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### **COVID-19 CASES**

The City of Boston has **19,880** positive cases of coronavirus. So far, **17,122** of these **19,880** residents have fully recovered. Unfortunately, there have been **777** COVID-19 related deaths in Boston.

The City posts race and ethnicity data for deaths, as well as for confirmed cases [here](#).

The Boston Public Health Commission will be providing the updated total of cases in Boston residents as it is received from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Information can be found at [boston.gov/coronavirus](https://boston.gov/coronavirus) or [bphc.org](https://bphc.org).

Massachusetts has **149,361** [positive cases of coronavirus](#) and **9,888** deaths reported at this time.

### **POLICE REFORM TASK FORCE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

- In June, the Mayor declared racism a public health crisis in the City of Boston. We shifted funding into health equity, trauma response, eviction prevention, and community centered programs. We strengthened the use of force policies in the Boston Police Department. And we restructured City government -- by placing a Chief of Equity in my cabinet to drive this work forward every single day.
- The Mayor created the Police Reform Task Force to review police policies and procedures; take community input; and present recommendations for action and reform.
- Since forming this summer:
  - They researched the issues, both here in Boston and across the country.
  - They held four public listening sessions on key issues of accountability; diversity; use of force; and transparency.
  - They took on board written testimony, in any language.
  - Hundreds of residents made their voices heard.
- The Task Force shared draft recommendations last month. They took public input through an additional listening session. Now they have completed and shared with the Mayor their final recommendations.

- **The Mayor is officially accepting these recommendations. They have been translated into 5 languages in addition to English, and they are available at [boston.gov/policereform](https://boston.gov/policereform).**
- The Mayor says these recommendations are bold and comprehensive. They call for:
  - An **Office of Police Accountability and Transparency** -- with full subpoena power to investigate misconduct.
  - A **Diversity and Inclusion Unit in the Boston Police Department** -- to work on representation, and equity for officers of color.
  - The continued **expansion of the body-worn camera program** and the **continued ban on biometrics and facial recognition technology**.
  - **Enhanced Use of Force policies** that articulate a clear disciplinary code.
  - **Expanded public access** to the policies, procedures, and data of the Police Dept.
  - Action in each of these areas within a timeline of 180 days.
- In the coming weeks, the Mayor will take the necessary actions to create an **Office of Police Accountability and Transparency**.
  - It will house a Civilian Review Board with subpoena power to conduct investigations;
  - And an Internal Affairs Oversight Panel that builds on and strengthens the existing CO-OP board.
  - This week, the Mayor directed his Administration to create a job posting for an Executive Director of the Office of Police Accountability and Transparency -- so that we can create this office as soon as possible.
  - In addition, he will immediately direct his Chief of Equity Karilyn Crockett -- and a cross-cabinet team of leaders -- to support the Boston Police Department: in creating a Diversity and Inclusion Unit; and updating their internal policies to ensure they are all written through the lens of equity.
- **This coming Monday, October 19, the Mayor will file a Home Rule Petition at the City Council -- and ultimately at the State Legislature -- to amend the state Civil Service rules that govern police department hiring.**
  - This petition will establish a preference for graduates of the Boston Public Schools, METCO, or any schools in the Boston Compact -- which includes charter schools and parochial schools in our city.
  - This step will build on the success of our Police Cadet program by developing a new pipeline for diverse Boston residents into law enforcement careers.

## PAUSING BPS REOPENING PLAN

- The citywide positive rate is just over the **4% threshold** that was established for moving forward with the phased-in, hybrid learning plan for the Boston Public Schools. Therefore, the next phase of in-person learning has been delayed.
- **The earliest possible start date for Phase 3 has been pushed back from October 15 to October 22.**
- That means, as of now, the K0, K1, and K2 kindergarten grades will enter schools no sooner than October 22. We will re-evaluate based on the data we see between now and then.
- **Every family, of every student, in every grade, will continue to have the option of fully remote learning.**

## RESOURCES FOR RENTERS AND HOMEOWNERS

- The statewide eviction moratorium ends on October 17, here is an overview of the tools and resources the City is putting in place to help keep people in their homes.
  - We mailed 46,000 at-risk households to let them know their rights. Those are arriving in mailboxes this week.
  - The Mayor filed the "[Housing Stability Notification Act](#)" with the Boston City Council, an ordinance that would ensure Bostonians at risk of eviction know their rights and have access to the resources available to them.
  - We are reopening our [Rental Relief Fund](#), which has already helped 1,000 families. That support goes directly to landlords, and we encourage them to look into it for their tenants. **New applications will be available on October 19.**
  - We also have a [housing stability pledge](#). More than 30 large landlords have signed an agreement to avoid evictions.
- We also have city resources for homeowners that can help small landlords, and encourage you to reach out to the [Boston Home Center](#) if you are concerned.
- The CDC has a national moratorium in place until the end of the year. Tenants need to fill out a form, and give a signed copy to their landlord, to receive that protection. We stand ready to help you do that. You can download the form at [boston.gov/Housing-Stability](http://boston.gov/Housing-Stability). And you can call 311 or call our [Office of Housing Stability](#) directly for help.

## EXPANDING DAYS OF OPERATION AT VOTING SITES

- The Mayor reminded everyone that the voter registration deadline for the November 3 election is **October 24**.
- Early voting in Boston runs from October 17 - October 30.
- **This week, the City expanded the days of operation at sites in East Boston and Roxbury. And we added new sites in Dorchester, Roxbury, Hyde Park, Mattapan and West Roxbury. The additional sites include:**
- **Tuesday, October 20, from 12 to 8 p.m.:**
  - BCYF Paris Street (Gymnasium): [112 Paris Street, East Boston, MA 02128](#)
  - BCYF Tobin (Lower Level): [1481 Tremont Street, Roxbury, MA 02120](#)
- **Thursday, October 22, from 12 to 8 p.m.:**
  - BCYF Shelburne (Gymnasium): [2730 Washington Street, Roxbury, MA 02119](#)
  - Strand Theatre: [543 Columbia Road, Dorchester, MA 02125](#)
- **Tuesday, October 27, from 12 to 8 p.m.:**
  - St. George Orthodox Church of [Boston: 55 Emmonsedale Road, West Roxbury, MA 02132](#)
  - BCYF Hyde Park: [1179 River Street, Hyde Park, MA 02136](#)
- **Thursday, October 29, 12 to 8 p.m.:**
  - Florian Hall: [55 Hallet Street, Dorchester, MA 02122](#)
  - Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston, Mattapan Teen Center: [10 Hazelton Street, Mattapan, MA 02126](#)
- We now have [27 unique sites across the city](#) where you can vote early, in person (including City Hall). All of these locations, during the early voting period, are open to all registered voters in Boston. You can vote at any one of them.
- Every voting site will be prepared for health and safety, including social distancing, cleaning, and PPE.

## STRENGTHENING ENFORCEMENT OF COVID RESTRICTIONS

- The City has a team of officials from across departments meeting and working together on strengthening the enforcement of COVID-19 restrictions. They include the Boston Public Health Commission, Health and Human Services, Inspectional Services, the Parks Department, Neighborhood Services, and the Boston Police Department.
- They are discussing efforts to tighten enforcement on gathering limits, restrictions on unpermitted public events, and unsanctioned activities in parks. They are also working to help restaurants follow restrictions on table size, distancing, and masks. They will be conducting spot checks and visits with businesses to ensure regulations are being followed.
  - If you own or manage a restaurant, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Small Business team at [boston.gov/SmallBusiness](https://boston.gov/SmallBusiness). There is guidance and funds available to help you implement the steps you need to take to adhere to safety guidelines.
- The team is giving special attention to gatherings and house parties that are putting people at risk. The City continues to get reports of house parties in South Boston as well as other neighborhoods. The team is tracking the locations where parties continue to happen, and will be working through Inspectional Services to curtail these events.
  - If you are concerned about a party, call 911.
- **Roughly half of our new cases continue to be in people under the age of 30. And this is a trend that's happening nationally.**
- A study was published recently, on COVID hotspots around the U.S. It found that, a month before an area sees major activity, you see elevated rates in young adults. They are more active, many are taking fewer precautions, and the virus takes hold. Then, a month later, the virus is spreading throughout the community. Older people are getting it, more people are in the hospital, and more people die.
- Please take the recommended COVID-19 safety precautions and do your part to protect yourself and your community.

## MOBILE TESTING AND RESOURCES

- **The City's free mobile testing site is back in East Boston at Central Square Park.**
- You don't have to have symptoms or an appointment, but pre-registration is required. Call 617-568-4500 to pre-register.
- This **second mobile testing team** is a partnership with Whittier St. Health Center. It is now in **Nubian Square, Roxbury, until October 24.**
- **CVS began testing at two new sites** on Friday, in neighborhoods with elevated rates. They are now testing at the pharmacies on **Saratoga St. in East Boston** and **Gallivan Boulevard in Dorchester.**
- In all, there are nearly [30 active testing sites across the city](#).

## BACK TO SCHOOL DRIVE GIVEAWAY EVENTS

The [Office of Public Service and Community Outreach](#) is hosting two Back to School Drive events where they will be giving away 300 backpacks of school supplies to families of BPS students. Residents can also register at: [bit.ly/BosBack2School](https://bit.ly/BosBack2School) to enter to win a raffle prize! Email: [Publicservice@boston.gov](mailto:Publicservice@boston.gov) with any questions.

### Event Details

- Saturday, October 17, 2020 from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m., Norfolk Street Park, Mattapan, MA
- Sunday, October 18, 2020 from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m., Justice Gourdin Park, Roxbury, MA

## SPARK BOSTON COUNCIL APPLICATIONS OPEN

The [Spark BOSTON](#) 2021 Council applications are now open through Friday, October 30. The council gives young people in Boston the opportunity to get involved in local government and help shape the City's future. To be eligible, you must live in Boston and be between the ages of 20-35. Learn and apply [here](#).

## **PARKS DEPARTMENT PUMPKIN CONTEST**

**The Parks Department is hosting a virtual pumpkin carving contest.** After you carve your jack-o-lantern, you can submit a photo at the Parks Department page on [boston.gov](#), any time between now and October 31. Three winners will receive iPads provided by Xfinity. Winners will be chosen in the categories: Most creative; Scariest; and Boston park themed. Visit [boston.gov/pumpkins](#) to learn more or submit your photo.

## **FALL DRIVE-IN MOVIE SERIES**

- The Boston Parks and Recreation Department and the Mayor's Office of Tourism, Sports, and Entertainment are hosting a [City of Boston Fall Drive-In Movie Series](#). This Halloween-themed Drive-in Movie Series is made possible by support from the Highland Street Foundation and Xfinity, and host site, the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.
- Attendees are encouraged to get in the holiday spirit and dress in their most festive costume while enjoying Halloween classics. This Drive-in Movie Series will include double-feature showings on select nights in October, as well as a special matinee showing in partnership with the Age Strong Commission. **This series is free and open to Boston residents only.**
- All event attendees must pre-register by car through an RSVP on Eventbrite which can be accessed through [boston.gov/drive-in-movies](#).
- Residents ages 55+ looking to attend the Age Strong matinee must register directly with the Age Strong Commission by calling 617-635-3959 or emailing [Marybeth.kelly@boston.gov](mailto:Marybeth.kelly@boston.gov). Registration for these events began on Thursday, October 15 at 12:00 p.m.

## **MULTILINGUAL BENEFITS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

- The City is kicking off a 9-month long, multilingual Benefits Awareness Campaign. Residents will be seeing the campaign on social media, on Boston City TV, and in neighborhood newspapers, including immigrant-serving media.
- The purpose is to help everyone who qualifies for federal, state, and city benefits to apply and receive those benefits. Those include:
  - Unemployment insurance.
  - MassHealth and Medicare -- where the open Enrollment Period starts on October 15.
  - Tax exemptions, ways to heat your home efficiently, and save on your water bill.
  - Seniors benefits, Veterans benefits, children's benefits, disability benefits.
- You can call 311 or visit [boston.gov/benefits](#) to learn more about what you may be eligible for.

## **GENERAL REMINDERS**

- Individuals can register to vote in person, by mail, [online](#) or through the Registry of Motor Vehicles by Saturday, October 24, 2020 to vote in the November 3 State Election. To be eligible to vote, an individual must be at least 18 years of age and a U.S. citizen.
- Learn more about the reopening process: [www.mass.gov/reopening](http://www.mass.gov/reopening).
- When going outside, wear a face covering, practice physical distancing from others (6 feet apart), and avoid mass gatherings.
- Anyone experiencing a medical emergency should call 911.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol; avoid shaking hands
- Cover your coughs and sneezes; clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces; and avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- If you think you might be sick, please call your doctor or 311 to be connected to the Mayor's Health Line 617-534-5050. Buoy Health has created a free online diagnostic tool which screens for COVID19 at [buoy.com/mass](http://buoy.com/mass).
- Donate supplies to first responders [here](#).
- Donate to the City of Boston Resiliency Fund [here](#).
- Volunteer with the City of Boston [here](#).
- City Hall is open to the public on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 9 am – 5 pm. Learn more about the status of city departments and hours of operation [here](#).
- Those employed at grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants, and local retail shops can sign up for a free 90-day Bluebikes pass [boston.gov/bike-share](http://boston.gov/bike-share).

## STAY INFORMED

Receive the latest COVID19 info from reliable sources. Visit: [bphc.org/coronavirus](http://bphc.org/coronavirus); [boston.gov/coronavirus](http://boston.gov/coronavirus); [mass.gov/2019coronavirus](http://mass.gov/2019coronavirus). Call: 311 or 211.

**The City of Boston has two dashboards to provide statistics on COVID-19 cases in Boston and throughout Massachusetts. [View them here](#).**

The City of Boston has a free texting service to provide daily updates and information about the coronavirus. Text BOSCOVID to 888-777 to opt-in for English. Language and communications access remains a priority for Mayor Walsh, so this text service which was available in Spanish, Haitian Creole, French, Cabo Verdean Creole, and Portuguese, now includes Somali, Chinese, Arabic, Vietnamese and Russian.

- **Text BOSEspanol to 888-777 for Spanish**
- **Text BOSKreyol to 888-777 for Haitian Kreyol**
- **Text BOSFrancais to 888-777 for French**
- **Text BOSKriolu to 888-777 for Cabo Verdean Creole**
- **Text BOSPortugues to 888-777 for Portuguese**
- **Text BOSSoomali to 888-777 for Somali**
- **Text BOSChi to 888-777 for Simplified Chinese**
- **Text BOSbilAraby to 888-777 for Arabic**
- **Text BOSViet to 888-777 for Vietnamese**
- **Text BOSRus to 888-777 for Russian**

Updates in 10 total languages can additionally be accessed through [boston.gov/coronavirus#multilingual-help](http://boston.gov/coronavirus#multilingual-help). Each language has its own page and hosts multilingual print materials distributed citywide.

The state has launched an interactive map, to help residents understand how the virus is spreading in their communities. It's available at: [mass.gov/info-details/community-level-covid-19-data-reporting](https://mass.gov/info-details/community-level-covid-19-data-reporting).

### **Halloween Guidance:**

Mayor Martin J. Walsh and the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) today released guidance on celebrating Halloween safely during the COVID-19 pandemic, urging residents who choose to celebrate Halloween to take extra precautions to keep themselves and others safe. Health officials have advised that many traditional activities, such as trick-or-treating, costume parties or crowded, confined spaces like haunted houses, raise the risk of spreading viruses.

"Halloween is one of the best nights, and what's most important this year is that any person participating in activities does so in a way that is safe for not only themselves, but also their neighbors and community," said Mayor Walsh. "We're asking people to take the extra precautions that are necessary this year, including avoiding direct contact with trick-or-treaters, wearing masks at all times, washing hands before eating any treats, and avoiding attending or hosting gatherings."

### **Tips for safe trick-or-treating:**

- Trick-or-treat only with immediate family members.
- Avoid direct contact with individuals passing out candy.
- Wash hands before handling treats.
- Wear a mask. A costume mask is not a substitute for a cloth mask.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others who do not live with you.
- Bring hand sanitizer with you and use it after touching objects or other people.

### **Tips to safely prepare for trick-or-treaters:**

- Avoid direct contact with trick-or-treaters.
- Wash hands before handling treats.
- Set up a station outdoors with individually wrapped goodie bags for trick-or-treaters.
- Wear a mask. A costume mask is not a substitute for a cloth mask.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others who do not live with you.

BPHC health officials encourage families to find safer, alternative or virtual ways to have fun this season. The safest celebrations involve people from your household, are outdoors, allow for social distancing and other safety measures. In addition, BPHC is urging adults not to participate in gatherings or parties on Halloween.

### **Halloween activities without risk:**

- Carving or decorating pumpkins
- Decorating your home
- A virtual Halloween costume contest
- A family Halloween movie night
- A trick-or-treat scavenger hunt at home
- A Halloween neighborhood scavenger hunt from a distance

### **Halloween activities with risk:**

- Traditional trick-or-treating
- Trunk-or-treat events
- Haunted houses
- Hayrides or tractor rides
- Fall festivals
- Halloween parties or celebrations

Any Halloween activities should comply with COVID-19 safety guidelines and participants should limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by following these safety tips:

- Wear a face covering. A costume mask is not a substitute for a cloth or paper mask. Do not wear a costume mask over a protective cloth mask because it could make it hard to breathe. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask.
- Stay at least six feet apart.
- Avoid large parties or gatherings.
- Avoid crowded areas.
- Wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially before eating candy.
- Avoid touching your face.

Keep in mind, if any Halloween activities may lead to screaming, make sure everyone is wearing a face covering and staying more than six feet apart. The greater the distance, the lower the risk of spreading a respiratory virus.

**If residents may have COVID-19 or may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, stay home and do not participate in in-person Halloween festivities. Residents who may have COVID-19, who are not feeling well, or have been exposed to the virus should not give out candy to trick-or-treaters.**

As a reminder, any Halloween activities are subject to the [current gathering size limits](#) set by the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Read more on the [Halloween activity guidance released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).