at least 6 months ago are now eligible for a booster dose of any COVID vaccine.



- **Johnson and Johnson recipients:**

- All Individuals 18 and older who received a dose of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine at least 2 months ago are now eligible for a booster dose of any COVID vaccine.

Individuals who are immunocompromised due to particular health conditions have been eligible for a third dose (different from a booster dose) of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine since August 13. Talk to your doctor if you think this may apply to you, or if you have questions.

- More information on this can be found [here](#).

Children's COVID Vaccine Information, Ages 5-11

The CDC has made the recommendation for children between 5 and 11 years old to be vaccinated against COVID-19 with the pediatric dosage of Pfizer. Distribution of pediatric vaccinations across the country started in early November, and scaled up to full capacity starting the week of November 8th. Vaccines will be available at thousands of pediatric healthcare provider offices, pharmacies, Federally Qualified Health Centers, and more. More appointments will become available as more vaccine is shipped out, so if you are not able to get an appointment immediately, continue checking back in over the next few weeks.



COVID-19 Booster Shot Clinic



The Belmont Health Department is offering a limited number of Moderna COVID-19 booster shots to eligible residents 18 and up, along with our upcoming pediatric clinic. Massachusetts has expanded the eligibility criteria for booster shots, and the new criteria can be found below.

If you are 18+, and received the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, you can get a booster dose once 2 months have passed since your original dose.

If you are 18+, and received either the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine, you can get a booster dose once 6 months have passed since your second dose.

**Booster shots can be any of the approved COVID-19 vaccines, regardless of your original dose, but at this clinic the Moderna vaccine will be provided.*

Belmont's booster dose clinic will be held on:
Monday December 13th
From 4 PM to 7 PM
at
Beth El Temple Center
2 Concord Ave, Belmont

Register for a booster dose appointment here:
<https://home.color.com/vaccine/register/belmont>

If you have difficulty with registration
Call 617-993-2720
or
Email Lsharp@belmont-ma.gov for assistance

**Please present insurance cards, photo ID, and vaccination cards at appointment.*



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Belmont Health Department
(617) 993-2720

Belmont Health Department
617-993-2720





Best Mask Practices to Support a Healthy Belmont



As cases continue to increase this winter, understanding the best practices for mask-wearing will help keep you, your loved ones, and your community safe. Here are three of the main factors to consider when choosing your masks:

Fit

Choose a mask that fits snugly, covering the nose, mouth, and chin. Bendable nose pieces can help with this.

All edges should touch your skin, you can test out different shapes and sizes to find the right fit for you.

Since medical masks do not fit everyone perfectly, you can layer a cloth mask over it to seal up any gaps and increase protection (double masking).

Filtration

Choose a mask that offers a high level of filtration.

High filtration medical-style masks have been found to effectively protect both the wearer and others around them.

There are many options to choose from, and this CDC page can help to select the best mask for you:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>

Wearability

Choose a mask you can comfortably keep on throughout the day, when you're out in public, at work, on public transit, or in healthcare settings.

This CDC page can help identify the proper way to wear and care for your masks, so you can accurately determine which masks will best fit your wearability needs:

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



**Belmont Health
Department
617-993-2720**

PDF Links:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

Town Wide Indoor Mask Order – Updated 9/20/2021

On Monday 9/20/2021, the Select Board met, and voted to amend the face covering order to include violation language. This language discusses a warning after first violation, and a fine after any following violations. These violations include businesses not posting the mask requirement signage, or not enforcing the mask mandate among their staff.

Spaces that are covered under this mandate should post Belmont's mask signage conspicuously at all points of entry. If a business or residence does not have this signage, it is posted on the Belmont website with the other COVID materials. You can also call the Health Department and we will send you the materials. 617-993-2720.

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 COVID webpage:

<http://belmont-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf6831/f/uploads/scan-44.pdf>

The link to the **mask signage** for businesses to post can be found here: https://www.belmont-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf6831/f/uploads/updated_face_covering_sign_for_businesses_-_aug_2021.pdf

Mask Recommendations and Reminders

With the mask mandate that is currently in place, here are some reminders about mask wearing.

- For the general public, surgical masks and cloth masks are recommended to help stop the spread of COVID-19
- Children should be wearing masks that are designed for children, to ensure they fit properly
- If cloth masks are worn, they should:
 - Consist of at least 2 layers of tightly woven fabric
 - Have a snug fit on your face, to prevent leaks
 - Have a nose wire
 - Block out light when held up to bright light source
- If surgical/disposable masks are worn, they should:
 - Be well fitted to the face, you can adjust them by tying knots in the straps and folding in excess material on the sides
 - Be clean and dry
- One way to ensure a better fit and maximum protection, is to double up and wear a surgical mask with a cloth mask over it
- You can also purchase mask fitters/braces that sit atop your mask to help it mold better to your face
- For full information on mask data, choices and fit, visit these CDC pages:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>



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 5+ 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->

Vaccination Data

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

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
- 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.