

**MetroWest
Center For
Independent Living**

**People with Disabilities
Living in the Community**

Covid-19 Updates

Are we feeling moldy? We have had a week of wind, rain, lightening, and ping-pong ball sized hail! The weather seems to be improving for the 4th of July.

Massachusetts continues to show improvement in infection rates while the governor remains cautious about reopening more businesses. One of the toughest aspects of this disease is the people with no symptoms. One wonders if non-symptomatic infections are common with other diseases such as the flu - we probably do not know because only symptomatic people get tested.

WBUR credits masks and distancing when MA did not experience a new surge after re-openings and protests: [Experts Feared COVID-19 Would Surge Back In Mass. After Protests, Businesses Reopening. It Hasn't.](#)

MetroWest Center has not yet begun to bring staff back into the office. We are fully staffed on-line, and ready to work with all consumers. We will resolve as much as possible remotely to protect both our staff and consumers.

Visit our [Website Covid-19 page](#) and download our [Local Resources pdf](#).

Paul Spooner,
Executive Director



Evening Primrose

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MetroWest Resources

MWCIL.org has a Covid-19 page with local and national resources, information on the disease, and more. Visit mwcil.org.

MetroWest Center for Independent Living has compiled information from most of our service area towns. This file is updated weekly:
[MWCIL Service area resources.pdf](#)

We recommend Senate President Karen Spilka's page of resources available for MetroWest residents. Visit <https://karenspilka.com/covid>.

City of Framingham Resource Page: Framinghamma.gov/covid19

- Framingham has announced a financial relief program which will help provide assistance with rent, mortgage, and/or utility payments for a period of two months to alleviate the burden on households which have seen a loss of employment and their primary income as of 3/10/2020. Download the application:
 - www.framinghamma.gov/DocumentCenter/

Resources for elders in the community provided by [Baypath Senior Services](#):
[Senior Living Service during Covid-10.pdf](#).

MWRTA has launched the "4 Grocery" shuttle to run hourly between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. to carry shoppers from the Framingham hub to the Market Basket in Ashland, Roche Bros. in Natick, and the Wegman's at the Natick Mall. Read more at
www.mwrta.com/application/files/.

SMOC (South Middlesex Opportunity Council) continues to provide a wide array of services. Visit their website for more information: www.smoc.org

Testing Sites

Visit this interactive, online map to find testing sites statewide:
memamaps.maps.arcgis.com

Census MetroWest

Below are the percentages of self responses to the 2020 Census. Massachusetts statewide has 63.8%. MetroWest communities range from a low of 64.5 (Framingham) to a high of 85.4 (Stow).

If you have not responded to the 2020 Census, do so [NOW!](#)

Minorities and people with disabilities are traditionally undercounted populations. PLEASE complete your census on-line, or send in a written response. At some point, census workers will be visiting addresses which have not responded.

An accurate census benefits everyone. Federal money and congressional representation for Massachusetts are based on these numbers.

Any questions? Visit <http://revupma.org/wp/2020-2/2020-census/> for information and resources.

Town	Percent	Town	Percent	Town	Percent
Statewide	63.8	Boston	51.9	Worcester	51.5
Ashland	76.3	Bellingham	77.2	Dover	80.9
Foxboro	73.4	Framingham	64.5	Franklin	76.9
Holliston	83	Hopkinton	80.7	Hudson	75.3
Marlborough	66.2	Maynard	74.4	Medfield	83.6
Medway	72.6	Millis	77.5	Natick	71.7
Needham	75.1	Norfolk	82.5	Plainville	72.6
Sherborn	82	Southborough	81.1	Stow	85.4
Sudbury	83.8	Wayland	77.9	Wellesley	79.2
Weston	75.8	Wrentham	79.4		

Source: <https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html> as of June 25, 2020.

Massachusetts Reopening

We are still in Phase 2 of reopening MA. Our metrics have been stable.

Read about Governor Baker's Wednesday conference in the Boston Herald - [No time for coronavirus ~victory lap~™ ahead of phase 3, Charlie Baker says.](#)

"The governor has promised to reveal more details by the end of the week about when he [will move forward with the third phase](#) of his four-phase reopening plan - when casinos, museums, gyms and movie theaters will be allowed to resume. They could reopen as early as Monday, but the timeline has already seen a one-week delay after Baker split phase 2 into a two-part rollout."

Visit [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) to learn the details of reopening, including workplace protocols, and business safety standards. If you are not comfortable with a salon's cleaning protocols, then do not get your hair cut or find another salon.

Who We Are in a Crisis

Editorial by Colin Killick, [Disability Policy Consortium](#), June 29, 2020

"Over the past few years, DPC has been a leader on both the local and national levels defending the right of people with disabilities to get care without having our lives devalued. During the pandemic, this issue has come roaring to the forefront due to **Crisis Standards of Care, government guidelines that specify who will get live saving care when there aren't enough resources to go around, and who will be denied that care.** Across the country, state governments explicitly told hospitals that people with disabilities should be at lowest priority for care, or even be denied it altogether in certain states if they had intellectual and developmental disabilities. Here in Massachusetts, the first draft of our standards included language pledging not to discriminate, but then outright stated that its goal was to maximize "life years"--meaning that if you had a disability that reduced your predicted life expectancy, you would be less likely to get care. After outcry from DPC and our allies, the state revised the standards to address some of the ways that they discriminated against people with disabilities, but continued to put people at lower priority if they were predicted to have fewer than five years to live.

Now, [a groundbreaking agreement](#) between the Office of Civil Rights at the federal Department of Health and Human Services and the State of Tennessee has set a clear precedent that policies like that violate the ADA and other federal laws and recommendations protecting the rights of people with disabilities. The agreement holds that any consideration of someone's predicted long-term survival for reasons unrelated to COVID is discriminatory, and that only a patient's odds of surviving COVID itself can be considered. It also found that any consideration of how many resources a person with a disability will consume is discriminatory, that reasonable accommodations must be made to short-term survival metrics, and that hospitals may not take away and reallocate patients' own personal ventilators.

Meanwhile, here in Massachusetts the executive order setting out the Crisis Standards of Care has now been rescinded, so at present there are no state guidelines for hospitals on how to allocate scarce medical resources. While this is in some ways better than having discriminatory standards, it is not a tenable solution-particularly since when providers are left to make decisions alone, horrific discrimination can result, like [the case in Texas](#) where a person with a disability was apparently denied lifesaving treatment due to his disability after contracting COVID, despite his wife pleading for them to reconsider. Instead, we and other organizations will be meeting with Secretary Sudders, and calling on her to adopt standards like those now in place in Tennessee that ban discrimination against people with disabilities, and affirm that our lives are every bit as worthwhile as everyone else's. "

- Join the City of Boston Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities and the Boston Center for Independent Living for a virtual event to discuss how far we have come and what the future of disability rights looks like with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The event is Wednesday, July 22 1-2:30. We will hear from leaders in disability rights, consumers, and elected officials. <https://bostoncil.org/event/ada-30-march-rally-for-disability-rights/>
- United Spinal Association: Hosting free webinar on July 15 to highlight the 30 years of progress since the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act and how advocacy will continue to play a role in strengthening disability rights as we navigate new challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic. https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_R90GZXiRRKBz2822tiHog

Face Masks for PCAs

Thank you to the Disability Policy Consortium for this information:

Consumers of the Massachusetts PCA program can get **free masks and gloves delivered for PCAs** from their union, [1199SEIU](#). PCAs can order the masks online using the [1199SEIU order form](#).

Town Elections

You can help people with disabilities by asking your town clerk about the AutoMark machine. Even if you do not need or want to use it, the law requires that it be available for everyone. With the current Covid-19 environment, we are afraid that the AutoMark machine will not be a priority. If you identify a problem:

- *Contact the state at 800-462-VOTE (8683) (toll free) or 617-727-2828. You may also e-mail them at elections@sec.state.ma.us.*
- *Contact DLC at 800-872-9992 or 617-723-8455. Visit their website www.dlc-ma.org.*

Visit the state website for more information on the changes to annual town meetings during covid 19, including an application that you can download and print: www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/covid-19.

If your town has a local election scheduled in the next few weeks, you should [contact your town clerk](#) about the status of that election. A new law has been passed to allow towns to postpone their local elections by a local vote. Some towns with upcoming elections have already obtained court orders to allow them to move their elections.

Whether or not your town has postponed your local election, a law has been passed to allow early voting by mail in local elections being held on or before June 30, 2020. You may [apply now for your mail-in early ballot](#).

If your town's election has been moved, ballots for the original election date will still be valid. If you have already submitted an absentee ballot, that ballot will be counted.

Mass.gov Resources

Main information page on the Coronavirus:

<https://www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

Mass Health:

- **Long Term Supports and Services including PCA information:** <https://www.mass.gov/doc/ltss-provider-updates-for-covid-19/download>
- Expansion of **Home Health Aide Services:** [MassOptions.org](https://www.massoptions.org).
MassOptions hotline at 1-844-422-6277
- **Consumer Information:** <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/masshealth-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-applicants-and-members-0>
- **General MassHealth Information:** www.mass.gov/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-and-masshealth
- **90 Day Supplies of Medication for MassHealth Members:** www.mass.gov/doc/pharmacy-facts-141-march-12-2020-0/download

Attorney General: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/resources-during-covid-19>

Housing

The state is implementing a temporary moratorium on evictions and foreclosures due to Covid 19. If you are having trouble making rent, talk to your landlord and get everything in writing for proof of conversations later on.

- **Detailed information** (a little tough to navigate) - www.mass.gov/lists/moratorium-on-evictions-and-foreclosures-forms-and-other-resources
- **RESIDENTIAL TENANTS:** In order to avoid having to pay late fees or receiving a negative credit report, the law requires tenants to send a form of hardship notice to their landlord within 30 days of every missed rent payment. That means if a tenant missed paying rent due April 1, the tenant must send the form by April 30 (3 days from now). One form must be filled out for each month of missed payment. If a tenant is unable to fill out and transmit the form, they can also email or post a letter to the landlord with the same information. Direct link to form: www.mass.gov/doc/form-of-notice-and-documentation-covid-19-hardship-residential-tenant/download
- **HOMEOWNERS:** The Division of Banks has also put out a Frequently Asked Questions document regarding the moratorium on foreclosures.

Direct link here:

www.mass.gov/doc/chapter-65-dob-faq

- **SMALL BUSINESS TENANTS:** Similar to residential tenants, small businesses are also not subject to late fees or negative credit bureau reporting if they submit a form of notice to their landlord within 30 days of missed rent payment. Small businesses must submit two forms:
 - A certification of hardship:
www.mass.gov/doc/form-of-notice-covid-19-hardship-small-business-tenant
 - Back up documentation: www.mass.gov/doc/documentation-of-financial-hardship-small-business-tenant
- **LANDLORDS:** The law allows the landlord to use last month's rent to pay for certain expenses including, but not limited to, mortgage payments, utilities, repairs and required upkeep. However the landlord must send a form of notice to the tenant when doing so. The form is here:
www.mass.gov/doc/notice-to-tenant-use-of-advance-rent-payment
- **Help with Rent**
 - List of regional agencies, see www.masshousinginfo.org/regional-agencies.
 - Additional information about resources for tenants is available at www.mhp.net/news/2020/resources-for-tenants-during-covid-19-pandemic.
- You will not be subject to late fees or a negative report to a credit bureau if you certify to your landlord in writing within 30 days from the missed payment that your non-payment of rent is due to a financial impact from COVID-19. If possible, you should use the approved form at: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/moratorium-on-evictions-and-foreclosures-forms-and-other-resources>. If you cannot access the form on this website, you can ask your landlord to provide the form to you. You may also send a letter or email so long as it contains a detailed explanation of your household loss in income or increase in expenses due to COVID-19.

Department of Community and Housing Development (DHCD)

- Information including updates for Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) Program - [www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-dhcd-website#residential-assistance-for-families-in-transition-\(raft\)-program-and-covid-19-state-of-emergency-](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-dhcd-website#residential-assistance-for-families-in-transition-(raft)-program-and-covid-19-state-of-emergency-)
- [RAFT Policy Changes during COVID-19.php](#)

CHAPA has adapted operations and policy priorities. COVID-19 Affordable Housing Resources: www.chapa.org

Housing Consumer Education Centers - Download the [Covid-19-Housing-Resources.pdf flyer](#).

Unemployment

Mass.gov has an online, virtual town hall that will teach you how to sign up for unemployment. Visit www.mass.gov/forms/massachusetts-department-of-unemployment-assistance-dua-virtual-town-halls.

Or visit the State Unemployment Insurance page for online application forms, as well as links to rules and exceptions during the Covid-19 pandemic. www.mass.gov/unemployment-insurance-ui-online.

Food

Visit foodpantries.org to see all of the food pantries in MA.

Senate President Karen Spilka's MetroWest Resource page has many local food sources: karenspilka.com/updates/2020/3/13/metrowest-covid-19-resources

Project Bread has additional food sources: www.projectbread.org/get-help.

Massachusetts residents can use SNAP benefits to purchase groceries online via Walmart and Amazon, with more grocery retailers hopefully joining the program soon. Visit Mass.gov for more information. The state's Online Purchasing Program Outreach Flyers are now available in Spanish.

MassHealth Food Assistance Flyers

- [Food Assistance.php](#) - English
 - [Asistencia alimentaria durante la emergencia por COVID-19.php](#) Spanish
-

2020 Census

Complete your census! This information is completely confidential. Please let us know if you have questions.

Visit the Revupma.org page for more information and resources about the Census.

To participate in the upcoming census, visit www.censuscounts.org.

Activist Resources and Directories

National Contact Information

[Directory of House of Representatives](#)

[Directory of Senators](#)

Senator Edward J. Markey

Address:

255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Phone:

(202) 224-2742

Contact:

www.markey.senate.gov/contact

Website:

<http://www.markey.senate.gov/>

Senator Elizabeth Warren

Address:

317 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Phone:

(202) 224-4543

Contact:

<https://www.warren.senate.gov/contact/shareyouropinion>

Website:

<http://www.warren.senate.gov/>

State Government Contact Information

[Directories of State Senators and Representatives](#)

[Contact Governor Baker](#)

[WhereDoIVoteMa.com](#) - Enter your address, and get a list of all of your elected officials.

National Resources

Save My Care - a movement to bring together families, advocates and health care providers to protect the health and financial security of all Americans.

[Visit the website.](#)

National Council on Independent Living has Action Alerts for issues on the table in Washington. [Visit the Advocacy Monitor webpage.](#)

Join REV UP - Make the disability vote count!



For more information, visit www.revupma.org.

And follow our [Face Book page](#)!

MA Tales of Independence

Visit our video projects at: www.matalesofindependence.net.

The concept and history of Independent Living are complex. MA Tales of Independence is a collection of videos by people who are successfully living independently. Each person tells their story including things like: how they achieved independence, why independence is important to them and what barriers they had to overcome.



Some of our videos have historical information about the struggle and others are about growing up today. Most have college degrees, jobs and families.



2020 Staff (visit the [staff page](#) for more info!)


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