



CORONAVIRUS BRIEFING: JUNE 25, 2020

THE CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS BRIEFING FOR THE TOWN OF WELLESLEY

Visit Wellesley's Coronavirus Information Hub at www.wellesley.ma.gov/coronavirus

Wellesley Health Department COVID-19 Case Update.

Total confirmed cases in Massachusetts: 107,837 New Cases Today: 226

Total cases in Norfolk County: 9,082

Total cases in Wellesley: 225 (1 new)

82 cases total in Wellesley long-term care facilities

Positive antibody tests: 0 new, 52 total

Public health indicators for COVID-19 continue to show positive progress throughout the State. [See the Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 dashboard.](#)

In Wellesley, the number of new COVID-19 cases continues to decline. However, Health officials are still very active with contact tracing and follow-ups to previous cases. It's important to note that the majority of Coronavirus cases in our community have fully recovered. Enhanced information that is specific to Wellesley is updated weekly by State health officials and includes reports on cases and testing in communities, cases and deaths in long-term care facilities and other data. [Read the Weekly COVID-19 Cities and Towns Report.](#)

Initial Back-to-School Guidance Released.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) today released initial guidance for reopening schools in the fall. See this message from Wellesley Public Schools Superintendent Dr. David Lussier.

Dear Members of the Wellesley Public Schools Community,

Earlier today, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released initial guidance for the reopening of schools in the fall. [Read the initial guidance here.](#) This guidance was developed through extensive input from the medical community, educators, and parents and reflects the clear goal of supporting the safe return of students and staff to our schools. While not a final blueprint, this document does underscore the many safety measures that will need to be in place to make this possible. This includes the combined benefit of wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, adhering to personal hygiene, and following strict cleaning protocols. The implications for our school operations are many.

The trajectory of the virus in Massachusetts has been moving in a positive direction, and yet the state is wisely wary of a resurgence that could result in a return to additional measures to help contain any new outbreaks. With this in mind, DESE is asking school districts to be prepared for multiple contingencies for the new year. More specifically, DESE is asking that each district submit three plans to the state for review later this summer: one that allows for a full opening with restrictions, a hybrid model of in-person and remote learning, and a full remote-learning plan to be used in the event of a full closure. The Wellesley Public Schools began its process of planning for these contingencies last month with the creation of an Advisory Committee on Reopening that includes student, staff, and parent

representation, as well as smaller working groups focused on individual topics. In addition to the learning already captured from the experience of the past few months, we will be informed in our planning by additional survey work and focus groups over the summer.

We were also pleased to see that in addition to outlining the many prerequisite elements that need to be in place to reopen, the state is also planning to provide additional financial resources to help offset the many new expenses that communities will incur to proceed with this direction.

Today's initial guidance provides an overview for reopening, but many questions still remain on a range of topics, including transportation and athletics. DESE anticipates addressing these and other areas of concern in the coming weeks. Needless to say, this will be a busy summer for our team as we continue to plan with many variables in mind. We will of course keep the community apprised of our planning efforts.

As daunting as all of this may seem, I believe I speak for our entire community when I say that we are excited at the prospect of returning to our schools in person once again. There is simply no substitute for the level of connectedness, social and emotional development, and academic progress that occur in our classrooms and schools. Our task now is to ensure that we can do this safely once again.

*Sincerely,
Dr. David Lussier
Superintendent of Schools*

REMINDER: Free 2-hour Meter Parking Until August.

To help support local businesses and encourage shopping in Wellesley, free parking at all 2-hour street meters in Wellesley has been extended until August. Please be mindful of your time; **beginning on July 1 cars will be ticketed after two hours.** Parking fees continue to apply in all municipal lots and at 4-hour street meters.

-END-