

Subject **MWCIL News - Covid-19 surges**  
From MetroWest Center for Independent Living <srork@mwci.org>  
To <srork@mwci.org>  
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## Stay Safe

First, ***please vote!*** If you have not mailed in your mail-in ballot, it can be brought to your local drop-box. Or you can simply vote in person. If you vote in person, wear a mask, stay socially distant from everyone, bring your own black pen and wash and sanitize your hands.

The infection rates of Covid-19 continue to rise in Massachusetts, and we are no longer welcome in neighboring states such as NY. We are not aware of any additional in-state restrictions on activities, only scoldings from Governor Baker. The president continues to recommend no strategy, hosting unmasked events, claiming that we have turned a corner and announcing that he has successfully ended the pandemic. Even in Massachusetts, neighbors, colleagues and officials disagree on what is safe and what is an infringement of your rights. *It's crazy!*

At MetroWest Center for Independent Living, we believe in the science, and the advice of doctors, such as Dr. Fauci. As the weather worsens and activities need to be indoors, we recommend limited, masked and socially distant contact whenever possible.

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.

Paul Spooner, Executive Director



Cosmos, nasturtium and marigolds

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## MetroWest Covid-19 Resources

[MWCIL.org](https://www.mwcil.org/covid-19) has a Covid-19 page with local and national resources, information on the disease, and more.

[MWRTA](https://www.mwrta.com) (MetroWest Regional Transit Authority) has a Grocery Shuttle, requires masks and disinfects all vehicles nightly. Some routes have changed - visit the website and stay informed.

[MetroWest Health Foundation](https://www.metrowesthealthfoundation.org) shares a wide range of resources.

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## Mass.gov Covid-19 Resources

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

[Covid-19 Test Site Locator](#) hosted by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

#### 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](https://www.mass.gov/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-and-masshealth)

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

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## Massachusetts Data

The [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#) (DPH) lists the weekly data with new numbers are now being posted on Thursdays. Drill down for town-specific infections and deaths. The charts are color coded. For those who like data, keep scrolling for statistics on everything from higher education to nursing homes.

- **gray:** fewer than 5 reported cases in the last 14 days
- **green:** Average daily case rate over the last 14 days: less than 4 cases per 100,000 population
- **yellow:** Average daily case rate over the last 14 days: 4-8 cases per 100,000 population
- **red:** Average daily case rate over the last 14 days: more than 8 cases per 100,000 population

## WCVB Report

[New signs that COVID-19 numbers in Massachusetts are going to get worse](#) by John Atwater on October 28.

*"For the fifth straight day, more than a thousand new confirmed COVID-19 cases were reported in Massachusetts."*

*"We're playing a really different game at this point than we were playing then," Baker said. "The biggest difference is better data, better information, much more testing and tracing capacity, and a health care system that is far more knowledgeable about dealing with this than they were then."*

*In spite of the rising numbers, "There is no talk about widespread closures this time around, but doctors are continuing to warn that masks are essential."*

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## **Dr. Fauci and Covid-19 Science Recommendations**

Dr. Fauci has interviewed recently with several news organizations including [cnbc.com](https://www.cnbc.com), warning that the rising infection rates will be difficult to manage, especially in the northwest and the heartland. " "They never had the kind of hospital and intensive care facility and flexibility that some of the larger hospitals in larger cities have,".

Given the lack of interest in a lockdown, " Dr. Fauci suggested doubling down on masks, distancing, and avoiding crowds and congregations amid Americans' coronavirus fatigue, and added that the country would "be much better than we're doing right now."

For more information, read [The Rolling Stone](#) interview with Dr. Fauci.

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## **Accessible Voting During Covid-19 The Fight for Accessible Voting**

2020 has had a new set of challenges to voting. In Massachusetts, the Disability Law Center successfully challenged the lack of a ballot that people who cannot complete a paper ballot and an on-line solution was provided.

For more information on the ongoing challenges, read [The Fight for Accessible Voting During Covid-19](#) by Lilian Aluri and Rachita Singh. The accessible voting machines are not usable if someone is not comfortable going to the polls because of covid-19.

AARP outlines other 2020 challenges, such as long lines and fewer polling locations in their article:

[Voters With Disabilities Challenged During COVID-19](#)

## **Access to Digital Information**

Let's hope on-line voting is more widely available to people with disabilities in 2022!

[NCAM Supports Voters With Disabilities By Ensuring Access To Digital Information](#)

WGBH reports on "NCAM, an accessibility consulting unit of GBH, which made its mark early on by inventing captioning for broadcast television, is working with states and app developers to improve the accessibility of voting information, election-related websites and tools and the voting experience itself for the more than 35 million U.S. voters who have a disability. Most recently, NCAM has worked with Voatz, a Brookline-based developer, to ensure that its voting app, long used by overseas military personnel, is accessible domestically for people with disabilities."

## **Share Your 2020 Voting Experiences**

[SABE](#) - Self Advocates Becoming Empowered - is working towards greater voting accessibility. One of their tools is their surveys. Let them know your experiences with the November 3 election!

- [English Voting Survey](#)
- [Spanish Voting Survey](#)

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## **Partner Websites and Organizations**



[REV UP Massachusetts](#) - Increasing the Disability Vote!



[MA Tales of Independence](#) - a collection of videos by people who are successfully living independently.



[Dignity Alliance of Massachusetts](#) is dedicated to secure fundamental changes in the provision of long-term services, support, and care.

## **About MetroWest Center for Independent Living**

We provide an array of independent living services that enable people with disabilities to live in the

community. The center was created by people with disabilities seeking full integration into society. We empower people with disabilities by teaching the practical skills and confidence to take control over their lives and become active members of the communities in which they live. We promote access and change within society while advocating for programs and services needed by people of all ages with a wide range of disabilities. MWCIL is a consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential private nonprofit agency.

*We enable people with disabilities to gain freedom from nursing homes and other institutional settings.*

If you have a disability, live within our area (26 towns in Metrowest section of Massachusetts) and have needs, goals, or barriers related to your living independently, then contact us at 508-875-7853.

MetroWest Center for Independent Living is a scent-free environment. Please keep this in mind when you plan a visit.

## View our Services



# MetroWest Center for Independent Living

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