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Westport Board of Health COVID-19 Update
October 15, 2020

Case Update:

Total number of state confirmed COVID-19 positive cases of Westport residents as of October 14th is **152**. **The continuing uptick of cases has put Westport back into the “yellow” or moderate risk category.** The rolling 14 day incidence rate has jumped from 3.0 to 6.9/100,000. There have been 133 recoveries and the town nurse is conducting contact tracing for six current cases. Many nearby towns (Fall River, Berkley, Dartmouth, New Bedford, Fairhaven and Acushnet) are in the ‘red/high risk’ category. This may be the beginning of the fall surge that many experts warned about, as we head into the fall and winter.

PLEASE do not let down your guard and keep up with the good habits of maintaining social distancing, wearing face coverings, and washing or sanitizing hands frequently. COVID-19 has been far more deadly than the annual flu and we are going into a double whammy season, so please get your flu shot to reduce risk to your health. The state risk map is updated based on the [state's weekly community COVID report](#), which is published every Wednesday evening.

Statewide there have been **138,083 confirmed cases** and **9,429 confirmed deaths** as of October 14th. The number of new cases statewide has more than doubled since last month.

Testing Data:

6487 COVID tests have been performed on Westport residents up through October 14th. There were **18 positive tests** out of 810 done in the last 14 days for a rate of **2.22%; almost double last week's percent.** The statewide 14-day average is trending up again to 1.17% positive.

Extended through December: The state's **Stop the Spread** free testing initiative in certain communities has been extended for two additional months through December. The sites in these communities are open to all. To find a site visit www.mass.gov/stopthespread.

Other COVID-related news:

COVID-19 Eviction Diversion: The goal of this initiative by the Baker administration is to keep tenants safely in their homes and to support the ongoing expenses of landlords once the pause of evictions and foreclosures expire on Saturday, October 17th. People with questions are encouraged to call 211 or check this FAQ: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-eviction-diversion-frequently-asked-questions>

ABCC Advisory: The Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission issued an advisory on October 13, 2020 reminding hotels, restaurants and other licensees that their **indoor**

events/gatherings are limited to 25 people in a single enclosed space. Licensee employees working at an indoor event do not count towards the capacity. All premises must maintain 6 feet of physical distance from every other participant in the gathering except where individuals are members of the same household.

Statewide gatherings order is modified, effective October 5:

- The limit for indoor gatherings remains at a maximum of 25 people.
- Outdoor gatherings in private backyards will remain at a maximum of 50 people.
- Outdoor gatherings at event venues and in public settings will have a limit of 100
 - Also requires 1 week advance notice to the Board of Health if attendance is expected to exceed 50.

Travel Order: The list of higher and lower risk states changes often so make sure to check the status before any travel. The list currently is only DC, NY and the New England states - except RI. Rhode Island remains on the restricted list. Detailed travel order instructions and the travel risk map can be found [here](#). In summary, all visitors entering Massachusetts, including returning residents, must:

1. Complete the online Massachusetts Travel Form prior to arrival, unless they are visiting from a lower-risk state.
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.

COVID-19 Community Impact Survey (CCIS) is an online survey to collect data on the social, economic, and health needs and inequities resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Open to anyone over age 14: <http://www.mass.gov/COVIDsurvey>.

Halloween Guidance: The state has issued Halloween safety tips, while reminding residents that gathering limits and all other COVID-19 rules apply:

<https://www.mass.gov/news/state-public-health-officials-offer-tips-for-a-safe-and-healthy-halloween>

Town COVID Updates:

- **The temporary Food Pantry is at the Westport Grange, 931 Main Rd.** The next food pantry pick-up is scheduled for Monday, October 19th from 9 am to noon at the Grange. Food donation days are Tuesday and Thursday mornings.
- **Schools** - The Westport Community Schools [website](#) has the latest on what is happening locally. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has begun issuing weekly updates on positive COVID-19 cases in schools every Thursday: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/positive-cases/#weekly-report> You can also find FAQs for families with information from the state at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/backtoschool/>
- **Town Hall and Annex** – Open to the public, but service by phone, mail, outdoor dropbox, or online is recommended. Face masks are required for in person visits.

Other BOH announcements:

- **Flu season:** Flu vaccines are available from the Town Nurse by appointment only. We no longer have any high dose (for over 65) vaccine in our supply. Please call 508-636-1030 if you would like to make an appointment.

- **Public Hearing on proposed Septic System Water Resource Protection Regulation:** Scheduled for October 29th at 7 pm. Links to the slides and video of the October 7th information session are posted on the [BOH website](#).

Stay safe everyone. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Matthew J. Armendo, Director