

Gov. Baker orders use of mask or face covering in public

The Baker-Polito Administration today issued an order requiring the use of masks or face coverings in public places where they cannot socially distance from others. The Administration also announced expanded community health center COVID-19 testing capacity at centers throughout the Commonwealth.

Mask and Face Covering Order: The Baker-Polito Administration has ordered all residents over the age of two to use a face covering or mask in public places where maintaining proper social distancing measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are not possible. This statewide order goes into effect on May 6th and supersedes previously issued guidance relative to mask use.

This order applies to all workers and customers of businesses and other organizations that are currently open to the public and permitted to operate as COVID-19 Essential Businesses, such as grocery stores, pharmacies and other retail stores. Residents are also required to wear a mask or face covering at all times when using any means of transportation service or public mass transit.

A face covering may include anything that covers your nose and mouth, including a mask, scarf or bandana. Health care masks should not be used and should be preserved for health care workers and first responders. Cloth masks should not be worn by young children under the age of two, persons with difficulty breathing, or those who are unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. Instructions on how to make a cloth mask are available from the CDC [here](#).

Community Health Care Center COVID-19 Testing: In continued partnership with Quest Diagnostics and the Mass League of Community Health Centers, the Baker-Polito Administration today announced further expansion of COVID-19 testing at additional centers throughout the Commonwealth.

This testing expansion builds upon the previously announced increased testing, bringing the total to 18 Community Health Centers. The new facilities that will begin or expand testing include:

Lynn Community Health Center

Holyoke Health Center

North Shore Community Health Center

South Boston Community Health Center

Community Health Center of Franklin County

New Bedford reports three more COVID-19 related deaths, total reached 19

Mayor Jon Mitchell's office Friday reported 27 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases in New Bedford, bringing the total positive cases in the city to 625, **up from 598 on Thursday**. Three additional COVID-19 related deaths were reported today raising the total to 19 in the city.

The Greater New Bedford Community Health Center will expand its COVID-19 testing capability by establishing an outdoor

testing location at its downtown health center. Full details **here**.

New Bedford Solid Waste Transfer Station open extended hours for bulky items and yard waste through May 18. Full details **here**.

On April 30, the Massachusetts Public Health Department reported that the state added 1,940 more positive cases of COVID-19 bringing to total to 62,205. This is a decrease from Wednesday's 1,963 reported cases. Full details **here**.

Nearly 900,000 Massachusetts workers, representing almost a quarter of the state's entire labor force, have filed new claims for unemployment benefits since mid-March as the COVID-19 pandemic and the widespread shutdowns it prompted continue to exert an economic toll. Full details **here**.

Three Bristol County security staff members recently tested positive for COVID-19. Full details **here**.

5 additional cases of COVID-19 have been identified in Fall River, according to Mayor Coogan. This brings the total in Fall River to 509. Full details **here**.

Rhode Island's nurses and doctors are rejoicing after Governor Raimondo secured 500,000 medical gowns from Fall River's Merrow Sewing Machine Company. In a press conference on Tuesday, Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo thanked Merrow Sewing Machine Company owners and brothers Charlie and Owen Merrow personally. Full details **here**.

Greater New Bedford Community Health Center expands COVID-19 testing capability

The Greater New Bedford Community Health Center will expand its COVID-19 testing capability by establishing an outdoor testing location at its downtown health center.

The state has designated community health centers across Massachusetts, including the Greater New Bedford Community Health Center, as expanded testing sites.

Those experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19 can be tested through their doctor or healthcare provider. To be tested at the Community Health Center, an appointment must also be made, by calling 508-992-6553.

The GNBCHC was previously able to offer an average of 20 tests a day at the health center, operating under stringent sanitation and social distancing requirements. By moving to an outdoor testing location with more space, the GNBCHC will be in a position to offer up to 50 tests a day beginning Monday, May 4. The expanded testing designation by Governor Baker, the GNBCHC continues to receive test kits and will aim to further increase capacity if demand increases.

“The Greater New Bedford Community Health Center has played a leading role in the response to COVID-19 in New Bedford and the region, and I thank the Baker-Polito Administration for distributing tests to the state’s community health centers. I’m grateful for the support of the GNBCHC staff for their commitment to expand their testing, and for the thoughtful, experienced leadership of Cheryl Bartlett, a tremendous asset to Greater New Bedford,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell.

“We were pleased to be selected by the Baker Administration to

increase our testing capacity in New Bedford,” said Cheryl Bartlett, CEO of the Greater New Bedford Community Health Center. “With almost 25,000 patients getting their primary care at the Greater New Bedford Health Center, having expanded testing capacity will better meet the needs of those we serve. We are working closely with the Mayor and his team to coordinate efforts to address the Coronavirus pandemic in the city.”

Mattel launches #ThankYouHeroes Collection with proceeds support frontline healthcare workers

Mattel launched action figures representing nurses, doctors, EMT’s and delivery drivers with the net proceeds going to “providing essential supplies, equipment, and resources for protecting frontline healthcare workers and their families.”

From Mattel:

“Here’s how it works. Beginning April 29, 2020 through May 31, 2020, when you purchase one or more of #ThankYouHeroes collection items online, the net proceeds from the sale of each item you purchase will be donated to #FirstRespondersFirst, a fund dedicated to providing essential supplies, equipment and resources for protecting frontline healthcare workers and their families. Click [here](#) for additional terms.”

Full details [here](#).

New Bedford's Community Foundation awards 2nd round of grants from the SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund

The Community Foundation's SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund is focusing on the needs of those in our community most severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and supporting nonprofits on the frontlines of this response. Today, we are announcing \$325,000 in unrestricted operating grants to nonprofits throughout the SouthCoast region.

This second round of grants from the Fund was made possible, in part, through the Community Foundation's partnership with the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund. The Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund supports those across the state most impacted by the COVID-19 health crisis, focusing on essential frontline workers and vulnerable populations including the homeless, immigrant populations, people with disabilities and those facing food security. The Fund works in concert with regional community foundations and non-profit leaders who partner with local leaders to understand the response and relief landscape, strategically filling in where gaps are pronounced. For more information, visit MACovid19ReliefFund.org.

"Too many in our community are experiencing significant challenges in accessing food as a result of the pandemic, so we are very proud to support the great efforts of organizations, big and small, to provide this basic need. Additionally, our Community Health Centers represent the best

of our community's ability to care for its most vulnerable – we are proud to be able to support them. We are particularly excited to work with the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund on behalf of the residents of Southeastern Massachusetts – the impact of the pandemic has been significant in our region and we appreciate this partnership”, said John Vasconcellos, President of the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts.

In the past three weeks the Community Foundation has granted more than \$800,000 to nonprofits on the frontlines of this pandemic from the SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund. To date, the Fund has raised more than \$1.6 million from a wide range of corporate donors, foundations, and individuals, in response to the Community Foundation's call to come together on behalf of our community. Major donors of the SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund include:

Amelia Peabody Charitable Fund, BankFive Fund, Barr Foundation, BayCoast Bank, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Bristol County Savings Bank Charitable Foundation, Carney Family Charitable Foundation, Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation, Greater Fall River Development Corporation, HarborOne Bank, Island Foundation, Karina Foundation, Manton Foundation, Montigny Children's Equity & Empowerment Fund, Plimoth Investment Advisors, Prime Buchholz, Rockland Trust Bank, Schrafft Charitable Trust, Van Sloun Foundation, Wagner Foundation, many generous donors with donor advised funds held with the Community Foundation, and local residents.

The second-round of grants totaling \$325,000 has focused on the increased challenge of food security and to strengthen those health organizations working with our most vulnerable populations. Together, these organizations help deliver vital services and share a commitment to serve their community. Among the grantees, Citizens for Citizens Inc. of Fall River, knows the issues around food security that have significantly

increased due to COVID-19. Providing food to 600+ households each month, they have been struggling to access food and basic necessity supplies as there have been such unprecedented increases in local demand.

“I cannot thank the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts enough for their generous grant to help us provide food to those who have been impacted by this pandemic.” Said Elizabeth Berube, Executive Director of Citizens for Citizens Inc. of Fall River. “Without this support, we would not be able to serve the additional families who are facing food security due to their recent loss of income and limited access to food sources. Citizens for Citizens, Inc. has been responding since day one operating our food pantry to those who need us the most in this time of devastation.”

Greater New Bedford Community Health Center, Inc. also received a grant from the Fund. Cheryl Bartlett, CEO of Greater New Bedford Community Health Center, Inc. said “I am very grateful for the generosity of donors to the Community Foundation Emergency Response Fund that has provided us with badly needed resources to help us continue COVID-19 care and support for the region’s most vulnerable populations. Every grant and donation we receive helps to insure we will be here for our patients not only today but for the foreseeable future. On behalf of those we serve I am deeply moved and thankful for this help.”

Among the grantees, Kelly O’Connor, Human Resources Generalist of M.O. L.I.F.E. Inc. said “These funds will help the M.O. FOOD = L.I.F.E. Food Pantry to meet the increasing need for nutrition in the greater New Bedford area. This pantry has fed over 600 families in the month of April as local residents are experiencing loss of work and wages. We expect this upward trend to continue over the next few months. The pantry will be there to help. Additionally, this award will help us to adequately compensate and protect our devoted front-line

direct care staff who continue to provide essential and support services to individuals with developmental disabilities during a frightening and isolating time in all our lives— especially in the lives of the vulnerable.”

Details of each grantee’s work can be found listed below. Grants for general operating support ranging from \$1,000 to \$50,000 were distributed to the following organizations:

Grantees:

- ADH Food Pantry at Church of Our Savior
- Angels Anonymous Inc.
- Apostolic Faith Ministries, Inc. House of Hope
- Bristol Community College Foundation
- Catholic Social Services of Fall River, Inc.
- Citizens for Citizens, Inc.
- Coastline Elderly Services, Inc.
- Grace Episcopal Church of New Bedford
- Greater Fall River Community Food Pantry
- Greater New Bedford Community Health Center, Inc.
- HealthFirst Family Care Center
- M.O. L.I.F.E
- Marion Institute
- My Brother’s Keeper
- PACE, Inc.
- Saint Anne’s Food Pantry
- Seven Hills Behavioral Health
- The Salvation Army Fall River
- The Salvation Army New Bedford
- The Shepherd’s Pantry
- United Neighbors of Fall River
- United Way of Greater New Bedford
- YMCA Southcoast

How to give

You can help those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic by supporting our region’s nonprofits on the front lines.

Donations to the SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund may be made online here.

For general questions and inquiries about the Fund, please direct your inquiry to emergencyfund@cfsema.org. If you are an interested partner or would like to make a donation, please contact the Community Foundation's Development Manager, Tricia Grime at pgrime@cfsema.org. Lastly, for media inquiries and interview requests, please contact Jasmyrn Baird at jbaird@cfsema.org.

About the Community Foundation

Our Community. Your Foundation. Since 1995, area residents have been turning to the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts to make their philanthropic giving as effective as possible. The Community Foundation is a public charity serving thousands of people who share a common concern – improving the quality of life in Southeastern Massachusetts.

To date, the Community Foundation has distributed over \$25 million from over 175 funds to humanitarian, educational and cultural organizations in the region. More information about the Foundation can be found at www.cfsema.org.

Three Bristol County security staff members recently tested positive for COVID-19

The first is a corrections officer who felt ill and went home sick in the middle of his second shift on Sunday, April 19. He

was notified of a positive test on Friday, April 24.

The second is a lieutenant who was last at the facility on Monday, April 20. She began feeling ill during her days off on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 21st and 22nd, and took a COVID-19 test. She was notified of a positive test on Friday the 24th.

The third is a corrections officer who was last at the facility on Tuesday, April 21. He was off Wednesday and Thursday, the 22nd and 23rd, during which time he felt ill. He took a test on Saturday the 25th and received notification of a positive test on Sunday, April 26.

Currently, six Bristol County Sheriff's Office staff members are away from the facility recovering from COVID-19. Four others have fully recovered and returned to duty.

"Each of our team members who has tested positive for COVID-19 has either recovered or is expected to be fine," Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson said. "We have hundreds of essential works here every day on every shift as our correctional facilities keep running, and our team is doing an amazing job in these extremely challenging times."

Currently, no one incarcerated in a Bristol County corrections facility has tested positive for the virus. Fifteen prisoners, some symptomatic and some in close proximity to symptomatic individuals, have tested negative.

Over the past month, the Bristol County Sheriff's Office has instituted many protocols to protect inmates, detainees and staff from the Coronavirus outbreak. Some of those measures include:

- All employees were given masks that must be worn inside the secure perimeter of our facilities. All inmates and detainees have also been given masks to wear for protection.
- All areas of the facility are being cleaned\disinfected

every day on every shift.

- All staff members are being screened before entering the buildings; new arriving inmates are being screened before being accepted into custody.
 - In-person visitation has been suspended to limit the number of people coming in and out.
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Massachusetts reports 1,940 new COVID-19 cases on Thursday

Massachusetts Coronavirus Update



On April 30, the Massachusetts Public Health Department reported that the state added 1,940 more positive cases of COVID-19 bringing to total to 62,205. This is a decrease from Wednesday's 1,963 reported cases.

157 new COVID-19 related deaths were reported on Thursday bringing the total deaths in Massachusetts to 3,562. As of 4 pm today, 275,647 people in Massachusetts have been tested for COVID-19 – 10,029 new tests since yesterday.

Gov. Charlie Baker said Wednesday that he generally agrees with federal officials who suggested COVID-19 deaths are probably being undercounted in the hardest hit states, including Massachusetts, and he said the state is making an effort to get a more precise count. Full details [here](#).

New Bedford Coronavirus Update

Mayor Jon Mitchell's office Thursday reported 17 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases in New Bedford, bringing the total positive cases in the city to 598, **up from 581 on Wednesday**. No additional COVID-19 related deaths were reported today keeping the total at 16 in the city.

Fall River Coronavirus Update

25 additional cases of COVID-19 have been identified in Fall River, according to Mayor Coogan. This brings the total in Fall River to 509. Full details [here](#).

Rhode Island's nurses and doctors are rejoicing after Governor Raimondo secured 500,000 medical gowns from Fall River's Merrow Sewing Machine Company. In a press conference on Tuesday, Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo thanked Merrow Sewing Machine Company owners and brothers Charlie and Owen Merrow personally. Full details [here](#).

New Bedford reports 17 additional COVID-19 cases

Mayor Jon Mitchell's office Thursday reported 17 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases in New Bedford, bringing the total positive cases in the city to 598, **up from 581 on Wednesday**. No additional COVID-19 related deaths were reported today keeping the total at 16 in the city.

36 additional cases of COVID-19 have been identified in Fall River, according to Mayor Coogan. This brings the total in Fall River to 484. The City has been notified of its fifth fatality due to COVID-19. Full details [here](#).

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On April 29, the Massachusetts Public Health Department reported that the state added 1,963 more positive cases of COVID-19 bringing to total to 60,265. This is an increase from Tuesday's 1,840 reported cases. Full details [here](#).

Gov. Charlie Baker said Wednesday that he generally agrees with federal officials who suggested COVID-19 deaths are probably being undercounted in the hardest hit states, including Massachusetts, and he said the state is making an effort to get a more precise count. Full details [here](#).

OPINION: “‘Overkill’ and ‘fear-mongering’ come to mind to describe the self-appointed COVID Czars during this Soviet-style event”

“As one of the multitudes of professionals and employees who have been deemed “nonessential” by the power-hungry, self-thought-of-as “almighty”, self-appointed “COVID Czars”, a very glaring reality has become apparent to me and should have become apparent to the rest of the population: the shutdown and “furlough”/lay-off of so-called “nonessential” businesses and workers has lead to a Great Recession of epic proportions.

It could be called the second Great Depression since unemployment claims have exceeded the last Great Depression levels at more than 30 million claims. And that is claims, which does not account for those who have not filed unemployment claims. Yet, the shutdown businesses and furloughed/laid-off workers are deemed “nonessential”, even when this has had far-reaching and severe economic consequences to the country at large and every state and a majority of their municipalities.

I for one, am far beyond extraordinarily sick and tired of all the, "We're all sacrificing" and "We're in this together" rhetoric in advertising, in the media, and by the talking heads. Yes, I acknowledge all the health care, first responders, grocery, and food (from farming/growing/processing to shipping to selling) workers are all doing a stellar job. And it's most appreciated. But I'm taking a different tact here that has not been given attention at all.

Let's face the harsh reality. Money matters a lot, especially in this country that places such an extremely high value on and has the highest regard for money and unbridled capitalism. So the many people who are still working, still receiving their paycheck, are not sacrificing anything financially.

To add insult to injury there are many non-emergency/law-enforcement/public-infrastructure/public-health civil servant employees who have been "furloughed" with pay; they are actually on paid vacations at the expense of taxpayers, and, it's causing greater exacerbation of the current financial hardship to towns, counties, and states in this time of extreme loss of tax revenue due to the furlough/lay-off of "nonessential" workers and shut down of "nonessential" businesses.

Ultimately, it is the "nonessential" workers and businesses who are paying the heaviest price financially and will continue to have the burden of those financial effects for months, even years to come for some people, due to this shutdown and furlough/lay-off.

As far as all the bloviating about the "lethal" coronavirus, I suggest looking closely at the back of your little antiseptic wipes bottle/container. Surely, you will find a statement similar to, "Kills human coronavirus". That wipes canister was probably manufactures more than six months ago. Whether "human" or "novel" coronavirus, it is still a "coronavirus". So why all the uproar over coronavirus because it is so

virulent and “lethal”? I truly think the full story of coronavirus’ high level of virulence, lethality and severity of infection caused in “certain individuals” {italics mine} has been avoided in most reporting.

“Those with pre-existing conditions” are most susceptible and suffer the most, is continually said. But what has been completely omitted in this rhetoric is just what causes those pre-existing conditions. Realize two main facts about this: One, that those pre-existing conditions primarily make up what are termed, “lifestyle diseases”, which are at or near epidemic levels in the population in this country. Two, the vast majority of lifestyle caused diseases and conditions seriously compromise a person’s immunity.

So, in the vast majority of COVID cases (and yes there are exceptions!), is there the possibility and how high is the probability that lifestyle caused diseases and conditions are the primary factors in causing greater susceptibility to coronavirus’ severe effects and symptoms? Yes, and high? {hearing crickets chirp}

“Overkill”, “extreme”, “fear-mongering”, and a host of other adjectives come to mind to describe all that is being conjured up by the COVID Czars during this Soviet-style event. After the decades of chicanery engaged in and myriads of lies on myriads of issues at all levels of government from all parties of all administrations, this unceasing fear-mongering and these overly extreme “orders” imposed on the public, are the coup de gras for me.

My regard and respect for all *politeers* aka political privateers/pirates, their appointed minions, and, everything concerning politics, has fallen far, far below zero. No longer will I follow, read about or engage in conversations about politics or *politeers* on any level for even a second. And since I am deemed a “nonessential” worker by these “oh so great” COVID Czars, my vote must also be considered

“nonessential”.

So I will never again vote in any election on any level, even insisting that the City Clerk unregister me to vote.

As far as I am concerned, these power-hungry, self-thought of as “almighty”, self-appointed “COVID Czars” and their minions can take just one action that results in really good for the public. That is, when they pass from this earth.

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Sincerely,
David Robinson
New Bedford MA

David was a practicing chiropractor for just over 30 years, and has been a nationally certified personal fitness trainer for more than 23 years.”