

Mount Washington Board of Health

Information on the Outbreak of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Updated as of July 12, 2020.

Mount Washington's statistics remain excellent. This does **NOT** mean that this health crisis is over. With increased group activity comes increased risk. Please, take the precautions seriously. Limit social interaction that does not comply with the 6-foot distancing and/or masks. Just because they are at your family barbeque does not mean that they (and you) are not at risk. Most of the new cases of COVID-19 are from close contact with friends or family members who have not been living with you and many are the result of parties where people are mixing without paying attention to the protocols.

If you feel ill, call your health care provider before you go into the office, or you have questions and cannot get ahold of your healthcare provider and you feel you may be infected, call the BHS (Berkshire Health Systems) hotline. By calling this number, you will be contacting a health care professional who will interview you and give you instructions on what to do. This is the most efficient way to get help. The number is: **855-BMC-LINK (855-262-5465)**

If none of the above options work for you, call Ellie Lovejoy (413 528-1798) at any time and I will see that you get the help you need. Any contact with the Board of Health is confidential.

If you have ANY OTHER health emergency, do NOT hesitate to call 911. Our local and regional emergency centers are well equipped and ready to take care of emergencies. Do not wait.

The website for the latest information from the Massachusetts Department of Health [mass.gov/covid19](https://www.mass.gov/covid19). The MDPH website is updated every day with the necessary information, as is the CDC website. Should you have any questions, click on the hyper-links in the text and it will take you to further explanation. Please call us if you have more questions – we will be happy to assist.

For the latest on case counts in the United States, visit the [CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov). In order to be respectful of an individual's right to privacy, the Mount Washington Board of Health will not publish information regarding positive cases within the town. Any information you may bring to the Board's attention will be treated with the utmost respect to privacy.

Quarantine requirements are still in place for those who are traveling from any area **except** for Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, New York, and New Jersey. If you are traveling from Massachusetts be sure to check other state's requirements for entry. Currently, we do not have open access to Maine.

As we continue to move into Phase 3, please keep in mind that more activity means more exposure for those who are in the high-risk categories. We have certainly seen a tremendous amount of traffic at the State Park sites. Please stay very aware of maintaining personal space (6-foot distancing) whether you are on a trail, simply walking or in a retail store. Please be

respectful and patient of retail establishment's attempts to comply with all of the Governor's directives. The good news is that on the 10th, the Governor lifted the ban on reusable bags at the grocery store. As of Monday, July 13th you may bring your reusable bag into stores and use them. Protocols may be different at different stores, so please be respectful and make sure your bags are clean.

Schools are on track for opening for the fall semester. Please stay informed through your individual school or district for requirements and schedule. We recommend that your children not travel out of the area for the two weeks before public schools open. Observe the social distancing and mask requirements for both you and your children.

Restaurants may have table service – inside and outside – with many restrictions. Again, please be patient and courteous. As we look forward to now enjoying children's sports, outside entertainment and the like, remember that everyone is working hard to make a successful transition.

Right now we are being told that Phase 4 will not engage until there is a medical solution to this very contagious disease.

Governor Baker's order requiring face coverings in public places where social distancing is not possible is also still in place. **The best insurance against contamination from a non-symptomatic carrier is Social Distancing and Washing Your Hands with Soap and Hot Water and NOT Touching Your Face.** The order specifically states that all persons are strongly discouraged from using medical-grade masks.

You have an obligation to make sure that the mask is appropriate and cared for in a way that keeps it safe for you and others. Therefore, there are several things to keep in mind when you are using a procedure mask (professional or home-made). The mask must cover BOTH your nose and your mouth. It must be replaced if it becomes damp or soiled from you having sneezed or coughed. Wash your hands BEFORE and AFTER you remove the mask. If you do cough or sneeze while wearing one, the mask needs to be changed and sanitized. If you are coughing and sneezing frequently due to allergies or have a medical reason for not wearing a mask at all, it is recommended that you stay home.

Keep in mind that you must sanitize your mask in order to stay safe. This means every day. Using a face covering that cannot withstand the rigorous cleaning, or having enough of them to rotate, becomes a real problem for you and others.

Be patient. We will have to put up with these inconveniences for a quite a while longer. As we all feel slightly more comfortable with our new routines, more and more people are feeling as though they should be able to resume "normal" activities. This is simply not true.

Town Hall access remains limited. Please call ahead to make an appointment with the person you need to see. We look forward to the time when you will be able to use the Library and come to the Town Hall without a specific appointment. Until then, you may access all town officials via email. Public meetings will still be held electronically unless otherwise advertised and the public will be given the access codes to attend. Access to any public area may change with very short

notice. If a meeting is scheduled for outside of the Town Hall, ALL SOCIAL DISTANCING AND SANITIZING REQUIREMENTS WILL BE ENFORCED.

Regarding the Transfer Station:

1. Please be respectful of the six-foot distance requirements. Where we may have more than one person using the facility at this point, the distance requirements will be enforced.
2. Deposit containers may **NO LONGER** be put into the mixed recycling container. Please return them to a redemption center or to the store where they were purchased.

As we have posted numerous times, paper food boxes that have been used to hold take-out food (i.e. pizza boxes, coffee cups, sandwich wrappers, etc.) **cannot go in the paper recycling**. This rule has not changed because of COVID 19, but it is even more important than it was before the health crisis. The glass/metal/plastic recycling is **only** for **CLEAN** food containers and containers for household cleaning products. Please, no hangers, no flowerpots, no broken glass or pottery, no oil filters, no hazardous material containers. Thank you.

As others continue to seek recreation by using the DCR properties, please be patient.

Please be aware that having someone come to your house to do work means that you are responsible for making sure that all the requirements for Social Distancing and sanitizing the workplace are enforced.

Stay Informed

- Get information from trusted sources. Visit <https://www.mass.gov/covid19> for the latest news, case counts, and lab testing results. Call 2-1-1 with questions. Text the keyword COVIDMA to 888-777 to receive notifications to your phone.
- 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.

Resources Infographics: The following may be found at the mass.gov website

- Stop the Spread of Germs COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER DAILY SITUATION REPORT
- Social distancing: for youth for general audience

- Coping with stress or fear
- What to do if you are sick

Short videos:

- How to Safely Cover Your Face Outside of Home 10 Tips for at home quarantine or self-monitoring
- Stop the Spread of Germs like Seasonal Flu and COVID-19 (:30)
- Help Prevent COVID-19 with Social Distancing (:30)
- How Young People Can Help Prevent COVID-19 with Social Distancing (:30)
- Coping with Stress and Fear from COVID-19 (:30)
- Stay Home - Save Lives (:06)

What we all seem to need most is patience. **The rules that have been put in place apply to everyone, not just everyone else.** We are incredibly fortunate to be here.