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PUBLIC HEALTH WEEKLY UPDATE:

COVID-19

October 15, 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 1367 *cumulative* confirmed cases of COVID-19, which is an increase of 10 cases over the past week since October 8, 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 8.6/100k, with 0.86 percent positivity. Per the CDC's color-coded Community Transmission metrics (7 Day case count per 100k), Middlesex County is in the **Substantial** 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>

New Belmont Public Schools COVID-19 Dashboard

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

Middlesex County Comparison Data

The following tables are the results of an analysis looking at how the towns in Middlesex County compare on different COVID metrics, based on mask mandate status. 18 towns have a town-wide indoor mask mandate, 14 towns only mandate masks in municipal buildings, and 20 towns have no mask mandate at all. For each town, average daily incidence and percent positivity (both over a 14 day period) were looked at, as well as what percentage of the population is partially or fully vaccinated. The towns with the highest and lowest metric values have been marked with red and green respectively in each table, and the average column values for each group of towns has been calculated in the last row. These tables are based on the data provided by MA DPH on Thursday September 30th.



Town wide Mask Mandates (18)				
Town	14 Day Average Daily Incidence/100k	14 Day Percent Positivity	Percent Partially Vaccinated	Percent Fully Vaccinated
Arlington	9.8	1.16	79%	74%
Bedford	18.6	1.93	72%	67%
Belmont	6.5	0.59	78%	72%
Billerica	21.9 (Max)	3.3	68%	63%
Cambridge	17.2	0.37	76%	69%
Carlisle	7.6	0.83	89%	82%
Groton	15.9	1.98	75%	69%
Lexington	4.8	0.54	84%	78%
Lincoln	0.8 (Min)	0.27	62%	52%
Littleton	18.3	1.8	80%	75%
Medford	21.4	2.11	76%	70%
Newton	11.8	0.58	85%	78%
Somerville	18.1	1.17	81%	75%
Sudbury	8.8	1.07	84%	79%
Waltham*	20.4	0.8	70%	64%
Watertown	7.8	0.68	83%	77%
Westford*	13.9	2.24	83%	77%
Winchester	9.6	1	81%	76%
Average	13.16	1.25	78.11%	72.06%

*As of 10/4

*As of 10/1

Only Municipal Buildings Mask Mandate (14)				
Town	14 Day Average Daily Incidence/100k	14 Day Percent Positivity	Percent Partially Vaccinated	Percent Fully Vaccinated
Ashland	10.9	1.58	78%	72%
Framingham	8.4 (Min)	1.09	78%	70%
Holliston	12.5	1.81	86%	80%
Hudson	18.3	2.96	75%	68%
Lowell	22.4	3.23	63%	58%
Malden	18.2	2.06	74%	68%
Marlborough	13.3	2.12	74%	67%
Maynard	15.1	2.16	79%	74%
Natick	11.5	1.48	82%	76%
North Reading	21.4	3.3	69%	65%
Sherborn	22.7 (Max)	2.78	92%	85%
Stow	17.7	2.5	78%	73%
Wayland	10.3	1.35	86%	80%
Wilmington	21.9	3.25	69%	65%
Average	16.13	2.26	77.36%	71.50%

No Mask Mandate (20)				
Town	14 Day Average Daily Incidence/100k	14 Day Percent Positivity	Percent Partially Vaccinated	Percent Fully Vaccinated
Acton	9.9 (Min)	1.3	82%	76%
Ashby	32.8	6.4	59%	54%
Ayer	19.4	1.31	79%	71%
Boxborough	32.4	4.1	84%	80%
Burlington	11	1.49	73%	68%
Chelmsford	31.2	4.43	75%	70%
Concord	11.8	1.24	82%	75%
Dracut	28.6	4.04	65%	61%
Dunstable	10.7	2.39	68%	64%
Everett	20.3	2.6	73%	64%
Pepperell	18.6	4.08	62%	57%
Reading	17.5	2.78	72%	68%
Shirley	23.5	5.57	56%	52%
Stoneham	15.1	1.95	79%	73%
Tewksbury	26	3.32	72%	67%
Townsend	19.6	3.85	65%	60%
Tyngsborough	42.3 (Max)	6.48	69%	65%
Wakefield	21.1	3.08	75%	70%
Weston	11.1	0.59	82%	74%
Woburn	19.8	2.72	73%	68%
Average	20.58	3.19	72.25%	66.85%

Pfizer Booster Dose Eligibility

Individuals who are immunocompromised due to particular health conditions have been eligible for a third dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine since August 13.

The following individuals are now eligible for a booster dose of Pfizer 6 months after their second dose of Pfizer vaccine (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html>):

- People 65 years and older
- Residents of long term care settings
- People aged 50–64 years with underlying medical conditions
 - Find list of applicable medical conditions [here](#)
- People aged 18–49 years with underlying medical conditions
 - Find list of applicable medical conditions [here](#)
- People aged 18-64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of their occupational or institutional setting
 - First responders (healthcare workers, firefighters, police, congregate care staff)
 - Education (teachers, support staff, daycare workers)
 - Food and agriculture workers
 - Manufacturing workers
 - Corrections workers
 - U.S. Postal Service workers
 - Public transit workers
 - Grocery store workers

Additional COVID Vaccine Dose Information

Third doses of vaccine for COVID-19 are recommended for certain groups of people, to bolster their immunity. 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>

- 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 third 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 third dose vaccine clinics at this time.
- These third dose 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.

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 - *This vaccination data has been provided by the MA Dept. of Public Health, and is based on Census estimates of population and age breakdown. Belmont Public School vaccination data is drawn directly from the school database, and is therefore a more specific number. The BPS vaccination data can be found [here](#), and is updated regularly by the head of school nursing.*

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, and the back to school season in full swing, 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 choices and fit, visit this CDC page:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>

More data and information on masks can be found here:

- <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>

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

BELMONT IS HOME TO THE



**MASKED
MARAUDERS**

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 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->

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.

