

Thursday, May 6, 2021

COVID-19 Command Center

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Situation Update

The Command Center Situation Report is published weekly. The next report will be published on Thursday, 5/13/21.



On Monday, Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito, joined by Secretary of Health & Human Services Marylou Sudders and Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Disaster Medicine Director Dr. Paul Biddinger, discussed the Commonwealth's progress toward fully vaccinating 4.1 million people by the beginning of June and outlined the next phase of vaccine distribution. (See story below.)

In This Week's Report:

Latest Data: Public Health & Vaccine Data Update

- Week in Review: Key State Actions
 - Administration on Track to Hit Goal of 4.1 Million People Vaccinated, Announces Next Phase of Vaccination Efforts
 - Mass Vaccination Sites to Open for Walk Ups May 10
 - Administration Celebrates COVID-19 Business Relief Program, Awards Final Round of Grants
 - Administration Launches Summer Learning Programs
 - DPH, Emergency Management, and Disaster Recovery Updates
 - Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes Weekly Update
 - New Communication Resources

Helpful Links:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine in Massachusetts](#)
- [Reopening Massachusetts](#)
- [FEMA COVID-19 Funeral Assistance](#)
- [Public Messaging Resources for Municipalities & Businesses](#)
- [Mass.gov/findfoodhelp](#)
- [Unemployment & COVID-19](#)
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [COVID-19 Cost Eligibility and Tracking Guidance](#)



Situation in Numbers

Massachusetts **current as of 5/6**

650,859 Total Confirmed Cases ([click here for more information](#))

17,311 Deaths among confirmed cases

21,762,513 tests for the virus conducted to date by MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals, and commercial laboratories.

United States **Last Updated 5/6**

Case numbers are updated regularly at noon. Saturday/Sunday reports are preliminary and have not been confirmed with state/territorial health departments.

Total Cases Reported to CDC:

32,356,034 Total Cases

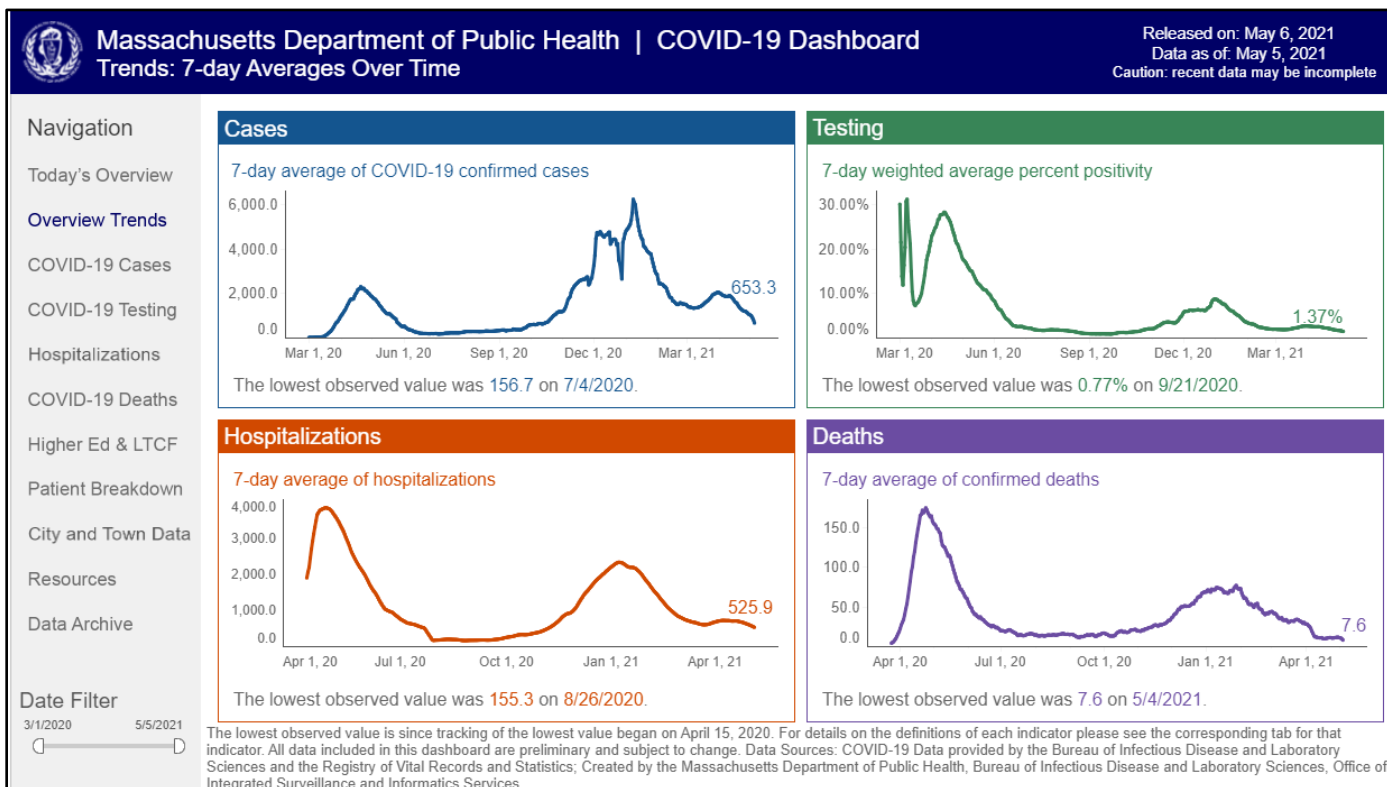
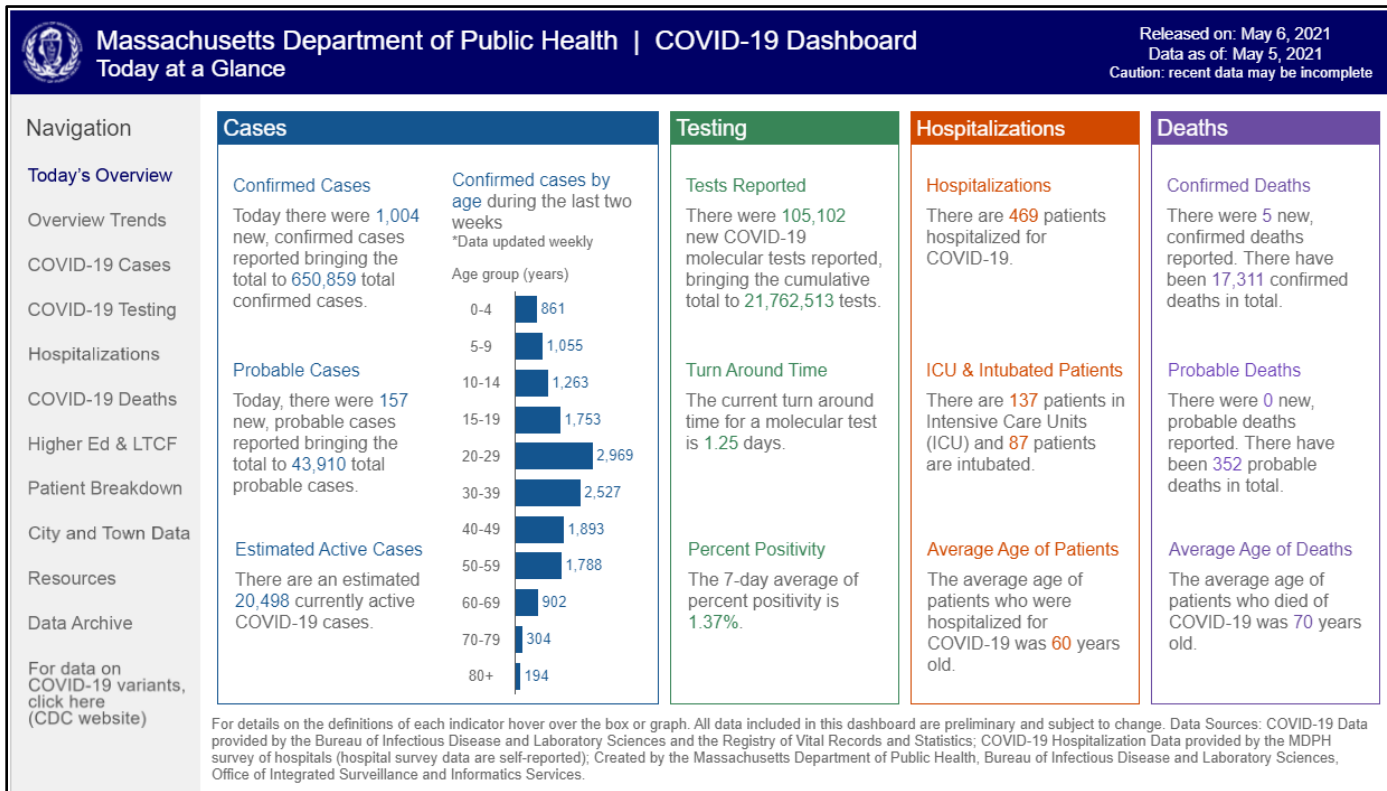
576,238 Deaths

57 Jurisdictions Reporting Cases (50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Marianas, Marshall Islands, American Samoa, and US V.I.)



Mass.Gov/CovidVaccine

Latest Data: COVID-19 Public Health Update



COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER
WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Weekly Public Health Report:

The Command Center released the [Weekly Public Health Report](#) on Thursday, 5/6. The report primarily includes information related to cases and inspection data for Long Term Care Facilities. Data previously included in the Weekly Report, including town-level data, contact tracing information (including active COVID cluster information by Exposure Setting Type), are now presented in the [Daily Interactive Dashboard](#).

Vaccine Update: For a more detailed weekly breakdown, [visit the MA COVID-19 Vaccination Data webpage](#).

	4/30	5/1	5/2	5/3	5/4	5/5	5/6
DOSES SHIPPED							
Doses Shipped to MA Providers (MIIS)*	4,777,525	4,904,225	4,904,225	4,904,225	4,904,225	5,198,015	5,198,015
Doses Shipped to Pharmacies and Directly by the Federal Government - Including FPPP Providers (Tiberius)	2,395,155	2,396,325	2,426,745	2,444,545	2,455,645	2,493,545	2,561,915
Grand Total Shipped to MA	7,172,680	7,300,550	7,330,970	7,348,770	7,359,870	7,691,560	7,759,930
DOSES ADMINISTERED (MIIS)*							
1st Moderna or Pfizer Doses Administered # of people with at least one dose	3,567,096	3,605,287	3,620,679	3,630,545	3,652,173	3,689,702	3,726,634
2nd Moderna or Pfizer Doses Administered # of people fully vaccinated	2,322,928	2,370,815	2,392,242	2,415,410	2,449,315	2,500,168	2,557,949
Janssen (J&J) Doses Administered (MIIS) # of people fully vaccinated	207,922	209,394	210,172	210,781	211,763	214,275	216,680
Grand Total Doses Administered (MIIS)	6,097,946	6,185,496	6,223,093	6,256,736	6,313,251	6,404,145	6,501,263
Grand Total Fully Vaccinated People with Existing COVID-19 Vaccines**	2,530,850	2,580,209	2,602,414	2,626,191	2,661,078	2,714,443	2,774,629
% of Total Doses Shipped That Have Been Reported as Administered	85.0%	84.7%	84.9%	85.1%	85.8%	83.3%	83.8%

*Data from the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS) are as of midnight the night before.

**Fully vaccinated people have 2 doses of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine or 1 dose of Janssen (J&J) vaccine

MA Dose Allocation Update:

This week, the Commonwealth received 381,970 first and second doses as part of the state allocation. These figures do not include doses provided directly from the federal government to the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), or Community Vaccination Center (CVC).

This week, first doses and second dose state allocations (total doses), were distributed among providers as follows:

- Health systems and health care providers (excluding community health centers): 153,340
- Regional Collaboratives and Local Boards of Health: 91,340
- Mass vaccination locations: 118,080
- Community Health Centers state allocation only: 12,110
- Retail pharmacies (non- CVS) state allocation only: 3,500
- Mobile Clinics supporting long-term care facilities, congregate care, affordable/low-income senior housing, and homebound individuals: 3,400

Weekly allocations are subject to change based on federal availability, demand from providers, and obligations to meet second doses. Providers have 10 days to use their doses and must meet specific performance thresholds.

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Federal Doses:

In addition to the state allocation, the federal government has increased its distribution of vaccines to CVS Health sites as part of the Federal Retail Pharmacy Partnership as well as to certain Massachusetts federally qualified community health centers. These quantities fluctuate on a weekly basis and are not counted as part of the state's weekly allocation but represent an increasing allocation to selected locations.

This week, 130,080 first and second doses were allocated to the retail pharmacy program.

FQHCs received 42,210 doses directly from the Federal Government.

The Community Vaccination Clinic at the Hynes Convention Center was allocated 42,120 doses.

Week in Review: State Actions

Administration on Track to Hit Goal of 4.1 Million People Vaccinated, Announces Next Phase of Vaccination Efforts

In December, the Baker-Polito Administration set a goal of vaccinating approximately four million people in the Commonwealth. According to the CDC's vaccine data, 3.9 million people in Massachusetts have been fully or partially vaccinated as of Monday, May 3rd. Another 180,000 people are scheduled to get their first dose by May 10th.

Altogether, 4.1 million people are set to be fully vaccinated by the beginning of June —reaching the administration's initial goal and representing a significant achievement for the Commonwealth.

Next Phase of the Commonwealth's Vaccination Efforts: More Targeted, Community-Based Options

Massachusetts is a leader for vaccine distribution across every national metric. As a result of the state's efforts, hospitalizations and new positive cases have decreased — particularly among the most vulnerable residents.

While reaching 4.1 million residents vaccinated represents progress, the administration will continue to adapt vaccine efforts to be more targeted and will shift vaccines to smaller scale operations focusing on certain populations and specific communities—such as the Commonwealth's 20 most disproportionately impacted communities.

This next phase of the Commonwealth's vaccine efforts will include:

- Providing all 22 regional collaboratives with doses to fully operate their programs.
- Doubling the state vaccine allocation for our 20 most disproportionately impacted communities.
- Working with the Massachusetts Medical Society to increase access of vaccines with additional primary care providers by mid-May. This effort will require affirming complex storage and scheduling logistics to ensure all doses are put to good use.
- Expanding mobile vaccine clinics in our 20 most disproportionately impacted communities at senior centers, houses of worship, and other community-based organizations.
- Working with current providers and community partners to offer new vaccine clinic opportunities.

Over 21,000 doses have been administered through mobile vaccination clinics in Boston, Chelsea, Brockton, Fall River, Springfield, and New Bedford. Mobile clinics have been particularly effective in our equity communities and to reach people of color. So far, 61% of vaccine recipients at these clinics have been people of color.

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New vaccine clinic opportunities have already started to be stood up. Some examples include:

- The Metro North Regional Collaborative's three new clinics at the Encore Casino in Everett, Tufts Campus in Medford and at the Cambridge Health Alliance location in Somerville.
- Boston Medical Center's new vaccine scheduling location at the South Bay Shopping Center.
- Mobile clinics in Lynn, New Bedford, Worcester and Fall River at local churches and temples in different languages.
- The City of Brockton's clinic at the Westgate Mall and at different municipal housing complexes.

Mass Vaccination Sites & Pre-Registration

The Administration will also begin to transition or ramp down the state's seven mass vaccination sites. Mass vaccination sites have played a critical role in the Commonwealth's vaccination process in a very short period of time.

At the mass vaccination sites, the Commonwealth has administered 1.2 million doses and fully vaccinated 470,000 people since the first site opened at Gillette Stadium on January 18th. The state expects to administer around 250,000 second doses in May and another 180,000 first doses across all providers by May 10th.

With millions of people vaccinated, the demand for high throughput mass vaccination sites will gradually decline, and more vaccines will be dispersed more widely across communities.

The administration will gradually close four of the state's seven mass vaccination sites by the end of June (Gillette Stadium, Hynes Convention Center, Double Tree in Danvers, and the Natick Mall).

Since the pre-registration system was launched, over 1.8 million people registered and have been offered an appointment at least twice.

In the coming weeks, the state is anticipating that the CDC may authorize vaccines for children ages 12-15, and pre-registration will remain available for parents who may want to bring children to a mass vaccination site.

Mass Vaccination Sites to Open for Walk Ups May 10:

Beginning Monday, May 10th, six of the Commonwealth's mass vaccination sites will open for walk up vaccination. These sites include the Hynes Convention Center, the Reggie Lewis Center in Roxbury, the Double Tree in Danvers, the former Circuit City in Dartmouth, the Eastfield Mall in Springfield, and the Natick Mall.

Residents should still go to [VaxFinder](#) to find a location near them and plan their vaccination. Residents will be able to use each site's VaxFinder listing to either book appointments or view more details about walk-up appointments. VaxFinder also lists important information like each site's accessibility options, MBTA Trip Planner and more. Over 500 locations have open availability on VaxFinder.

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Administration Celebrates COVID-19 Business Relief Program, Awards Final Round of Grants

Today, Governor Baker, Lt. Governor Polito, Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy, legislators, and key partners celebrated the success of the Administration's COVID-19 business relief program administered by the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (MGCC). Gathering in person at the family- and minority-owned Panela Restaurant in Lowell, a program grantee, the Administration announced the end of the program, which has provided over \$687.2 million in direct cash grants to 15,112 businesses across the Commonwealth. Among the awardees included in the final round were 108 additional businesses that received a total of approximately \$4.8 million in COVID relief grants.



First launched in October 2020 as part of the Administration's Partnerships for Recovery initiative to stabilize and grow the Massachusetts economy, this program became the biggest state-sponsored business relief program in the nation after being infused with an additional \$668 million in December. Established to provide direct financial support for businesses, the Administration has tapped numerous partners to ensure specific economic sectors and priority demographics known to be the most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic applied to the program and were prioritized for aid.

Over the duration of the program, 43 percent of MGCC grants were awarded to minority-owned businesses, and 46 percent of grants went to women-owned businesses. Businesses owned by veterans, individuals with disabilities, or that identify as LGBTQ, as well as those operating in Gateway Cities and not previously awarded aid, also received substantial grant support. Additionally, one-third of the total program funding (about \$224 million) has benefited the hard-hit restaurant and bar industry, with personal services like hair and nail salons (\$91 million), and independent retailers (\$62 million) rounding out the top sectors.

The 15th and final round of awards totaled approximately \$4.8 million in grants to 108 additional businesses. Among the final round of recipients, grants were awarded to 25 minority-owned, and 26 women-owned businesses; 24 recipients were located in Gateway Cities, and 28 businesses had not received any prior aid.

To increase applications from underrepresented groups and achieve equitable access to funding, MGCC worked with a statewide network of local non-profits, small business technical assistance providers, and other organizations that support minority enterprises to reach businesses and entrepreneurs that would match the program's priorities. These partners include the Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA), Amplify Latinx, the Business Equity Initiative, the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC), LISC, LEAF, the African Community Economic Development of New England (ACEDONE), and the statewide Coalition for an Equitable Economy.

MGCC will soon be announcing two new funding opportunities focused on small businesses. A program called Biz-M-Power will assist low-income and moderate-income entrepreneurs acquire or improve their brick-and-mortar location, purchase new equipment, and other capital needs. Businesses will crowdfund through local residents, neighborhoods, community members, and other stakeholders and become eligible for matching grants. Another new program will help small businesses access tools and services to develop their digital capabilities, including social media, website development, and team collaboration.

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These awards have been part of a steady deployment of grants and capital funding to support economic recovery throughout Massachusetts and are a key part of the Administration's larger strategy to assist small businesses and support an equitable economic recovery across the Commonwealth.

In addition to this business relief program, recovery efforts consist of MGCC Small Business Technical Assistance grants and matching grants for Community Development Financial Institutions and Community Development Corporations; the [Regional Pilot Project Grant Program](#), which is a \$5 million initiative designed to activate vacant storefronts, support regional supply chain resiliency, and create small business support networks; the \$1.6 million [Travel and Tourism Recovery Grant Pilot Program](#) to promote recovery in the tourism industry; the ongoing [My Local MA](#) marketing initiative to encourage residents to support their local economies by shopping at Massachusetts businesses and attractions; and a \$9.5 million effort underway to help 125 communities pursue locally-driven, actionable strategies to support downtown and commercial districts through the [Local Rapid Recovery Planning](#) program.

Administration Launches Summer Learning Programs:

The Administration announced the establishment of summer learning opportunities and the availability of more than \$70 million in funding for school districts and community organizations to offer summer learning and recreational programs that will help students, who have been impacted by a year of remote and hybrid learning, grow academically and socially. Students at every grade level will have opportunities to take part in a mix of academic and recreational programs offered at schools, after-school providers, community colleges and recreation sites.



All middle schools in the Commonwealth were required to return to full time in-person learning last week. Elementary schools returned on April 5, and high schools will be required to return by May 17.

Acceleration Academies

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will help school districts launch Acceleration Academies, which allow students to learn and build skills working intensively on one subject in small, hands-on learning environments with excellent teachers.

Students benefit from small class sizes, longer uninterrupted instructional blocks, individualized attention, project-based lessons and teacher flexibility for learning time. The Baker-Polito Administration will commit up to \$25 million in grants for districts to operate Acceleration Academies using federal **Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Response** (ESSER) discretionary funds. This will be a multi-year program that the Department anticipates will impact more than 50,000 students statewide each year.

Acceleration Academies will include:

- Early Literacy Academies for incoming kindergarteners, rising 1st and 2nd graders; and
- Math Acceleration Academies for rising 3rd and 4th graders, as well as 8th and 10th graders.

Summer School Matching Grants

DESE will also offer summer school matching grants, up to \$15 million in federal ESSER funds, for school districts to offer 4-to-6-week, in-person programs with a mix of in-person academic and recreational activities. The Department is making these funds available to schools to enhance or expand their existing summer programs

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while also including mental health services and additional supports for students with individualized education plans and English learners.

Summer Acceleration to College

High school graduates from the Class of 2021 will be able to participate in Summer Acceleration to College, a new program that provides recent graduates access to credit-bearing math and English courses at no cost to them as they prepare for college.

Fourteen community colleges in the Commonwealth will participate in this program, expected to be funded at \$1 million.

Summer Step Up

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) will support school districts to offer Summer Step Up, a new program aimed at giving extra support to young learners entering school in the fall.

Young children, who have had limited in-school experiences due to the pandemic, will be able to take part in summer learning opportunities developed in conjunction with community partners to help prepare them for school. With pre-school and kindergarten enrollments down over the last year, Summer Step Up is an opportunity to engage young learners and accelerate learning while smoothing the transition to in-person learning for young children to provide them a stronger foundation for academic success. The Administration will commit up to \$10 million to this program.

In addition to these programs, the Baker-Polito Administration will:

- Provide early literacy tutoring grants this summer and during the 2021-22 school year, funded at \$10 million.
- Launch a new K-8 Math Acceleration program to help teachers increase student learning over the summer and throughout the school year.
- Expand the Biggest Winner Math Challenge – which was piloted last summer – to serve approximately 2,500 gifted math students, costing approximately \$2.5 million.
- Offer college courses over the summer for rising high school juniors and seniors who are enrolled in approved Early College programs, costing approximately \$1 million.
- Help camps and community organizations expand educational enrichment as part of their existing summer programs by making at least \$3 million in funding available.

Important Updates

Department of Public Health Updates:

- A new Highlights page has been added to the Vaccine Equity Initiative website – here you can scan the latest media clips, photos, and activities, refreshed every few days: www.mass.gov/covidvaccineequity
- Trust the Facts. Get the Vax: The state’s public information campaign is performing well above average for similar awareness campaigns. Since its launch in early February, the ads have been viewed more than 3 million times and more than 130 thousand have clicked on the vaccine website.

Impressions	Completed Views	Clicks
13,940,351	3,264,703	134,226

- DPH Epidemiology Line handled 329 COVID-19 calls and 73 non-COVID-19 calls for a total of 402 calls from 4/26 through 5/2.

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- MDPH Immunization Division COVID-19 Vaccine Live Q&A, **May 24th 1:00pm – 2:00pm** for health care providers, vaccine coordinators, and all health care personnel who handle and/or administer COVID-19 vaccines. Click on [this link](#) to register.
- MDPH COVID-19 UPDATED Case Investigation & Contact Tracing 101 Training for Local Public Health, Tuesday, May 11, 2021 from 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Click on [the link](#) to register and for more information.
- As of 5/6, the [Academic Public Health Volunteer Corps](#) has 309 volunteers supporting 36 local boards of health.
- MA211 received 3,828 calls from Monday 4/26 through Sunday 5/2 for a new total of 295,462 calls.
- DPH issued updated guidance, May 5, 2021: [Updates to Long-Term Care Surveillance Testing](#)
- DPH provided community health centers and community hospitals with updated BinaxNOW testing guidance.
- All HMCC Regions are at Tier 2 status, in accordance with the [DPH COVID-19 Resurgence Planning and Response Guidance for Acute Care Hospitals](#). DPH and the COVID-19 Command Center will continue to work closely with all regions to monitor hospital capacity statewide.
- There are currently 3 Rapid Response Teams, comprised of nursing staff, deployed to nursing homes across the Commonwealth. Teams are also administering second doses of Pfizer vaccine to nursing and rest home residents as well as Homebound individuals. The team resumed vaccinations on Tuesday, April 26, 2021, using Janssen vaccine at nursing homes and rest homes that have a high number of residents that are unvaccinated while awaiting further recommendations.

Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery Updates:

Mass Care

- One state contracted isolation/recovery hotel in the City of Everett continues to receive client placements. 61 individuals are currently housed in the program.
 - Top 5 referring cities:
 - Boston (457)
 - Worcester (199)
 - Springfield (196)
 - Quincy (129)
 - Cambridge (120)
 - To date, a total of 2,449 residents have been placed in these hotels for safe isolation and recovery, an increase of 41 since last week.

Community Food Box Program Update 4/30-5/6:

MEMA has partnered with the Salvation Army, and a vendor, to bring in shelf-stable food boxes each week to support communities in their effort to deliver food to individuals and families in quarantine and isolation who require assistance accessing food. **While food boxes are no longer being delivered to MEMA’s warehouse, distribution will continue until inventory on hand is depleted.** Distribution of food boxes is coordinated between MEMA and communities in need. The table below reflects the current food box inventory and number of food boxes distributed to communities during the weekly reporting period.

Total Number of Food Boxes in MEMA’s Inventory	Total Number of Food Boxes Distributed to One or More Local Communities During the Reporting Period	Total Number of Communities that Received Food Boxes During the Reporting Period
5,936	86	2

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Grocery Card Distribution Program Update 4/30-5/6:

As an extension of the isolation and quarantine food program, the Food Security Task Force has begun coordinating the distribution of grocery cards in addition to or in lieu of shelf-stable food boxes. These grocery cards allow individuals to have greater flexibility of food options and help accommodate unique dietary needs and cultural food preferences.

Store Name	Number of Cards Distributed During the Reporting Period	Total Value of Cards
Stop & Shop	17	\$1,700
Market Basket	266	\$13,300
Total Number of Communities Receiving Cards: 4		

Logistics (including Personal Protective Equipment and Supplies)

- 74 orders prepared for pickup or delivery from the MEMA State Logistics warehouse from 4/30-5/6.
 - As part of these orders, Mass Vaccination Sites, MDPH Community Health Centers, MDPH Community Grant Programs, and Command Center Vaccine Equity Programs are being supported
 - Orders are also being processed to support Housing Authorities and School Districts across the Commonwealth
- MDPH coordinated 20 deliveries to health care entities on Tuesday (5/4) (19 BinaxNOW kits and 1 vaccine supplies); 14 deliveries were made on Thursday (5/6) (14 BinaxNOW kits) and 8 deliveries have been scheduled for Friday (5/7) (7 BinaxNOW kits and 1 surplus supplies).

Disaster Recovery

On March 27, 2020, the President [declared](#) a Major Disaster Declaration for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts related to the COVID-19 pandemic response. Through this declaration, federal aid will be made available to cities and towns, state agencies, and certain non-profits in all Massachusetts counties to help pay for emergency protective measures (response costs) related to the COVID-19 pandemic. MEMA's Recovery Unit has developed a [webpage](#) with information and guidance on, but not limited to, disaster declaration, eligibility criteria, and the application process. Highlights from the Disaster Recovery process include the following:

Data as of: 4/30/2021			
MEMA COVID-19 EXECUTIVE DASHBOARD			
AGGREGATE PROGRAM VIEW			
<small>Note: Financial data for pre-submission projects reflect 100% federal cost share while submitted projects continue to reflect 75% federal cost share. The remaining 25% federal cost share for submitted projects will be reported as FEMA adjusts cost share for these projects on a rolling basis. In addition, figures do not include MEMA management cost allowance.</small>			
Overall (Best Available Estimate)	Submitted (Eligibility & Cost Review)	Approved* (by FEMA)	Paid (by MEMA)
\$1.4B +\$4.40M	\$1.2B +\$3.71M	\$665.6M +\$2.25M	\$299.7M +\$472.66K
1,027 Projects +9	712 Projects +4	238 Projects +11	156 Projects +7
Approved Applicants: 657			

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- FEMA RPA Requests: 667 (+2)
- Technical Assistant Requests: 524
- Distributed survey to collect data on non-congregate sheltering operations for the 5/14/21 FEMA reporting period
- Validated all supporting documentation for the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center FEMA application and advanced the project to the applicant’s final review queue.
- Advanced the Boston Food and Distribution PW and City of Worcester Sheltering PW to FEMA for review.
- New project obligations (2): \$51,568.30
- Completed the closeout documentation for 5 large COVID-19 FEMA project applications.

Funeral Assistance

FEMA began processing applications for funeral assistance starting on 4/12 ([learn more here](#)).

FEMA COVID Funeral Assistance Program registration as of 5/5/21:

Disaster	State	FEMA Region	Registrations	In Process	Eligible	Award Amount	Withdrawn	Ineligible
4496	MA	1	3,609	3,567	41	\$293,250.36	0	1

Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers’ Homes Update:

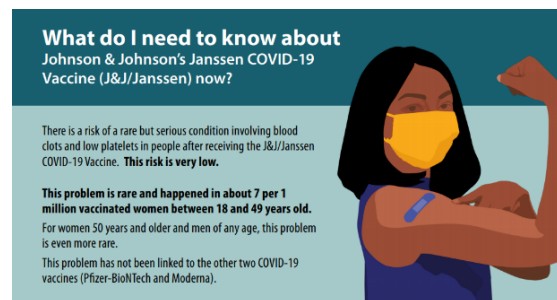
NOTE: The Soldiers’ Homes are continuing regular reporting on the status of COVID-19 cases at the facilities but are transitioning the weekly reporting to the EOHHS State Facility Dashboard which is published every Wednesday afternoon. Cases will be reported weekly each Wednesday [on this dashboard](#).

Communications Resources

New CDC fact sheets about Johnson & Johnson (J&J)

These can be used by providers or with the public to discuss the safety of the J&J COVID-19 vaccine following the CDC and FDA recommendation to resume use after a temporary pause. Available data indicates the vaccine’s very large benefits outweigh its very small risks.

- For the public: [What do I Need to Know about J & J COVID-19 Vaccine Now?](#)
- For providers: [Talking to Your Patients About the Safety of Janssen Vaccine](#)



New Best Practices for Community and Faith-based Organizations

This [two-page overview](#) of strategies from the CDC can be used to ensure access, cultural appropriateness, language sensitivity, community involvement, and support.

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New Vaccine Equity Initiative Highlights

You can now see a snapshot of highlighted activities, photos from the field, and news clips about the efforts in our 20 priority communities to improve awareness and access to COVID vaccination. Visit the [highlights page](#) to learn more.

(photo: the team fans out in Everett)



Reminder Fliers, posters, graphics: COVID-19 vaccine need-to-know details

These materials explain the key details about the COVID-19 vaccines, including that the vaccines are safe, free, and that two doses may be required. Download and share [these materials](#) in your community.

Increasing COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake Among Members of Racial and Ethnic Minority Communities

This CDC [guide](#) includes strategies, interventions, and ready-made messages and materials, as well as information on how to connect with others to increase COVID-19 vaccination confidence and access in racial and ethnic minority communities.



Guidance for people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19

- Until more people are vaccinated, prevention measures will be necessary, even for individuals fully vaccinated. Review MA's [Guidance for people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19](#).

CDC 'plain language' materials in multiple languages

- [Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Communication Resources for COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

Other Public Messaging Resources for Communities:

The COVID-19 Command Center and DPH have produced many communication resources aimed at helping communities inform and educate residents on recent executive orders and guidance related to COVID-19.

- [Trust the Facts, Get the Vax Campaign Materials | Mass.gov](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Posters | Mass.gov](#)
- [Preparing for your COVID-19 Vaccination Appointment flier | Mass.gov](#)
- [Guide to hosting a forum on the COVID-19 Vaccine | Mass.gov](#)

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Resources

MassSupport

MassSupport is the Massachusetts Crisis Counseling Program funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and managed in partnership between the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health and Riverside Trauma Center, a program of Riverside Community Care. Contact MassSupport by phone at **888-215-4920** or by email at MassSupport@riversidecc.org

Red Cross Virtual Family Assistance Center

In order to provide support to families and communities who have suffered loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Red Cross has developed a Virtual Family Assistance Center (VFAC), staffed by a team of specially trained mental health, spiritual care, and health services volunteers who are:

- Connecting with families over the phone to offer condolences, emotional and spiritual support, and access to available resources
- Providing support for virtual memorial services for families, including connecting with local faith-based community partners
- Hosting online classes to foster resilience and facilitate coping skills
- Assisting families with access to national, state, or local resources such as grief counseling, legal resources, funeral information, financial information services, or veterans' assistance
- Additional state- and local-specific resources are available.

People can visit: <https://www.redcross.org/virtual-family-assistance-center/ma-family-assistance-center.html> to access this resource with special virtual programs, information, referrals, and services to support families in need. People without internet access can **call toll-free 833-492-0094** for help. All Family Assistance Center support will be provided virtually and is completely confidential and free.

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) now reports on the number of positive COVID-19 cases as reported to the DESE by school districts (including charter schools), collaboratives, and approved special education schools. The data only represents what has been reported to DESE. For more information and to view the report people can visit: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/positive-cases/>

COVID-19 Test Site Locator

MEMA, in conjunction with the COVID-19 Command Center, has developed an [interactive tool](#) that shows the locations of COVID-19 testing sites around the Commonwealth.

Massachusetts COVID-19 Response Dashboard

MEMA has developed and maintains a public-facing COVID-19 ArcGIS Online dashboard, available [here](#). This dashboard is continuously updated and captures information about current COVID 19 case counts, cases by age, cases by county, hospital status, hospital bed status, death tolls, and deaths by age. Users should refresh the dashboard daily as enhancements are continuously being added.

Health care facilities can learn more about [requesting personal protective equipment here](#).

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WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

Stay Informed

- Get information from trusted sources. Get notified by text, email, or phone call in your preferred language. Visit <https://member.everbridge.net/index/406686158291020/#/signup> to sign-up for **AlertsMA** for the latest news on the Commonwealth's response to COVID-19
- Take care of your emotional health:
- Call 2-1-1 and choose the "CALL2TALK" option.
- Samaritans is continuing operations 24/7, as always. During this unprecedented time, it can feel overwhelming to receive constant messages about COVID-19. Call or text their 24/7 helpline any time at 877-870-4673.
- The Disaster Distress Helpline, 1-800-985-5990, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster, including disease outbreaks like COVID-19. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories.

How to Help Out

- [Donate](#) to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund

The Need for Blood Donations Continues, and Recovered COVID-19 Donors Can Help Save Lives

In coordination with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Red Cross is seeking people who are fully recovered from the new coronavirus to sign up to donate plasma to help current COVID-19 patients. People who have fully recovered from COVID-19 have antibodies in their plasma that can attack the virus. This convalescent plasma is being evaluated as treatment for patients with serious or immediately life-threatening COVID-19 infections, or those judged by a healthcare provider to be at high risk of progression to severe or life-threatening condition. Interested individuals can visit [RedCrossBlood.org/plasma4covid](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org/plasma4covid) to learn more. The Red Cross follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and volunteer donors are the only source of blood for those in need. To make an appointment to donate, please visit www.RedCrossBlood.org