



## CORONAVIRUS BRIEFING: MARCH 25, 2020

THIS IS THE CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS BRIEFING FOR THE ENTIRE TOWN OF WELLESLEY AND IS SHARED ACROSS ALL COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORMS

**Here's what you need to know today.**

**NEW!** Get text updates about COVID-19 in Massachusetts sent to your phone by texting COVIDMA to 888-777.

### Health Department COVID-19 Case Update.

**Total confirmed cases in Massachusetts:** 1,838      **New Cases Today:** 679

**Total cases in Norfolk County:** 222

**Total cases in Wellesley:** 12 (6 active cases, 6 recovered cases)

Health Department officials are advising residents of community spread of COVID-19. Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

### Schools and Non-Emergency Childcare Programs to Remain Closed Until May 4.

Governor Baker has announced that all schools and non-emergency childcare centers will remain closed until Monday, May 4. This expands on previous orders that suspended operations until April 6.

[Read the Governor's announcement.](#)

- Wellesley Public Schools is waiting on guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on Thursday, March 26 about expectations for schools during this extended closure.
- Whitson's Food Services is providing meals to WPS families in need. Food is prepared at the Wellesley Middle School and can be picked up by participating families at set times from 10 a.m. – Noon. Orders are placed through the [Wellesley Public Schools website](#).

### New Recycling and Disposal Facility (RDF) Rules Effective Immediately.

New recycling procedures and queuing requirements are now in effect at the RDF. [Read the new rules and accompanying RDF map.](#)

- One section of the recycling wall and parking area is closed.
- Users must park in every other space.
- Users/cars will queue at the RDF flagpole; only ten (10) users at a time will be allowed in the recycling area.
- A separate lane will be available for trash only.

### Construction Projects Clarification.

The Governor's General Counsel has sent guidance to cities and town about construction projects indicating that the Governor's [order to continue essential services operations](#) provides that:

*All construction projects are to "continue operations during the state of emergency, but to do so with allowance for social distancing protocols consistent with guidance provided by the Department of Public Health." Local policies, regulations, or directives that provide otherwise are in direct conflict with the Order and should be withdrawn.*

The order and guidance provided appears to overturn the [Board of Health order](#) from March 19, 2020 limiting interior building inspections. Town officials continue to seek clarification on alternative inspection protocols to protect the members of our Building Department. We will begin scheduling necessary inspections subject to further guidance.

## Plastic Bag Ban Temporarily Lifted.

In accordance with the Governor's order to keep grocery store and pharmacy workers safe, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health announced new [grocery store and pharmacy procedures](#). These will no longer allow shoppers to use reusable bags. Stores may offer paper or plastic bags to customers, without charging for them. This order temporarily overturns Wellesley's [Plastic Bag bylaw](#) that went into effect in 2017.

## Pay Bills Online or Use the Drop-box.

Residents are reminded to use the Town's online [bill payment services](#) for taxes and utility bills. Payments and mail may also be dropped in the locked drop-box on the Washington Street side of Town Hall. Town Hall is closed until further notice. Residents may also call the Treasurer's Office at 781-431-1019 ext. 2266.

## #WellesleyWillBeWell

### PPE Donation Program.

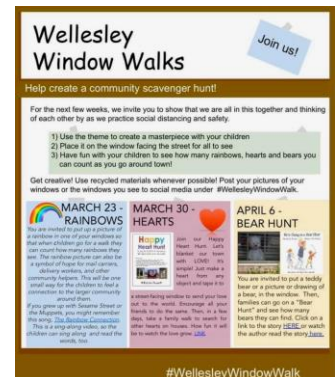
Thank you to all of the residents who are donating supplies to the Town's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) program. Collected today: 500 surgical masks, 600 pairs of surgical gloves, 6 surgical gowns, 2 containers of wipes. To donate **please call the Fire Department at 781-235-1300**. This program is **PICK-UP ONLY**.

## PAWS Window Walks.

PAWS (Preschool at Wellesley Schools) is participating in the #WellesleyWindowWalks community scavenger hunt program. Families are encouraged to use the theme provided each week to create artwork to hang on doors for people to see as they walk outside and practice social distancing.

## Submit Your Questions to the Health Department.

The Health Department continues to respond to COVID-19 questions. Check the [Coronavirus FAQs](#) for answers to questions regularly received. Submit your own questions using our [online form](#).



-END-