Wesley Chin, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

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

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

BOARD OF HEALTH
STEPHEN M. FIORE, ESQ
JULIE C. LEMAY, M.P.H.
DONNA S. DAVID, R.N., M.N.

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

PUBLIC HEALTH WEEKLY UPDATE:
COVID-19
July 24, 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 234 *cumulative* confirmed cases of COVID-19. There are have been 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*.

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.

Safe dining

As we move further into phase 3, more individuals as well as businesses are able to take advantage of the increased allowances for outdoor and indoor dining options at our local food establishments. Accompanying this is the importance of putting the appropriate safety measures in place, to keep both staff and customers healthy. Below are a few reminders for best practices to help keep food service staff and customers safe:

- It is important to make sure all staff and customers are wearing **face masks**, and are wearing them correctly.
    - A properly worn face covering should cover an individual's nose and mouth at the same time. A graphic below from the WHO illustrates the proper way to utilize a face mask.
    - ***Customers, who are able to wear a face mask, are required to wear one when not seated at a table. Please remember that face masks should be worn when entering/leaving a dining area, going to the bathroom, etc.***

- Another consideration is for proper menu procedures. At this time, reusable menus are not permitted. Instead, customers may be given single use, disposable paper menus, and/or

Find us on Facebook

alternatively a restaurant can utilize a posted menu on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or digital board, or direct customers to an electronic menu to look at on their personal phones/devices.

- Lastly, food service establishments are required to retain contact information (a phone number or email) from one person in each dining party. This is important for contact tracing, in case of an outbreak.

For the full list of guidance on food establishment practices during phase 3, please follow this link: https://www.mass.gov/doc/restaurants-checklist-english/download

Off-Leash Dog Program: Regular Hours Resume

As of Monday July 20, the Board of Health and the Recreation Commission agreed to reinstate the regular hours for members of the off-leash dog program in Belmont. Previously, hours were limited to 6 and 9 am due to the pandemic. They have now been restored to the usual hours between dawn and sunset. As a reminder, you must apply for the off-leash dog permit to utilize this privilege in the allotted areas.

You can visit Belmont's Animal Control Site for more information on the off-leash dog program. https://www.belmont-ma.gov/animal-control-officer

Providing Information for Contact Tracing

As more businesses have become accessible to the public during phase 3, it is important to understand why restaurants and other businesses will be asking for your party's contact information when you dine or spend time there. In the event of an outbreak these establishments will utilize your information for contact tracing, to help inform you and others about potential exposure to COVID-19, so you can get tested and self-isolate if needed. Your name and contact information will not be used for anything else, and will be expunged after a 3 week safety period.

What is contact tracing?

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is collaborating with Partners in Health (PIH) to contact every resident that tests positive for COVID-19. Public health officials from PIH and/or the local board of health will speak with infected individuals and help identify a list of **close contacts*** that they may have had an interaction with in the 48-hour period before their start of symptoms, or the two days prior to the test that led to a positive result for individuals who do not have symptoms.

Once close contacts are identified, public health officials will begin reaching out to individuals on the list of contacts to notify them about the exposure to an infected individual (who will not be identified) and to also provide them with direction about a 14-day quarantine period and instruction on self-monitoring for symptoms. Contact tracers or local board of health officials then will check in with individuals to monitor symptoms and needs throughout the duration of the quarantine period.

If an individual develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while in quarantine, they will need to notify public health staff, and remain in isolation until symptoms resolve. Contact tracing will then begin on behalf of this individual as well.

*MDPH defines a **close contact** as someone that has being within approximately 6-feet of a known COVID-19 case for about 15 minutes.

Why is contact tracing important?
People in close contact with someone infected with a virus such as COVID-19 are at higher risk for becoming infected themselves and of potentially infecting others. Contract tracing finds possible new cases quickly so that they can be isolated to help stop further spread of the virus.

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.

Sign up to work as a contact tracer for the state
Partners in Health (PIH) is hiring Contact Tracers, Resource Coordinators, and Case Investigators for outreach to all Massachusetts contacts of COVID-19 patients. These positions are essential for providing COVID-19 contacts with critical information about testing and quarantine, referrals for testing, and to provide support resources during the quarantine period.

Learn more about contact tracing opportunities by visiting the PIH website.

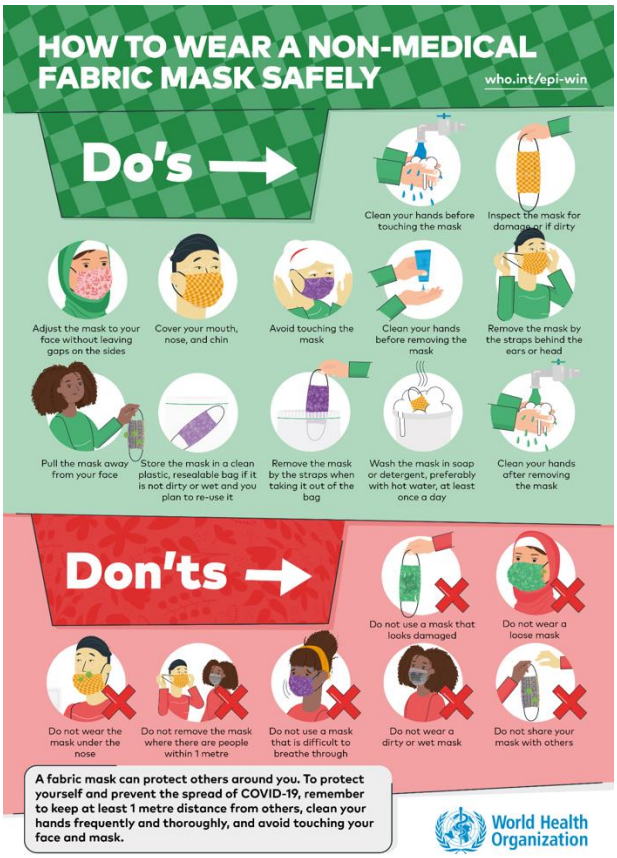
A *Reminder*: Why it is important to wear a cloth face covering

Cloth face coverings may help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others. Wearing a cloth face covering will help protect people around you, including those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and workers who frequently come into close contact with other people (e.g., in stores and restaurants). Cloth face coverings are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings. The spread of COVID-19 can be reduced when cloth face coverings are used along with other preventive measures, including social distancing, frequent handwashing, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or respirators. Currently, those are critical supplies that should be reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders. Cloth face coverings are not personal protective equipment (PPE). They are not appropriate substitutes for PPE such as respirators (like N95 respirators) or medical facemasks (like surgical masks) in workplaces where respirators or facemasks are recommended or required to protect the wearer.

Cloth face coverings should **not** be worn by:

- Children younger than 2 years old
- Anyone who has trouble breathing
- Anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance



For more information on face coverings: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html

https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks

Phase 3, Step 1: Youth and Adult Amateur Sports Activities Guidance

This guidance will not apply to fall K-12 and other youth sports activities. School and other youth sports activities guidance for the fall is currently under development and will be jointly issued by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

In Phase 3, Step 1, businesses and other entities are permitted to operate youth and adult amateur sports and other recreational activities subject to the limitations set forth below.

Outdoor and Indoor Sports and Athletic Facilities Organizations, businesses, schools and government entities that operate outdoor or indoor sports facilities, such as athletic fields, courts and other playing surfaces, pools, and sailing and boating facilities can open their premises and facilities for use by adults and youth in Phase 3, Step 1 provided that the safety measures outlined by the state are implemented by facility operators and activity organizers. Such athletic facilities subject to this guidance include:

- Gymnastics Facilities
- Indoor & Outdoor Pools
- Indoor and Outdoor Athletic Fields and Courts
- Ice Rinks

- Tracks
- Indoor Gymnasiums
- Martial Arts & Dance Facilities
- Indoor Racquet Courts
- Indoor Batting Cage Facilities

Fitness Centers and Health Clubs must follow the Sector Specific Workplace Safety Standards for Fitness Centers and Health Clubs to Address COVID-19. Pool Facilities (both indoor and outdoor) must ensure compliance with the Safety Standards for Public and Semi-Public Pools. Recreational camps or other programs that are subject to 105 CMR 430.000 must follow the requirements outlined in the Massachusetts Child and Youth Service Programs Reopen Approach: Minimum Requirements for Health and Safety.

More information can be found by following the links below to learn more about the reopening of:

Fitness centers and health clubs:
https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-fitness-centers-and-health-clubs

Pool facilities:
https://www.mass.gov/doc/safety-standards-for-public-and-semi-public-swimming-pools/download

Recreational camps:
https://eeclead.force.com/resource/1591036172000/Min_Req

Sports and recreational activities allowed during Phase 3, Step 1

The ability to participate in sports and recreation activities is determined by a combination of (1) risk of transmission of COVID-19 inherent in the sport or recreation activity itself and (2) level of risk associated with the "Type of Play". In Phase III, Step 1, subject to the limitations and guidelines set forth below:

- Sports and activities included in the **Lower Risk** category can participate in Level 1, 2, 3, 4 type of play.

- Sports and activities included in the **Moderate Risk** category can participate in Level 1, 2 and 3 type of play.

- Sports and activities included in the **Higher Risk** category can participate in Level 1 type of play

Standards for sports & recreational activities in Phase 3, Step 1: Risk Levels

recreation activities are categorized as "**Lower Risk**," "**Moderate Risk**," and "**Higher Risk**."

Lower Risk sports and recreation activities are characterized by:

- Sports or activities that can be done with social distancing

Find us on Facebook

• Examples of sports or activities that can be done individually: *Batting cages, tennis, pickleball, swimming, catch, disc golf, golf, individual biking, surfing, horseback riding, individual sailing, fishing, hunting, motor sports, yoga & no contact exercise classes, gymnastics*

Moderate Risk sports and recreation activities are characterized by:

• Examples of sports or activities that involve intermittent contact, but with protective equipment or mitigating measures in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants (e.g., wearing masks, modifying play: *Baseball, softball, crew/sailing (2-3 people in a boat), track and field, cross country, running clubs, team swimming, volleyball, dance class, fencing, field hockey, no-contact lacrosse*

Higher Risk sports and recreation activities are characterized by:

• Examples of sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants: *Football, wrestling, soccer, rugby, basketball, lacrosse, ice-hockey, competitive cheer, martial arts, crew/sailing (more than 3 people in a boat), ultimate frisbee*.

Type of Play: The following types of play are defined by level from least to greatest risk.

• **Level 1**: Individual or socially distanced group activities (no-contact workouts, aerobic conditioning, individual skill work, and drills)

• **Level 2**: Competitive Practices (Intra-team/group games, contact drills and scrimmages)

• **Level 3**: Competitions (Inter-team games, meets, matches, races, etc.) • Level 4: Tournaments (Outdoor only)

For the purposes of these guidelines, a "**Competition**" is defined as multiple participants or two teams competing against one another in a single contest. A competition includes, inter-team games, matches, shows, meets, and races.

A "**Tournament**" is a formal contest that consists of multiple games between multiple persons or teams, that might include multiple stages, played in a condensed period of time, such as over the course of a single day or multiple days in a row. In Phase 3, Step 1, only outdoor Tournaments are allowed for Lower Risk Sports.

For further guidance around sports and recreational activities regulations, please visit:
https://www.mass.gov/doc/outdoor-recreation-reopening-presentation-phase-iii-step-1/download

BELMONT FOOD PANTRY HOURS

The Food Pantry will be **OPEN** on a limited basis for **July, August & September** 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, JULY 25TH
SATURDAY, AUGUST 1ST
SATURDAY, AUGUST 15TH
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH

GO TO 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

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.

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

Find us on Facebook

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

Find us on Facebook