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PUBLIC HEALTH WEEKLY UPDATE:
COVID-19
July 10, 2020

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 daily on the [Town's website](#).

The Town of Belmont currently has 231 *cumulative* confirmed cases of COVID-19. There are now a total of 60 COVID-19 related deaths in the Town of Belmont, 57 of which are confirmed by filed death certificates with the Town Clerk's Office and 3 are *unconfirmed*.

***New:** Updates on COVID-19 and the local case count will continue to be posted on the Town of Belmont's [COVID-19 webpage](#), but, for now, just once at the *end of each week*.

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 Wednesdays.

Governor Baker's reopening plan: Phase 3

This week marked the beginning of Step 1 of Phase 3 of reopening in Massachusetts. Governor Baker announced that Phase 3, which started on July 6th, will be the longest phase of reopening, with the expectation that Phase 4 is unlikely to begin until a form of widespread immunity can be achieved to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The following businesses will be eligible to reopen in Step 1 of Phase 3, subject to industry-specific rules concerning capacity and operations:

- Movie theaters and outdoor performance venues;
- Museums, cultural and historical sites;
- Fitness centers and health clubs;
- Certain indoor recreational activities with low potential for contact;



- Professional sports teams, under the authority of league-wide rules, may hold games without spectators

Phase 3 guidance issued by the state can be accessed at: <https://www.mass.gov/reopening>

Under the [updated gatherings order](#), indoor gatherings are limited to eight people per 1,000 square feet, but should not exceed 25 people in a single enclosed, indoor space.

Outdoor gatherings in enclosed spaces are limited to 25 percent of the facility’s maximum permitted occupancy, with a maximum of 100 people in a single enclosed outdoor space. This includes community events, civic events, sporting events, concerts, conventions and more. This order does not apply to outdoor, unenclosed gatherings if proper social distancing measures are possible. However, the continues to prohibit activities such as street festivals, agricultural festivals, walk-a-thons, road races and bike races, and other outdoor, organized athletic or recreational events that gather large numbers of participants or spectators outdoors.

This revised order does not supersede previously issued sector guidance, and became effective beginning Monday, July 6.

MassHealth

MassHealth is extending its current telehealth flexibility through at least the end of the year to ensure member access to critical health care services and encourage continued adherence to preventative public health precautions.

Belmont Public Library: Parking Lot Pickup

The Belmont Public Library is now offering an appointment-based, socially distanced pickup service. This is currently available Monday through Friday between the hours of 10 am-12 pm and 2pm-4pm. They are hoping to expand appointment times in the future, as this service has grown in popularity.

Before you come to the library:

- Request your library materials as you normally would via the [online catalog](#) or the [Minuteman mobile app](#).
 - **Please note:** Due to high demand, requests will take longer than normal to fulfill.
- Get a notice that your materials are ready for pickup.
- Book an appointment.
 - After you get your “Ready for Pickup” notification, you may schedule a pickup time via the [Parking Lot Pickup Calendar](#).



At the library:

- Come to the library during your scheduled pickup & park your car in a parking space in the main parking lot.
- **Please wear a mask**
- Come up to our tent
- Identify yourself
- Take your bag
 - A library employee will match you with your bag. Your name will be on the bag.
- Enjoy your day!



For more information, and Frequently Asked Questions, please visit: <https://belmontpubliclibrary.net/services/parking-lot-pickup/>
Or Email: blmparkinglotpickup@minlib.net

Belmont Parks & Playgrounds

Belmont's public parks reopened for *passive* use on June 2nd. This means walking, jogging, and other *passive* activities are now permitted in the parks. No pick-up games, practices, or contact sports allowed at this time. Do not share equipment with anyone other than those of the same household.

Please note at this time:

- Permits will only be issued to groups that are identified in current guidance by the state.
- No pick-up games, practices, or contact sports are allowed.
- *The use of face coverings/masks is required at any indoor or outdoor setting where it may be difficult to socially distance from individuals from other households.*
- Given the continued risk from COVID-19, the Town may need to reconsider closing these facilities if the public does not comply with the requirements set forth below.



Belmont's playground equipment reopened on June 15th.

- When at the playgrounds, adhere to all posted signage
- Maintain social distance of at least 6-feet from non-household members
- Wear face masks in the playground area
- Stay home if you feel sick
- If a playground is crowded, seek out an alternative facility to take your child to
- Wash and sanitize hands frequently

Before visiting one of Belmont's parks, please review the Recreation Department's *passive* field use rules below or for the most up-to-date information visit the following link:

<https://www.belmont-ma.gov/recreation-department/pages/belmont-parks-re-accessing-plan>

Playground Equipment

Please follow proper hand hygiene before and after visiting the playgrounds. Maintain proper distancing and avoid use if you are unable to maintain proper distancing. Please adhere to all signage at the playground.



Track

Will be open for jogging/running/walking.

Basketball Courts

No pick-up games or organized games allowed.

Tennis Courts and Pickleball Courts

No equipment to be left at the courts. All equipment must be carried in and out by those using the court. Those waiting to use a court should wait outside the court area. Please be respectful to one another.

Athletic Fields

In general, walking, jogging, and other passive activities are allowed. No pick-up games, practices or contact sports allowed at this time.

Off-Leash Program

Off-Leash program resumed on Monday July 6, 2020 (Start of Phase 3) with limited hours (6:00am – 9:00am) for those dogs with valid Off-Leash permits only.



BELMONT FOOD PANTRY HOURS

The Food Pantry will be **OPEN** on a limited basis for **June & July** from **8:30–10:00 am** for Belmont residents to receive food or to drop off donations. The pantry will **NOT** be open on any other days.

SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH
SATURDAY, JUNE 20TH
SATURDAY, JULY 11TH
SATURDAY, JULY 25TH

GOTO OUR WEBSITE/FACEBOOK PAGE FOR CONTINUED UPDATES

<https://sites.google.com/site/thebelmontfoodpantry/>

<https://www.facebook.com/BFPantry/>



The Belmont Food Pantry will be open to distribute food from 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. on the dates listed above. The distribution will still be a drive-thru with everyone remaining in their car, pulling up to the volunteer to check in and another volunteer will put the bag(s), per family, into the car. Walkers PLEASE keep a distance from each other and Food Pantry volunteers WILL COME to you. Belmont residents who are coming to receive food, please remember to bring your ID and have it ready before you get to the check in. Click here for the application and instructions: <https://sites.google.com/.../thebelmont.../home/new-client-forms>

COVID-19 Testing

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) originally restricted the availability of COVID-19 testing to individuals with symptoms (i.e. cough, sore throat, fever, chills, fatigue, headache, recent loss of sense of taste or smell, shortness of breath) consistent with the virus. As more test kits have been made available to providers, MDPH is now expanding its COVID-19 testing categories to now include those who are close contacts to someone that has recently tested positive and those that work with individuals that have tested positive. Close contacts, with or without symptoms, should be tested as soon as possible after they are notified of their exposure to COVID-19.

Community wide testing

On 7/8/20, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the launch of free COVID-19 testing sites in eight communities from July 10 to August 14 to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

This “Stop the Spread” initiative is a data-driven effort to reduce the prevalence of COVID-19 in communities that are above the state average in total cases and positive test rate, and have experienced a decline in testing levels since April. The initiative is being launched in Chelsea, Everett, Fall River, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Marlborough, and New Bedford. Residents of these communities are urged to take advantage of the availability of these new testing sites, even if they are asymptomatic. While these sites are being launched in these communities, they are open to all residents of the Commonwealth, and residents do not need to have symptoms to be tested.

You can find additional information about the “Stop the Spread” initiative test sites here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/stop-the-spread>

MDPH has informed local health officials throughout the state that COVID-19 testing is available to anyone, without prior approval from a medical provider, at a number of different Community Health Centers located throughout the state.

The Community Health Centers closest to Belmont are:

Cambridge Health Alliance – East Cambridge Care Center
163 Gore Street
Cambridge, MA 02141
(617) 665-3000

Cambridge Health Alliance – Somerville Hospital



230 Highland Ave
Somerville, MA 02143
(617) 591-4500

Free COVID-19 testing is available to individuals that are either underinsured or do not have insurance at:

Tufts Medical Center COVID-19 Testing Site
Josiah Quincy School
885 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111
(617) 636-0019

Please note: It is recommended that you call any Community Health Center ahead of time to learn more about their testing capabilities before visiting.

A list of testing site located throughout the state can be found here:
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-testing#testing-sites>

Face Coverings: Required per Order of the Governor

Governor Baker's [COVID-19 Order No. 31](#) went into effect throughout the Commonwealth on May 6th and requires all individuals over the age of 2 to wear face coverings in public places where physical distancing is not possible. This applies to both indoor and outdoor spaces such as, but not limited to, grocery stores, pharmacies, laundromats, home improvement stores, banks, government buildings, and restaurant pick-up sites. However, it should be noted that there are exceptions to this Order, as it does not apply to children under the age of two (2) and those unable to wear a mask or face covering due to a medical condition*.

On May 11th, the Belmont Board of Health and the Belmont Select Board updated [Temporary Emergency Regulation #2](#) to include language for fines in line with the Governor's Order.

A violation of this Order and local Regulation may result in a fine of up to \$300.

*Please note: There are many disabilities that are invisible and you may not know why someone is not wearing a face covering. The Town asks that you do not confront people about wearing masks. If you are uncomfortable about being near someone who does not have a mask on, please consider walking away or around them from a safe distance.

This is a challenging time for everyone and we appreciate your continued compliance as we all work together to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and look forward to safely reopening businesses.

Please visit the CDC's website to learn more about its [recommendation for face coverings](#). The CDC has also posted information on [how to make your own face covering](#).

You may also [contact Belmont Helps to request a mask](#).

Face Coverings for Senior Citizens



The Beech Street Center has a limited supply of face coverings available to provide to senior citizens in Belmont. Senior citizens may contact the Beech Street Center to request either handmade washable cloth masks, or disposable masks.

Please be advised that as of Tuesday, April 28th, the Town has mandated use of masks at essential business; please further be advised that any contactless transitions occurring outside the center, including meals, also require you to wear a mask.

Please note that your call will be answered and Beech Street Center staff will respond to your request within 48 hours. To make your mask requests, please call the main number at 617-993-2970 or email dleavitt@belmont-ma.gov.

Beech Street Center

Nava Niv-Vogel, Director of the Council on Aging, wishes to remind the community that staff at the [Beech Street Center](#) are available to help residents of all ages to access essential services during the pandemic.

Due to growing national concern that people are waiting too long to seek out medical treatment over fears of catching COVID-19, potentially contributing to poor health outcomes, all residents are reminded to always call their primary care physicians and/or other medical specialists for advice regarding ANY medical issue, even if it is not related to COVID-19.

Staff at the Beech Street Center can be reached at (617) 993-2970.

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.

Medical Reserve Corps: A Call for Volunteers

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), is a national network of volunteers under the US Department of Health and Human Services. The [Metro East MRC](#) is the regional unit based out of the Arlington Health Department that is charged with serving 18 communities, including Belmont. There is currently a high demand for Metro East MRC volunteers to help with the local and regional response to the COVID-19 crisis. Volunteers have been activated to assist with delivering food and medications, staffing call centers, and providing backflow to medical facilities in the region. Interested volunteers should sign up at www.MAResponds.org by selecting "Metro East MRC" as their organization. Medical volunteers are also encouraged to join the "COVID-19 Response" team via MA Responds. Please contact **Mia Nardini**, Metro East MRC Coordinator, at 781-316-3177 or MetroEastMRC@Town.Arlington.MA.US with any questions.

Contact Tracing: Answer the Call

To help reduce the spread of the virus, Belmont is participating in the [Massachusetts COVID-19 Community Tracing Collaborative \(CTC\)](#) program.



The solution starts with all of us. Answer the call.

The greatest act of love is answering the call. If you've tested positive for COVID-19, the MA COVID Team will be reaching out via phone to connect you with the support you need through quarantine and to identify your close contacts to stop the spread.

Your caller ID will show the call is coming from

MA COVID TEAM
(833) or (857)

Answer the call.
Stop the virus.

#COVID19MA



Community Tracing Collaborative



Partners
In Health

Your name will
not be released.



Belmont COVID-19 Informational Call Center and Email

For general COVID-19 questions not specific to the Town of Belmont, 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 on the [Mass 2-1-1 website](#).

The Town of Belmont has also established a call center to allow residents to ask non-medical questions specific to COVID-19 in Belmont. The call center will be staffed Monday through Friday from 8am to 4pm the number for the call center is (617) 993-2222. Questions can also be emailed to: belmonteoc@belmont-ma.gov .

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