



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Update on COVID-19 From the Town of Needham and Needham Public Health

March 20, 2020 – The Town of Needham and Needham Public Health today provided the following update regarding COVID-19.

COVID-19 Numbers

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is reporting that as of March 20, 2020, there are 413 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Massachusetts, including 64 in Norfolk County. There are three confirmed cases in Needham.

Beginning next week, the Town will release the confirmed cases in Needham weekly each Wednesday at 5 pm.

It is important to note that the numbers reported do not represent the reality of our situation. The number of cases is likely many times higher. Due to limited testing, however, we don't have a true picture of how many people have been infected with the virus. To protect yourself, we strongly urge people to practice social distancing.

Social distancing is the practice of staying at least six feet away from other people, especially when in public settings. It also means modifying our everyday behavior, such as canceling play dates, postponing discretionary shopping, and only spending time near your immediate family members.

Shopping for groceries or picking up medications at the pharmacy are not discretionary, however. When you do shop for groceries, there are some simple steps to make the experience safer:

- Make a grocery shopping list, and go into the store with a plan in order to minimize your time in a public setting;
- Be especially mindful not to touch your face while in the grocery store specifically or out in town generally;
- Clean your hands with hand sanitizer before and after shopping, and when you return to your car.

Check out these charts for more: <http://www.needhamma.gov/4855/Social-Distancing-Guidelines>

Select Board Declares State of Emergency

The Needham Select Board voted today to declare a local state of emergency, a procedural move that gives the Town maximum flexibility during COVID-19 and provides additional resources for managing the outbreak. The declaration is a proactive measure and is not in response to any Needham-specific cases. The declaration is similar to those in neighboring communities. The declaration will remain in effect until further notice. The full Select Board meeting can be viewed on the Town's Facebook Page (www.facebook.com/townofneedham)

Needham Community Council Seeking Food Donations

The Needham Community Council is seeking small portion-sized raw meats: chopped meat, hot dogs, chicken. 1-2 lb packages. (PLEASE NO BULK), eggs, and bread. See the Council's website (<http://needhamcommunitycouncil.org/>) for COVID-19 emergency wish list. The NCC is operating by appointment only; no more than 1-2 clients at a time. The Council is also providing delivery to homebound seniors.

Wellesley College Facilities Closed to the Public



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A note from Wellesley College: “Last week, in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the College announced it would be moving to remote instruction for the remainder of the semester. Therefore, and in accordance with Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker’s recent guidance, all Wellesley College facilities are closed to the public for the foreseeable future.

This is a very difficult time and we applaud all of the work that the neighboring towns are doing to keep residents safe. Going forward, campus buildings and facilities will only be open to students remaining on campus, faculty, staff, and registered guests of the College. All athletics facilities—indoor and outdoor, including the track, fields, and tennis courts—are closed. Only Wellesley College registered vehicles will be permitted to park in campus parking lots. The College also asks that any visitors who do come to campus, for example to walk around Lake Waban, be mindful of their safety and the safety of others by not congregating and by maintaining social distance. We are taking these measures to assure the safety of all of us. We look forward to returning to the days of sharing our beautiful campus with our neighbors. If you have questions or concerns about this, please contact the Office of Communications and Public Affairs. Additional information can be found on the College’s coronavirus website.”

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