

New Bedford police arrest three, seize fentanyl and crack cocaine

On May 19, New Bedford police officers arrested three people and seized more than 25 grams of fentanyl, 18 grams of crack cocaine, \$1,007, and drug paraphernalia.

Police officers executed a search warrant at 128 Sycamore St., Apt. 2, and seized 20 bags of fentanyl weighing more than 25 grams, a digital scale, packaging materials and \$895.

Juan Rivera Montilla, 25, was charged with trafficking, conspiracy, and unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle. Nathaneal Navarro-Ayala, 40, 128 Sycamore St., Apt. #2 was charged with trafficking and conspiracy. Detective Timothy Soares led the investigation.

Also that day, Detectives seized more than 18 grams of crack cocaine and \$112 after witnessing what appeared to be a street-level drug transaction on Hathaway St. near Madeira Ave. Erique R. Monteiro, 33, 71 S. 6th St. was arrested and charged with distribution, trafficking, and conspiracy.

Detective Nathan Pimental and Detective Kevin Barbosa led the arrests.

If you have any information on criminal activity in 2our community, the New Bedford Police Dept. wants to hear from you. You can leave an anonymous tip on our voicemail at (508) 991-6300 Ext. 1.

New Bedford officials report three additional COVID-19 related deaths on Wednesday

New Bedford officials reported three additional COVID-19 related death on Wednesday bringing the total to 52.

Mayor Jon Mitchell's office reported 24 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases in New Bedford on Wednesday, bringing the total positive cases in the city to 1,582, **up from 1,552 on Tuesday.**

Greater New Bedford has six operation COVID-19 testing sites; two in New Bedford, three in Dartmouth, and one in Fairhaven. Details on each location and list of COVID-19 symptoms **here.**

38 additional cases of COVID-19 have been identified in Fall River, according to the Mayor's Office. This brings the total in Fall River to 1,042. The death toll from the coronavirus in Fall River remains at 22. Full details **here.**

With Governor Baker outlining his plan for reopening the state's economy Monday, COVID-19 numbers continue to trend in a positive direction overall. Massachusetts has seen 873 more positive cases in the last 24 hours. A decrease from the previous 24 hour period. Full details **here.**

Democrats grab pair of Senate seats from Republicans in

Massachusetts election

special

Michael P. Norton
State House News Service

Democrats claimed victory in two special elections Tuesday, seizing Senate seats that had long been held by Republicans in races that party chair Gus Bickford said reflected a rejection of President Donald Trump's politics.

John Velis of Westfield prevailed to take the seat that Don Humason gave up after he was elected mayor of that city, and Susan Moran of Falmouth was elected to serve in a district formerly represented by Plymouth Republican Vinny deMacedo.

The wins leave Republicans with just four seats in the 40-member Senate. The party, whose top officeholders in Massachusetts are Gov. Charlie Baker and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito, holds 31 seats in the 160-seat Massachusetts House, where veteran GOP Reps. Randy Hunt and Elizabeth Poirier are not seeking re-election.

Both special elections had been scheduled for March 31 but were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and were carried out with both traditional in-person voting and the use of mail-in voting, an option that lawmakers are weighing for the Sept. 1 primary and Nov. 3 general election.

"Two areas that were strong for Donald Trump a few years ago came back home and voted blue tonight," Democratic Party Chair Gus Bickford said in a statement Tuesday night. "Democrats and independents are united now more than ever, and we will continue to work together through the fall. These two flipped seats are a sign of things to come in a few months."

Moran, an attorney and selectboard member, beat James McMahon

of Bourne, an attorney and supporter of President Trump. McMahon made a bid for state Senate after running in 2018 as the GOP nominee for attorney general, losing that race to Attorney General Maura Healey.

The Cape Cod Times reported that Moran took 55 percent of the vote to 45 percent for McMahon, riding voting margins in Falmouth and Sandwich to victory even though McMahon prevailed in Bourne, Kingston, Pembroke and Plymouth.

Velis, a state representative, veteran and attorney from Westfield, defeated John Cain of Southwick to give the Democrats a seat that had been held for more than two decades by Republicans. Humason had joined the Senate after Republican Michael Knapik, who was elected to the Senate in 1994, gave up the seat.

Moran's win in the Plymouth and Barnstable Senate district enabled the Democrats to take back a seat that was long held by Therese Murray, the former Senate president. In 2014, deMacedo, a longtime state representative, snagged that Senate seat for the Republicans. Last year, deMacedo resigned his Senate seat to take a job at Bridgewater State University.

"Not only is this a great day for Senator-elect Moran, it's a great day for her new constituents and their fellow Bay Staters," said Rebecca Hart Holder, executive director of NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts. "Her victory flipped a seat that had been previously held by a staunch anti-choice politician and prevented it from falling into the hands of another."

On the Horizon

On June 2, voters are scheduled to settle two House special elections to fill seats held until recently by Jennifer Benson of Lunenburg and Shaunna O'Connell of Taunton. Benson left the House to work as president of the Alliance for Business Leadership and O'Connell resigned after being elected as mayor

of her hometown last November.

Democrat Carol Doherty and Republican Kelly Dooner, both of Taunton, are competing in the Third Bristol House district. In the 37th Middlesex district, Democrat Danillo Sena of Acton faces Republican Catherine Clark of Lunenburg.

The deadline for prospective candidates to turn in nomination signatures to qualify for the 2020 ballot passed in early May. Republican officials are still awaiting final certifications, but expect they will be able to run candidates in at about 55 House districts and eight Senate districts.

Republican Party Chairman James Lyons, who lost his House seat to Democrat Tram Nguyen in 2018, told the News Service this month that party officials have their eyes on the seat that Democrat Rep. Theodore Speliotis of Danvers is giving up, and the district covering Tewksbury and Wilmington that is currently represented by Democrat Rep. David Robertson.

The MassGOP is also planning to compete in the 12th Worcester District, where Democrat Rep. Harold Naughton of Clinton is giving up his seat to join a law firm based in New York. Republican State Committeewoman Susan Smiley is running there.

The MassGOP also sees a chance to be competitive against Rep. Jonathan Zlotnik of Gardner, Rep. Kathleen LaNatra of Kingston and Rep. Josh Cutler of Pembroke. And Lyons said he expects to have five or six candidates running in the state's nine Congressional districts and two for U.S. Senate.

Democrats are hoping the turnout surge that accompanies presidential elections will help them build on super-majorities in both branches and return an all-Democrat delegation to Washington D.C.

Supervised drug-use facilities in Massachusetts gets 13 yes votes in committee

Chris Lisinski

State House News Service

More than two-thirds of lawmakers on a legislative committee endorsed a bill that would launch medically supervised drug-use facilities in Massachusetts, underlining what one sponsor described as a long-running effort to overcome discomfort with the controversial but life-saving proposal.

Thirteen of the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Recovery's 19 members supported legislation creating a 10-year pilot program for at least two supervised consumption sites, where individuals could consume controlled substances, including illegal drugs, without threat of arrest and could be revived from any potential overdose or medical emergency.

Four representatives voted against advancing the bill, which now moves to another legislative committee with an uncertain future and opposition from Gov. Charlie Baker. Two senators declined to support or oppose it.

Every lawmaker who backed the committee's redraft (H 4723) is a Democrat, but the vote did not break down exactly along party lines: votes against it came from Republican Reps. William Crocker and Alyson Sullivan, independent Rep. Susannah Whipps and Democratic Rep. Angelo Scaccia, an aide to co-chair

Rep. Marjorie Decker told the News Service.

Fellow co-chair Sen. Julian Cyr's office said that five senators voted in favor of the bill and two reserved their rights, but refused to say which two lawmakers did not take a position.

Of the committee's seven senators, four – Cyr, John Keenan, Cindy Friedman and Brendan Crighton – either cosponsored an earlier version of the legislation or confirmed they voted in support of the rewritten version.

The remaining three, Democratic Sens. Jo Comerford and Walt Timilty and Republican Sen. Patrick O'Connor, [a]could not be reached Tuesday.

The committee's endorsement is a major step for the proposal, which has floated around Beacon Hill for years.

The Senate adopted language calling for a pilot program in its version of a 2018 opioid bill, but dropped it during private negotiations with the House. Both branches set up an expert panel, which included Friedman, to study the idea further.

Supporters argue that supervised consumption facilities, sometimes referred to as safe injection sites, will give people struggling with addiction a safe place to consume heroin or other drugs without risk of overdose.

According to the most recent Department of Public Health data, 2,023 Massachusetts residents are confirmed or suspected to have died from opioid-related overdoses in 2019.

Fentanyl has become increasingly common in overdose cases, and because it is so potent – according to the CDC, it is 50 to 100 times more powerful than morphine – it can trigger a fatal overdose in a matter of seconds. Public health experts who support supervised consumption sites say they allow for immediate intervention with the overdose-reversing drug

naloxone, a timely response that is critical to preventing death.

"This is a notion that makes people really uncomfortable, and I started out being uncomfortable, too," Friedman said in a Tuesday interview. "But then when you look at the data and realize it's not about me, it's not about us, it's about saving people's lives. It's a really important thing to do, and I'm so glad they did it. I think it's a big step."

The committee's bill would pilot at least two sites over the next decade. Any community would need to opt in to open a site.

Drug users would have to acquire substances outside the facilities. Workers would provide sterile syringes and other injection supplies, and they would also refer users to addiction treatment whenever possible.

It is unclear if there is enough support among legislative leaders to bring the proposal to a full vote in either chamber this session, particularly because the COVID-19 pandemic is consuming almost all attention.

Neither House Speaker Robert DeLeo nor Senate President Karen Spilka indicated Tuesday whether they support or oppose the bill, or what their plans may be for the legislation.

"In this time of crisis, we must be very cautious of the most vulnerable around us, and certainly, that includes those struggling with addiction," Spilka said in a statement. "I was pleased to see regulatory rules modified during this public health crisis to streamline the availability of medication assisted treatment and I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue the conversation on the committee proposal."

A DeLeo spokesperson said the bill that cleared the Mental Health Committee "will continue to be reviewed as it goes

through the process.”

Baker previously described the idea as a non-starter – even after the panel chaired by his health and human services secretary, Marylou Sudders, recommended piloting one or more sites as part of a statewide harm-reduction strategy – because U.S. Attorney Andrew Lelling has stressed such facilities would violate federal law and draw enforcement.

In October, a federal judge ruled that Pennsylvania nonprofit Safehouse would not violate the so-called “crack house statute” of the Controlled Substances Act by opening a supervised consumption site in Philadelphia.

One day after the ruling, Lelling said he “respectfully disagrees” with the judge’s decision and renewed his argument that the sites are illegal under federal law. “Efforts to open injection facilities, including here in Massachusetts, will be met with federal enforcement,” he said.

Friedman cited the ruling as a key step toward the committee’s embrace of legislation, and she said she hopes the decision will help bring Baker on board.

“We need to be willing to take a chance,” she said. “I think saving these lives is worth it, and I’m going to try to convince people that if we have to go to court, then we’ll let the courts decide. But I think we have a very, very good argument that this is health care. We’re not encouraging people to use drugs. There’s no data that this encourages people to use drugs. We’re keeping people safe.”

The legislation is now pending before the Health Care Financing Committee that Friedman co-chairs. Since former Rep. Jennifer Benson resigned Jan. 8 to become president of the Alliance for Business Leadership, the committee has lacked a permanent House chair, with several duties falling to Vice Chair Rep. Daniel Cullinane.

Friedman said she is optimistic the committee can advance the supervised consumption legislation even with only one permanent chair.

“We have bills we have to report out, and I hope this can be one of them,” she said. “I would push for it, because I’m very much committed to it.”

Bill calls for rent hike freezes in Massachusetts

Katie Lannan

State House News Service

The Housing Committee on Thursday plans to accept written testimony on a Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa bill that would authorize state- and city- level freezes on rent increases during the COVID-19 state of emergency and for 30 days after state and federal emergency declarations are lifted. Sabadosa’s bill (H 4718) would temporarily suspend the sections of state law prohibiting rent control.

“The Department of Housing and Community Development shall be empowered to issue, maintain, and enforce a rent freeze and/or rent control within the Commonwealth for the duration and 30 days following the COVID-19 state and federal state of emergency declarations of March, 2020,” the bill says. It continues, “A city or town may enact, maintain, or enforce rent freezes and/or rent control for the duration and 30 days following the COVID-19 state and federal state of emergency declarations of March, 2020.” The bill has 29 co-sponsors, including two Republicans – Rep. Elizabeth Poirier and Sen. Patrick O’Connor.

The Housing Committee is accepting testimony by email to Kelly.Mallon@mahouse.gov.

New Bedford officials report 24 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases on Tuesday

Mayor Jon Mitchell's office reported 24 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases in New Bedford on Tuesday, bringing the total positive cases in the city to 1,552, **up from 1,528 on Monday**. New Bedford's COVID-19 related death count remains at 49.

Greater New Bedford has six operation COVID-19 testing sites; two in New Bedford, three in Dartmouth, and one in Fairhaven. Details on each location and list of COVID-19 symptoms **here**.

14 additional cases of COVID-19 have been identified in Fall River, according to the Mayor's Office. This brings the total in Fall River to 1,004. The death toll from the coronavirus in Fall River has also increased to 22. Full details **here**.

With Governor Baker outlining his plan for reopening the state's economy, COVID-19 numbers continue to trend in a positive direction overall. Massachusetts has seen 1,042 more positive cases in the last 24 hours. A decrease from the previous 24 hour period. Full details **here**.

The Baker-Polito Administration released Reopening Massachusetts, the Reopening Advisory Board's report, which details a four-phased strategy to responsibly reopen businesses and activities while continuing to fight COVID-19. Full details **here**.

The ACLU of Massachusetts and the law firm Foley Hoag sued the Bristol County sheriff's office Monday in an attempt to obtain information surrounding a violent altercation between officers and detainees at the Bristol County House of Correction in early May. Full details [here](#).

Recreational marijuana stores will be allowed to reopen for curbside pick-up next Monday, just more than two months after they were ordered to close as part of the essential work order Gov. Charlie Baker put in place to control the spread of COVID-19. Full details [here](#).

ACLU sues Bristol County Sheriff for access to incident recordings

Chris Van Buskirk
State House News Service

The ACLU of Massachusetts and the law firm Foley Hoag sued the Bristol County sheriff's office Monday in an attempt to obtain information surrounding a violent altercation between officers and detainees at the Bristol County House of Correction in early May.

The civil liberties organization filed a public records request on May 7 seeking audiovisual recordings, reports, and other records linked to the May 1 incident, according to a press release from the group. The statement said the sheriff's office issued a "blanket denial" of the request.

"The public deserves to know what happened in Bristol County's

immigration detention facility,” Carol Rose, executive director of the ACLU of Massachusetts, said. “That is especially true when the leader of that government institution has been accused of personal misconduct during the incident, and given ongoing controversy about potentially unsafe conditions there. This oversight should be a foundation upon which we hold sheriffs accountable to the job voters elect them to do, namely preserving public safety.”

The ACLU of Massachusetts has previously called for an independent investigation into the altercation between correction officers and immigrant detainees. Bristol County Sheriff Thomas Hodgson has said the incident began when a group of about 10 Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees refused to be moved for COVID-19 testing, rushed Hodgson and corrections officers, and damaged equipment and walls in the facility.

Three detainees were taken to the hospital at the time, and some of the prisoners have accused Hodgson of assault.

A spokesperson for the Bristol County Sheriff’s Department said the denial of ACLU’s public records request was based on two exemptions in the public records law related to “investigatory material” and documents concerning internal layout and security measures, among other things. The matter remains under investigation by the Sheriff’s Office and the Department of Homeland Security’s Office of the Inspector General, the spokesperson said.

“Disclosure of video and/or photographs of the interior of the secure facility would be akin to releasing the internal layout of the facility, which the statute expressly forbids. Releasing interior videos and/or photographs would jeopardize the operational security required to maintain the effective, safe, and secure operation of the jail,” the department wrote in an emailed response to ACLU, which was provided to the News Service. “It would provide the BCSO’s tactical and strategic

‘playbook’ for responding to emergency situations and inmate/detainee disturbances, which would compromise the BSCO’s ability to respond in a timely, effective and safe manner.”

A Senate Committee announced an investigation into the altercation earlier this month. The Senate Post Audit and Oversight Committee has said its review will focus on both the incident and why a state lawmaker, Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz, was not permitted to enter the facility the day after.

Massachusetts pot stores receive green light to reopen next week

Colin A. Young
State House News Service

Recreational marijuana stores will be allowed to reopen for curbside pick-up next Monday, just more than two months after they were ordered to close as part of the essential work order Gov. Charlie Baker put in place to control the spread of COVID-19.

Though medical marijuana treatment centers have been allowed to fulfill patient orders throughout the pandemic, adult-use cannabis operations – not just retailers, but also the growers and product manufacturers – were shut down effective March 24. Baker said they will be allowed to reopen Monday, May 25, for curbside pickup of orders.

“The whole point behind curbside is it doesn’t require people

to go inside and stand around,” he said. “And there’s plenty of evidence at this point that inside spaces with a long period of time in which people are there, especially if they don’t have the ability to socially distance, is probably the biggest and most significant opportunity for spread.”

Cannabis advocates have been calling on Baker for weeks to allow non-medical marijuana sales to resume, and the chairman of the Cannabis Control Commission has said he thinks the industry could operate safely and effectively. A group representing many of the state’s cannabis retailers said Monday that it is glad Baker is allowing pot stores to be among the first businesses to reopen.

“We appreciate this gesture of confidence by the Administration and believe it is reflective of our industry’s commitment to workplace and consumer safety, as well as our history of compliance and significant regulatory oversight,” David Torrisi, president of the Commonwealth Dispensary Association, said. “In addition to beginning to restore access to safe, tested adult-use cannabis, this determination provides a first step in providing meaningful economic relief to the more than 2,000 Massachusetts cannabis employees who will be able to return to work—workers who otherwise do not qualify for federal relief.”

While adult-use shops have been closed, the CCC has seen a surge in registrations for the medical marijuana program. Though the product is largely identical, the medical program offers several benefits not available in the recreational market: medical marijuana is not taxed, patients can get marijuana delivered to their homes, and patients can buy edibles with higher THC levels than are allowed in the non-medical market.

Governor Baker Initiates Transition to First Phase of Four-Phase Approach

Today, the Baker-Polito Administration released Reopening Massachusetts, the Reopening Advisory Board's report, which details a four-phased strategy to responsibly reopen businesses and activities while continuing to fight COVID-19. The Administration also released a new "Safer At Home" Advisory, which instructs residents to stay at home unless engaging with newly opened activities, as a way to continue limiting the spread of COVID-19. Starting today, based on current public health data and trends, Massachusetts will begin Phase 1 of a cautious reopening, and workplaces that are permitted to open are required to follow new safety protocols and guidance.

Detailed in Reopening Massachusetts, each phase of the reopening will be guided by public health data and key indicators that will be continually monitored for progress and will be used to determine advancement to future phases. Industries, sectors, and activities that present less risk will open in earlier phases. Those that present more risk will open in later phases.

The 17-member Reopening Advisory Board, co-chaired by Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito and Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy, consists of public health experts, municipal leaders and members of the business community representing many facets of the Massachusetts economy. Since its formation on April 28, the Board met with a total of 75 stakeholder groups ranging from industry

associations, regional chambers of commerce, community coalitions, and labor organizations, representing over 112,000 different businesses and more than two million workers across the Commonwealth. The Reopening Advisory Board also considered written comments from over 4,500 employers, organizations, and individuals in the development of its plan.

Safer at Home Advisory:

Effective today, the Department of Public Health also updated the Stay at Home Advisory, replacing it with a new, “Safer at Home” Advisory. The new Safer at Home Advisory instructs everyone to stay home unless they are headed to a newly opened facility or activity. It also advises those over the age of 65 and those with underlying health conditions to stay home with the exception of trips required for health care, groceries, or that are otherwise absolutely necessary. All residents must continue to wear a face covering in public when social distancing is not possible, and individuals are advised to wash their hands frequently and be vigilant in monitoring for symptoms. Restrictions on gatherings of more than 10 people remain in effect.

Public Health Metrics:

Key public health metrics will determine if and when it is appropriate to proceed through reopening phases. They include:

- COVID-19 positive test rate;
- Number of individuals who died from COVID-19;
- Number of patients with COVID-19 in hospitals;
- Health care system readiness;
- Testing capacity;
- Contact tracing capabilities.

Phase 1 Reopening:

Based on the public health metrics, manufacturing facilities and construction sites will open effective today with

applicable guidelines.

Places of worship will be able to open with guidelines that require social distancing and encourage services to be held outdoors.

Hospitals and community health centers that attest to specific public health and safety standards can begin to provide high priority preventative care, pediatric care and treatment for high risk patients.

Under a staggered approach, additional Phase 1 sectors of the economy will be permitted to open effective May 25 including:

Lab space;

- Office space;
- Limited personal services, including: hair salons, pet grooming, car washes;
- Retail: remote fulfilment and curbside pick-up;

Also permitted to open on May 25 with applicable guidelines, are the following:

- Beaches;
- Parks;
- Drive-in movie theaters;
- Select athletic fields and courts;
- Many outdoor adventure activities;
- Most fishing, hunting, and boating;
- Outdoor gardens, zoos, reserves, and public installations.

Additional sectors expected to open on June 1 as part of Phase 1 include office spaces in the city of Boston with applicable guidelines.

Reopening Massachusetts In Phases:

The goal of this phased reopening plan is to methodically allow businesses, services, and activities to resume, while

avoiding a resurgence of COVID-19 that could overwhelm the state's health care system and erase the progress made so far.

Each phase will last a minimum of three weeks and could last longer before moving to the next phase;

If public health data trends are negative, specific industries, regions, and/or the entire Commonwealth may need to return to an earlier phase;

The Commonwealth will partner with industries to draft sector-specific protocols in advance of future phases (example: restaurant-specific protocols will be drafted in advance of Phase 2);

If we all work together to defeat COVID-19, we can proceed through each phase.

Success in earlier phases will refine criteria for future phases including travel, sizes of gatherings, as well as additional retail openings, lodging and accommodations, arts, entertainment, fitness centers, museums, restaurants, youth sports, and other activities.

Industry-Specific Guidance:

Businesses are not required to reopen, and may not do so if they are unable to follow safety protocols. The Baker-Polito Administration has developed specific guidance so that each industry reopens as safely as possible. Businesses are expected to implement these protocols in addition to the more general Mandatory Workplace Safety Standards.

As of May 18, materials for the sectors eligible to open in the first phase of reopening are included on the mass.gov/reopening website. Guidance for sectors opening in later phases will be posted online in advance of those phases.

In order to reopen, businesses must develop a written COVID-19 Control Plan outlining how its workplace will prevent the

spread of COVID-19. Required materials are located on mass.gov/reopening, and include detailed sector-specific circulars and checklists to facilitate compliance.

Self-Certification for Businesses:

Required materials for businesses to self-certify are located on mass.gov/reopening, and include:

- COVID-19 Control Plan template, which must be retained on premises and provided in the event of an inspection;
- Compliance Attestation poster to be posted in a location visible to employees and visitors indicating a completed COVID-19 Control Plan; and,
- Other posters and signs describing rules for maintaining social distancing, hygiene protocols, as well as cleaning and disinfecting.

Businesses operating to provide Essential Services, as defined in the Governor's March 23, 2020 Executive Order, updated on March 31, April 28, and May 15, may remain open and have until May 25, 2020 to comply with the general workplace safety standards, as well as their industry's sector-specific protocols.

Health Care:

Effective May 18, hospitals and community health centers who attest to meeting specific capacity criteria and public health/safety standards will be allowed to resume a limited set of in-person preventative, diagnostic and treatment services.

Effective May 25, other health care providers who attest to meeting these standards may resume limited in-person services.

Services that may be performed are limited, based on the provider's clinical judgment to high-priority preventative services, including pediatric care, immunizations, and chronic

disease care for high-risk patients, and urgent procedures that cannot be delivered remotely and would lead to high risk or significant worsening of the patient's condition if deferred.

In order for the phased in hospital expansion and non-hospital reopening, the following statewide metrics must be met:

- 30 percent of hospital ICU beds (including staffed surge capacity) must be available;
- 30 percent of total hospital beds (including staffed surge capacity) must be available.

As a precursor, health care providers must meet the following requirements to reopen or expand services, which include:

- Attesting to public health standards and specific guidelines;
- Ensuring adequate personal protective equipment is on hand, reliable supply chain and other supplies and policies in place;
- Infection control readiness (workflow, cleaning, social distancing, etc.);
- Workforce and patient screening and testing protocols; and,
- Hospitals must have ≥ 25 percent ICU and total bed capacity and reopen pediatric ICU and psychiatric beds if they had been repurposed for surge capacity.

Child Care:

The Commonwealth's mission in reopening is to increase access to child care and youth programs while continuing to protect children and staff and preventing the spread of COVID-19. Child care and summer recreation camps will reopen in a phased approach. The Departments of Early Education and Care and Public Health are developing guidelines that balance families' need for child care with health and safety. The initial reopening plan will focus on families who have no safe alternative to group care by increasing emergency child care

capacity. EEC will also partner with industries returning to work to develop options specific to their workplaces.

In March, the Baker-Polito Administration stood up an emergency child care system to support children of essential workers and vulnerable families with extra virus mitigation protocols. During Phase 1, the emergency child care system we have already in place will be utilized to meet the needs of people with no alternatives for care. Currently, only 35% of the 10,000 child emergency child care capacity is occupied and the system has the ability to serve more families to provide care options as more sectors come back online.

Transit:

The MBTA has been and will continue to implement measures to slow the spread of COVID-19 across the system to keep employees and riders safer.

While public transportation unavoidably creates some risk of transmission, working together the MBTA, riders and employers can significantly reduce that risk:

- Riders are required to wear face coverings and must make efforts to distance. Riders are asked to avoid riding transit if they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19;
- Employers are encouraged to stagger schedules and implement work from home policies to reduce demand, especially during rush hours;
- The MBTA will continue to take protective and preventative measures such as frequently disinfecting and cleaning vehicles and stations and providing protective supplies to workers.

To mitigate risk while providing appropriate levels of service, the MBTA will:

- Support the transit needs of essential workers and those returning to the workplace in Phase 1 while continuing with limited service to maximize employee and rider safety;

- Ramp up to a modified version of full service by Phase 3, although social distancing efforts will limit effective capacity on vehicles even after full service schedules are restored;
- Actively communicate public health guidance and schedule adjustments in-station, online, and over social media.

Supplies:

In order to operate, all Massachusetts businesses will need to meet the Mandatory Workplace Safety Standards and relevant Sector-Specific Protocols published by the state. To support businesses, the state has developed a guide to educate business owners on what supplies are needed to return to workplaces, and a portal to connect businesses with manufacturers and distributors. These are now available to business owners via mass.gov/reopening.

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□ The state has developed a guide to educate business owners on what supplies are needed to return to workplaces, and a portal to connect businesses with manufacturers and distributors.

Educational materials will be provided to define how an employer should prepare their work spaces to reopen and what products are appropriate for employees to protect themselves at work.

While face coverings are critical, medical grade face coverings are not necessary for non-health care workers.

Schools and Higher Education:

As previously announced, Massachusetts' K-12 school buildings will remain closed through the end of the 2019-20 school year, with remote teaching and learning in place.

Schools will continue offering essential non-educational services to their communities. Plans are being made for the summer learning programs and 2020-21 school year, and will be shared with the public in the weeks to come.

Massachusetts' diverse higher education institutions continue to foster teaching, learning, student support, and essential research remotely throughout this time.

They are working together and in partnership with the state to ensure a safe and gradual return to campus life. In the upcoming weeks, institutions will develop customized reopening plans with safety of their communities in mind.

New Bedford officials report 91 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases since Saturday

New Bedford health officials reported one additional COVID-19 related deaths today bringing the city's total death count to 49.

Mayor Jon Mitchell's office reported 91 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases in New Bedford on Monday, bringing the total positive cases in the city to 1,528, **up from 1,437 on Saturday**. New Bedford officials do not report COVID-19 data on Sundays.

Greater New Bedford has six operation COVID-19 testing sites; two in New Bedford, three in Dartmouth, and one in Fairhaven. Details on each location and list of COVID-19 symptoms **[here](#)**.

The City of New Bedford is offering a mask to any New Bedford

resident who wants one at no cost, at a series of drive-through distribution events in late May and June. Full details **here**.

25 additional cases of COVID-19 have been identified in Fall River, according to the Mayor's Office. This brings the total in Fall River to 990. The death toll from the coronavirus in Fall River remains at 20. Full details **here**.

Massachusetts is on its way to reopening the state's economy with a detailed plan Gov. Charlie Baker is scheduled to unveil on Monday under which construction projects can resume immediately and some businesses can reopen on May 25 with public health restrictions in place. Full details **here**.

Cambridge-based Moderna Therapeutics is investing in manufacturing capacity in hopes of producing millions of doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, the company said Monday as it announced positive results from the first phase of its vaccine clinical trials. Full details **here**.