



CORONAVIRUS BRIEFING: MARCH 27, 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.

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: 3,240 New Cases Today: 823

Total cases in Norfolk County: 393

Total cases in Wellesley: 16 (8 new today)

The Health Department has recommended that we discontinue reporting the number of recovered COVID-19 cases in Wellesley as it is hard to accurately represent the number of people who have recovered. Officials attribute the large increase in COVID-19 cases today to “community spread” - meaning people have been infected with the virus in our area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected. Infected individuals may be showing symptoms, or they may be asymptomatic.

Areas with community spread, like Wellesley, are in the acceleration phase of the COVID-19 pandemic and will likely see many more reported cases. Staying at home, adhering to the community restrictions in place, and social distancing are the best measures to take to limit community spread as much as possible.

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](#).

Travel Guidelines and Online COVID-19 Symptom Checker.

Governor Baker announced new travel guidelines, effective today, requiring anyone arriving in Massachusetts to self-quarantine for 14 days. Only health care and public health workers, public safety workers, transportation workers and designated essential workers are exempt from this requirement.

The announcement also included information on a new online COVID-19 symptom checker. The free service is provided by [Buoy Health](#). It does not replace emergency care but can support users and connect them to appropriate health care resources. [Read the announcement here.](#)

WPS Remote Learning Update.

Wellesley Public Schools continues to refine its remote learning plans with guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide families and students with online learning until schools reopen on May 4. A more robust model will be announced next week. See the message from Superintendent of Schools Dr. David Lussier.

Dear WPS Community,

I write to you during unprecedented times when the COVID-19 pandemic has not yet peaked in our state or the country. The anxiety levels among our students, parents, and staff is palpable as we continue to deal with a crisis we have not experienced in our lifetimes. The safety of our community remains our first priority and I encourage everyone to continue heeding the guidance coming from our federal, state, and local health officials.

Among the many concerns we all share right now is how best to support our students while schools are not in session. When we announced the WPS closure on March 12th, educators across the district had already begun work on a remote learning plan for a two-week window of time. Based on clear guidance from the state, this approach was focused on educational enrichment and flexibility. Even as our remote learning site went live last week, it was clear that we would need to revisit this approach with the prospect of an even longer-than-anticipated closure likely. This was confirmed when Governor Baker announced on Wednesday that all schools in Massachusetts would remain closed until May 4th, 2020.

Yesterday, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released new guidance to school districts on how to approach this extended closure. While recognizing that there are significant equity issues that challenge our support of all students through remote learning platforms, the Commissioner of Education encouraged districts to begin planning for a more robust approach to student learning, consistent with the planning already underway in WPS.

With a strong foundation already in place, WPS is working to complete version 2.0 of our remote learning model in the coming week, which we will then begin to roll out to the community. While we intend to provide a structure for meaningful learning at all levels, we fully intend to maintain a great deal of flexibility for our families and staff, knowing that we are each dealing with unique circumstances in our households that often must take priority.

Finally, while I appreciate the high anxiety levels that surround us all at the moment, I ask that we also pause and consider the core values that our district tries to uphold each day and let these values inform how we communicate and collaborate with one another during this time of uncertainty.

Please stay safe and healthy in the days ahead.

Best regards,

Dr. David Lussier, Superintendent of Schools

Wellesley Free Library Closed Until May 4.

To continue to protect the health and safety of the public, our volunteers and staff are our top priority. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, all Wellesley Free Libraries will remain closed until May 4. Fines will be suspended and due dates extended during this time. Book drops are closed, so please hold on to your materials.

Virtual Government Meetings for Week of March 30.

See the list of government meetings scheduled for March 30 – April 3. Agendas and public comment information can be found in the [Agenda Center](#) on the Town of Wellesley website.

Wellesley Virtual Government Meetings Week of March 30th

Monday March 30th	Wednesday April 1st
9:00 a.m. Facilities Management	6:30 Planning Board
5:30 Municipal Light Plant	5:30 Board of Public Works
3:00 Board of Public Works	Thursday April 2nd
6:00 Board of Selectmen	5:30 School Building Committee
7:00 Natural Resources Commission	6:30 Wetland Protection Committee
Tuesday March 31st	Friday April 3rd
6:30 School Committee	8:30 a.m. Sustainable Energy Committee
7:30 Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing	

Meetings can be watched live in these formats:

From Wellesley Media Home Page www.wellesleymedia.org
High Definition stream on Wellesley Media Youtube channel
High Definition live stream of local TV channels

Local Cable TV
Comcast 8/Verizon 40 Government Channel
Comcast 9/Verizon 39 Public Channel



#WellesleyWillBeWell

Red Cross Blood Drive on April 1.

The American Red Cross has partnered with Wellesley Dental Group to hold a local blood drive on Wednesday, April 1. **This is by appointment only – NO WALK INS.** Call 1-800-RED-CROSS to schedule an appointment or go to www.RedCrossBlood.org and enter Wellesley Dental Group. The Blood Drive runs from 12 noon – 5 p.m. at the Wellesley Community Center. Precautionary measures will be in place to ensure the safety of all donors and Red Cross workers.

The Red Cross is urging healthy, eligible individuals to donate to help maintain a sufficient blood supply and avoid any potential shortages during the COVID-19 crisis. Donating blood does not impact or weaken the immune system.

PPE Donation Program.

Residents continue to support the Town's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) program. To donate **please call the Fire Department at 781-235-1300.** This program is **PICK-UP ONLY.** Please remember, following [public health guidance](#), all supplies must be sealed and clearly marked. No flammable, perishable or homemade supplies will be accepted.

-END-