



## CORONAVIRUS BRIEFING: JANUARY 5, 2021

THE CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS BRIEFING FOR THE TOWN OF WELLESLEY

Visit Wellesley's COVID-19 Information Hub at [www.wellesleyma.gov/coronavirus](http://www.wellesleyma.gov/coronavirus)

**Total confirmed cases in Massachusetts:** 375,455

[View the COVID-19 daily dashboard.](#)

The COVID-19 daily dashboard from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) is now in a more interactive format. All of the same data previously provided is still available. In addition, some of the information previously shown in the weekly dashboard is now also included: age groups, race and ethnicity, and sex of cases, hospitalizations and deaths; and a map of specific city/town metrics.

**Total confirmed positive cases in Wellesley:** 639 (78 new cases in past 14 days)

**Average Daily Incidence Rate/100,000 for Wellesley:** 18.8 (past 14 days)

**Percent Positivity of Testing:** 1.58% (past 14 days)

[View the Weekly COVID-19 Public Health Report.\\*](#)

*\*Data is based on information available to MDPH as of December 31.*

Wellesley Health officials are seeing a substantial spike in COVID-19 cases in our community which may be attributed to holiday activities. More than 30 new cases have been identified since January 1, many among members of the same family. If members of your family are feeling ill, showing symptoms of the virus, or have been identified as a positive COVID-19 case, please remember to isolate individuals to help prevent spreading the virus to others in the household. While our community is still in the yellow (moderate) risk level, it is more critical now than ever to wear masks, wash your hands, and follow the current capacity and gathering guidelines.

As a reminder, State restrictions now in effect limit capacity to 25% at restaurants, offices, places of worship, retail locations, grocery stores, gyms, and more. The gathering restrictions also limit the number of people at private homes, event venues and public spaces to **25 people outdoors** and **10 people indoors**. This new order will remain in effect until January 9, 2021 and may be extended longer. Read [a summary of the restrictions](#).

If you are concerned or have questions about situations that could increase the risk of exposure to COVID-19, please call the Health Department at 781-235-0135.

### COVID-19 Vaccinations for First Responders Begin on January 11.

Many residents are asking about the COVID-19 vaccine and the immunization phases. The Health Department currently does NOT have doses of the COVID-19 vaccine available for public distribution. The next priority group to receive the COVID-19 vaccine will be [first responders](#); vaccinations for our local fire, police, 911 Dispatchers, and EMTs may begin as soon as Monday, January 11. The exact timing of vaccinations to particular groups depends on when our community receives its allotment from the State.

Also, the State has updated its vaccine distribution plan so that individuals ages 75+ will be added to the second phase of the vaccine rollout. For complete details on the vaccine plan and its phases, go to

the State's [When Can I Get the COVID-19 Vaccine webpage](#). You can also find vaccine information on the [Massachusetts COVID-19 vaccination dashboard](#), or email questions directly to [COVID-19-Vaccine-Plan-MA@mass.gov](mailto:COVID-19-Vaccine-Plan-MA@mass.gov).

### **State Campaign to Reduce Stigma of Substance Abuse.**

As the pandemic continues, sadly Massachusetts is seeing a slight increase in substance abuse overdoses and deaths. State health officials (MDPH) have launched a new phase of a public information campaign intended to reduce the stigma of substance addiction and encourage individuals to seek the treatment they need and deserve. Learn more about the support, help, and resources provided by [the #StateWithoutStigMA campaign](#).

### **Select Board Extends Free 2-hour Metered Parking through February.**

To continue to support our merchants and encourage residents to visit retailers and shop local, the Select Board has extended free 2-hour parking at all **bagged meters** in Wellesley through February 2021. Parking fees do apply at non-bagged meters, municipal and private parking lots. Parking attendants are monitoring cars; you will be ticketed after two hours. Please do not move to another bagged meter after two hours, as that will also result in a ticket.

### **Thank you Sue Webb!**

Sue Webb retires today, January 5, after 41 years as Wellesley's first-ever Animal Control Officer. During her time in Wellesley, she's kept our community and our pets safe, vaccinated, and licensed; founded the group Stray Pets in Need (SPIN) to rescue, care for, and find forever homes for tens of thousands of animals; was an advocate for keeping pets with victims of domestic violence; and educated school children and so many of us about her important work with domestic and wild animals. "Sue has a very big heart, is so beloved, and has done so much for our Town, our families, and our animals. We thank her and wish her the very best in retirement," said Select Board Chair Marjorie Freiman.

Pictured right: Animal Control Officer Sue Webb with WPD bloodhound Maisie, in 2016.



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