

Boston Mayor: Nearly half of our positive COVID-19 tests are people under 40

As of April 5, there are 1,877 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Boston residents, representing an increase of 259 cases from the previous day. Public health modeling indicates that Boston is only 11 days away from peak demand for hospital resources, an estimate that emphasizes the critical need to flatten the curve immediately.



“I cannot stress enough that the actions we take now through the next several weeks will help curb the spread of this virus, and save lives,” said Boston Mayor Marty Walsh. “There is nothing that I won’t do as Mayor of the City of Boston to protect our residents, and at this very critical time, we must do everything we can as Bostonians to protect one another. This is bigger than any one person – this is about the greater good of our people. Stay safe, stay inside, and let’s get through this together.”

To date, nearly 45 percent of positive tests in Boston are in people under the age of 40 and more cases of severe illness are now being seen in young people. Further, nearly 80 percent of positive tests are in people under the age of 60. The CDC estimates that nationally 25 percent of people infected with COVID-19 are asymptomatic, and may not know they are a carrier of the virus, or that they could be infecting others. As of April 5, 15 residents of Boston have died from COVID-19.

Social and physical distancing remain the primary strategy to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The new measures that Mayor Walsh is putting into place strengthen the guidance previously issued around social and physical distancing, which include

staying home as much as possible and maintaining a distance of 6 feet or more from others. These new measures will be effective on Monday, April 6 through Monday, May 4, 2020, and include:

Encouraging everyone to wear a face-covering over their mouth and nose when in public:

- In addition to social distancing when going out in public for an essential trip, wearing face covers will help to reduce the risk of a person spreading the virus, especially if they do not know they are sick. Face coverings should be worn anytime someone is outside the home, including on walks or other passive recreational activities.

Face coverings should not be placed on children under 2 years of age, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance.

- Face coverings can include a cloth, scarf, bandana, etc. that cover a person's mouth and nose. Homemade face coverings should be made of intact, close-weave cloth and allow comfortable breathing. Visit CDC guidelines on face coverings for more information and guidance.

- Face coverings should be frequently washed using a washing machine with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. They can also be hand washed with soap and warm water and left to dry.

- It is advised that residents use a face covering, as opposed to a medical grade facemasks, in order to preserve protective equipment for health workers and those serving on the front lines in response to COVID-19.

The Boston Public Health Commission is issuing a Public Health Advisory for everyone in Boston except essential workers to stay at home from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. daily:

- This advisory will address unnecessary trips to businesses, restaurants, and other locations, and is intended to encourage

people to stay inside their homes at night.

- Residents are encouraged to utilize delivery services as much as possible after 9 p.m.

- As a reminder, residents are encouraged to remain in their homes as much as possible throughout the day and only leave for essential needs, including trips to the grocery store, pharmacy, emergency meal sites and other essential services. Residents are discouraged from visiting essential businesses only to browse and should be mindful of only visiting essential businesses to pick-up essential items.

Closing City parks with recreational sports areas:

- Recreational sports areas in City parks, such as courts and fields, will be closed to limit exposure and contact between people. As a reminder, all playgrounds in Boston have been closed since March 20, 2020 and will remain closed. Areas for passive recreation, like walking and jogging, will remain open.

- Additional signage will be posted on all recreational sports areas and outside of parks that will be closed. For a full list of park features that are closed, please visit the Parks updates webpage.

- If needed, Boston Police are empowered to disperse gatherings and they can order people to vacate closed sections of parks.

Recommendations for people who are at higher risk:

- For people over 65 and those with underlying health conditions, the City of Boston encourages taking extra precautions. Trips outside the house should only be made when absolutely necessary, for either food or medications. Those experiencing difficulty with access to food, please call 311 or visit our food resources page for assistance.

- In addition, taking walks or spending time outside is discouraged for the next few weeks, and exercising inside the home instead is encouraged as an alternative.

– The underlying health conditions that can put someone more at risk are very common and include asthma, diabetes, heart conditions, kidney or liver disease or conditions that can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment and smoking.

– In Boston, over 11 percent of adults have asthma, and the rate is higher in black (15 percent) and Latino (12 percent) residents, as well as in Dorchester and Roxbury (15 percent each). One in four Boston public high school students have asthma, according to the Boston Public Health Commission.