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Westport Board of Health COVID-19 Update

July 30, 2020

Case Update:

Total number of state confirmed COVID-19 positive cases of Westport residents as of July 29th is **103**. However, our Town nurse reported **109** cases on her roster as of yesterday morning (not including visitors or seasonal residents) – **which is a total of 5 new confirmed cases in the last seven days**. All it takes is one careless situation or one event without safety protocols for there to be a jump in new cases. The Board of Health has had to focus on contact tracing and putting a significant number of individuals on quarantine this week due to close contact.

PLEASE do not let your guard down now! COVID-19 is not going away. It is especially important to keep vigilant as we engage in more social interactions and activity outside the home. Consistent mask wearing, social distancing and hand hygiene will help keep us from going backwards in the re-opening. COVID-19 can spread easily and quickly among people who are in close contact.

Statewide there have been **109,096 confirmed** cases and **8,360 confirmed** deaths as of July 29. In both Rhode Island and Massachusetts we are seeing a slight upward trend in cases, which is concerning. The state's weekly reporting town specific data is issued every Wednesday afternoon and our [COVID-19 Case reporting page](#) will provide a link to the complete state reports each week.

Testing data:

2552 COVID tests have been performed on Westport residents to July 29th. There were 3 positive tests out of 288 done in the last 14 days, for a rate of 1.04%. Currently, the statewide 14-day average has ticked up to 1.74% positive rate. Ideally we want to be under 1% statewide to break the chain of transmission.

Other COVID-related news:

New Travel Order: The Governor announced new a travel order for people coming into Massachusetts. Effective August 1st, all visitors entering Massachusetts, **including returning residents**, are required to:

1. Complete the online [Massachusetts Travel Form](#) prior to arrival, unless they are visiting from a lower-risk state designated by the Department of Public Health (currently New England, NY, NJ and Hawaii).
2. Quarantine for 14 days or produce a negative COVID-19 test result that has been administered up to 72-hours prior to arrival in Massachusetts.

There are some exemptions for transitory travel through Massachusetts, commuting for work or school, for medical treatment and military personnel. More guidance can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/guidance/guidance-for-travelers-arriving-in-the-commonwealth-of-massachusetts>

Phase 3, Step 1 of re-opening: We are into the fourth week of Phase 3, step 1 (which began July 6th) and expect to remain at this status for a while. The Board of Health is continuing to actively monitor businesses and venues for compliance with all safety protocols.

Contact the Board of Health if you want to report a business or workplace that is non-compliant with the mandatory workplace safety standards or with their sector-specific protocols. You may also report non-compliance to the Department of Labor Standards (DLS) through their hotline (508) 616-0461 x 9488, or by sending an email to safepublicworkplacemailbox@mass.gov.

Gathering size: Limits on gatherings remain the same. Indoor gatherings are limited to 8 people per 1,000 square feet; no more than 25 people in a single enclosed, indoor space. Outdoor gatherings in enclosed spaces are limited to 25% of the facility's maximum permitted occupancy, with a maximum of 100 people in a single enclosed outdoor space for gatherings like community events, sports games, concerts, and conventions. This order does not apply to outdoor, unenclosed gatherings if proper social distancing measures are possible.

Street festivals, agricultural festivals, walk a thons, road races and bike races, and other outdoor organized athletic or recreational events that gather large numbers of people are still prohibited.

Beaches: Visitors are required to maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet or more at all times and visitors should maintain at least 12 feet minimum distance between towel/beach blanket areas.

Town Updates:

- **Town Offices:**
 - Town Hall and Annex – Open to the public, however service by phone, mail, outdoor dropbox, or online is still highly recommended. Face masks are required for in person visits.
 - The town nurse's regular schedule is now Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 8 am to 4 pm; Wednesday and Friday 8 am to noon.
 - Transfer Station – Open regular hours (Thursday through Monday 8:30 am to 3 pm). Face mask required.
- **The temporary Food Pantry is at the Town Hall Annex Gym, 856 Main Road.** The next food pantry pick-up is scheduled for Monday, August 3rd. While local farmers continue to generously provide fresh produce, donations of non-perishable food, paper goods and toiletries have dropped off. The need continues, so please consider helping out. Food donations days are Tuesday and Thursday mornings.
[WESTPORT FOOD PANTRY](#)

Other BOH announcements:

- **NEW Water Advisory** – Reports of some wells going dry have been coming in to the office. Due to drought conditions, we have issued a water advisory: <https://www.westport-ma.com/home/news/water-advisory>
- **Unsolicited seeds** – Mass. Dept. of Agricultural Resources encourages Massachusetts residents that receive or have received an unsolicited package of seeds to not plant the seeds and immediately complete a [form](#) on MDAR's website.

- **Red Cross Blood Drive – Thursday, August 6th 10 am to 3 pm at the Town Hall Annex.** Details [here](#)
- **Mosquito and tick season –** I want to remind everyone to protect against mosquito and tick bites. EEE and WNV have been found in the area and tick borne Lyme disease is on the upswing.

Stay safe everyone. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Matthew J. Armendo, Director
Westport Health Department