

Mayor O'Connell: 21 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Taunton

Today, Mayor Shaunna O'Connell announced that, as of Thursday, March 26, there are 21 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Taunton.

"Taunton residents should not panic but should take very seriously all the directives and advisories that have been put in place to protect the public and stop the spread of COVID-19. Our priority is to keep the public informed and safe. Our Emergency Task Force Team meets via teleconference daily to continue our coordinated response to this public health emergency," said O'Connell.

Taunton Health Department officials were notified by DPH of the positive test results. The individuals are being contacted and informed of self-isolating requirements. State and Federal privacy laws prohibit any further information being disseminated.

"The Board of Health is working closely with the Mayor and key officials in the City on the COVID-19 response, but we need the public to do their part to help keep everyone safe. Please listen and adhere to the advisories regarding staying at home, unless you are going out for necessities. It is extremely important that if you are confirmed to have COVID-19 you adhere to the isolation requirements, and if you are a close contact of a confirmed case, you must adhere to the quarantine requirements. Everyone can do their part in terms of reducing the spread of COVID-19 within the City of Taunton," said Heather Gallant, BOH Director.

Updated information continues to be made available on the City of Taunton website, social media, local cable, and to local media. Due to the rapidly changing nature of circumstances, residents are encouraged to check frequently for updates.

"There is a lot of helpful information on our City website, so people should check it regularly. We also continue to give daily Video Updates and E-Alert updates," O'Connell stated. "We need the public to strictly adhere to all directives and advisories."

Directives in place in the city are as follows:

- The Governor has ordered schools to remain closed and re-open on May 4.
- Playgrounds and basketball courts are closed to the public. People should not engage in pick-up sports games that require close contact.
- Certain gatherings of more than 10 people are prohibited. There are limitations and exceptions regarding the prohibition on gatherings of more than 10 people. The complete regulation regarding prohibited gatherings is available here: <https://www.mass.gov/.../march-23-assemblage-guidance/download>.
- City buildings, TMLP, and the library are closed to the public until April 7. Residents are encouraged to make payments online and conduct other business online as permitted. The secure drop-box outside of City Hall may be used to drop off bill payments and other documents. Do not drop off cash. If you require assistance from a city department, call 508.821.1000.
- All non-essential physical workplaces and facilities ("brick and mortar premises") are ordered to remain closed to workers, customers and the public from 12:00 noon on March 24, 2020, at least through 12:00 noon on April 7, 2020. Essential services such as grocery stores, pharmacies, hospitals, healthcare facilities, gas stations, public transit, restaurants that offer takeout and delivery, police departments, and other essential operations will remain open while the advisory is in effect.
- Individuals are strongly advised to stay home and only go out for necessities.