

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021

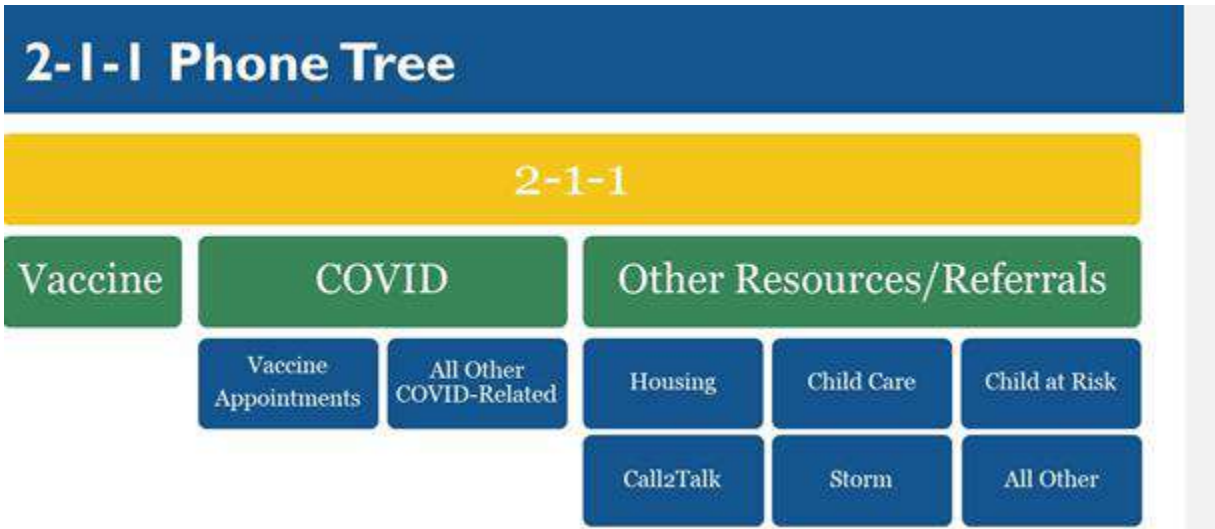


Inter-agency Staff on the Webinar

- Jana Ferguson, Assistant Commissioner, DPH
- Ron O'Connor, Office of Local and Regional Health, DPH
- Dr. Catherine Brown, Glynnis LaRosa, Laurie A. Courtney, and Tammy Goodhue, Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences, DPH
- Donna Quinn, Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management, DPH
- Ben Wood and Lauren Cardoso, Division of Community Health Planning and Engagement, DPH
- Michael Flanagan and Adam Kinney, Department of Labor Standards
- Helene Bettencourt, Anne Gilligan, and Anne Marie Stronach, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Cheryl Sbarra, Massachusetts Association of Health Boards
- Jeff Farnsworth, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
- Chief Edward Dunne, Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association

Announcements:

2-1-1 overview: Lots of questions about how this is working in conjunction with the employee assistance line. Please look at the 211 phone tree.



This week we made a change to make it easier for people to get to the right place. You might have heard that people were really struggling, waiting in a long queue, and having to be referred. Right now, if you call 211, there will be brief message that says if you are 65 or older and do not have access to the internet, please press 1. If you have other needs please stay on the line. Then, there will be an additional message about if you want more information about COVID. If COVID is not what you're looking for, and instead you are looking for assistance with

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



emergency child care, food insecurity, suicide prevention, housing/eviction, storm emergencies, and additional social services (LBOH, DLS, DESE, EEC, etc.), there will be a prompt for how to connect with the appropriate staff. This is managed by DPH and United Way. This resource team is different from the 211 COVID-19 scheduling team. This resource team is available 24/7, open to anyone in Massachusetts with questions about COVID-19. Questions about COVID-19 revolve around transmission, prevention, testing, quarantine, isolation, vaccine eligibility, reopening, emergency orders, advisories, etc. Primary resource is mass.gov.

For the vaccine scheduling resource team, this is not DPH or United Way, these are professional hotline members and there are about 700 call takers who are hosting this. There are always English and Spanish speakers, but there are also about 100 languages available through an interpreter line. This is only for people who do not have internet. One thing that has happened is that people think this is another option for them although they have internet. Also, call takers use the mass vax site finder, they do not have access to special appointments. Because they receive thousands of calls each day, they have to be quick with the call so sometimes they can't do a deep investigation. For example, some sites like pharmacies can be difficult because their registration process is more difficult. If there are no appointments available for a caller, or they cannot use the internet themselves, they will be placed on a callback list if additional appointments become available, but people need to understand there is a long list. You might have to wait several weeks to get a call back, and these are only for mass vax sites. Also, one limitation is that they cannot assist with 2nd dose appointments. Some sites that offer the first dose will schedule the second dose at the same time. 211 Scheduling resource team is available Monday-Thursday, 8:30 am-8:00 pm, Friday-Sunday 8:30-5:00pm.

Q: 211 for people who are deaf? Is there a TTY?

A: People call with an interpreter. Yes, TTY, also a chat feature online. I don't think we've received any.

Q: How to get a second dose?

A: What we are doing is instructing people to go on PrepMod where there are ways to schedule yourself for an appointment, in some instances people are calling their COA or local senior center who can help make an appointment at their site. Getting 2nd dose appointments has been difficult, especially if a site shuts down.

Q: People have gone to Gillette and told to schedule their second appointment on their own.

A: Yes, we received calls about Gillette that people are being told they have to schedule their second appointment on their own. But then this information was in the confirmation email the entire time, and people skipped over it.

COVID-19 [Community Impact Survey](#): Conducted online survey between Sept. and Nov. of 2020, available in 11 languages and employed a sampling strategy that ensured we reach key populations. Weighted results to the state average to make them more representative to the

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



state. Survey had open ended questions to capture previously unknown needs and barriers. Able to understand the experiences of these different population groups, makes this survey very meaningful. Recruited participants via a network of community-based organizations (CBOs). Over 33,000 adult respondents in the final sample. More respondents from western and central MA than in the entire statewide samples of past surveillance surveys (e.g. BRFSS—Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey). Compared to past surveillance surveys, CCIS (Covid19 Community Impact Survey) priority population samples reached: 10 times as many Alaska Native/Native Americans, 10 times as many LGBTQ respondents, 5 times as many residents who speak languages other than English, 5 times as many Hispanic residents, 5 times as many Asian residents, over twice as many respondents in other populations including the deaf/hard of hearing and Black community. Additional focus groups were conducted with the deaf/hard of hearing community. We presented the preliminary results last month at the Public Health Council (PHC). At the March 10 PHC meeting, we plan to release data for select outcomes from the survey by the following levels of geography: counties, rural clusters, municipalities (including the 20 SVI [CDC Social Vulnerability Index] communities).

GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD

COUNTY	SAMPLE SIZE	RURAL CLUSTERS	SAMPLE SIZE	SVI CITIES	SAMPLE SIZE	SAMPLE SIZE RANGE	# OF CITIES/TOWNS
Barnstable	774	495 Corridor	235	BOSTON	2631	0	9
Berkshire	652	Blackstone Valley	191	BROCKTON	220	1 - 29	136
Bristol	1886	Central Berkshires	67	CHELSEA	120	30 - 100	118
Dukes	127	Central Pioneer Valley	158	EVERETT	156	101 - 150	30
Essex	3254	Dukes County	126	FALL RIVER	308	151 - 250	31
Franklin	1008	East Franklin	663	FITCHBURG	78	251+	27
Hampden	2228	East Quabbin	79	FRAMINGHAM	576		
Hampshire	1310	Essex	102	HAVERSHILL	145		
Middlesex	9066	Hilltowns	233	HOLYOKE	329		
Nantucket	86	Lower/Outer Cape	246	LAWRENCE	295		
Norfolk	3975	Nantucket	86	LEOMINSTER	82		
Plymouth	1772	North Central	465	LOWELL	405		
Suffolk	3503	North Quabbin	262	LYNN	235		
Worcester	4058	Northern Berkshires	208	MALDEN	319		
		Quabog Valley	300	METHUEN	129		
		Southeastern Mass	426	NEW BEDFORD	166		
		Southern Berkshires	182	RANDOLPH	340		
		West Franklin	226	REVERE	234		
				SPRINGFIELD	491		
				WORCESTER	476		

For each outcome, if at least 30 residents from a geography completed the survey question and at least 5 of those residents answered in the affirmative, we will be able to share that data point. For this reason, some communities and rural clusters may not have reportable information for all outcomes. We talked about people’s ability to exercise social distancing to mitigate individual risk of infection, and why people are unable to do that. Often times it was

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



about needing to go to work. Also about testing, are you getting tested? Do you know where to go? What are common barriers? Also about access to healthcare, and what kind of service do you need and what are your barriers? Also about the social determinants of health, specially access to housing, medication, social services. Which are the populations most impacted, not only with COVID-19 but will all aspects of social determinants of health.



There are limitations to the data, but we want to make sure we can send out as much data as we can. We would love your help and input for what you need or would like to use this data for to help you. What types of data do you want to see? What format would be the most useful? What geographic level of data would be the most helpful and actionable? We value your input! Please take our very short survey: <https://mdph.checkboxonline.com/CCIS-Survey-for-Community-Stakeholders>

Q: How did you define the 495 corridor, why did you not use the existing distinctions like Nashoba valley?

A: Experts at DPH have defined these clusters and they decided how to label them. What we did was find the sample sizes of the communities around, and although it might not belong perfectly on the normal community identity, sometimes if one community only had 30 responses, we do need to branch out and include additional communities into each category.

Reopening Update: Back into Phase 3, Step 2 effective March 1st. Indoor performance venues such as concert halls, theatres, and other indoor performance spaces are allowed to be at 50% capacity with 500 person max. Indoor recreational activities with greater potential for contact, such as laser tag, roller skating, trampolines, obstacle courses can open at 50% capacity.

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



Additional industries increasing to 50% capacity are: Arcades and other indoor and outdoor recreation businesses, close contact personal services, driving and flight schools, fitness centers and health clubs, golf facilities (indoor), libraries, operators of lodging (common spaced), museums/cultural/historic facilities, guided tours, office spaces, places of worship, sectors not otherwise addressed, theatres and performance venues, relevant EEA industries such as youth sports spectator etc. The following industries remain unaffected by capacity limits: drive-in movie theatres, construction, laboratories, manufacturing.

Restaurants: Effective March 1st, restaurants will no longer be subject to a % seated capacity limit and their capacity is limited only by the requirement of 6 ft between tables. Musical performances allowed in restaurants with appropriate distancing. 90 minute time limit on tables stays in place, limit of not more than 6 people per table stays in place, and food courts remain closed.

Fitting rooms: May open in all retail businesses.

Gathering limits: Effective March 22nd, and subject to public health data, limits will increase for event venues and public settings, but will stay the same in private settings. Event venues and public settings, 100 indoor, 150 outdoor. Private settings (such as private residences), 10 indoors, 25 outdoors.

Phase 4, Step 1: Effective March 22nd, subject to public health data. Indoor and outdoor stadiums, arenas, and ballparks will reopen with a 12% capacity limit. A large venue is defined as having a capacity of 5,000 or more. Venues with a capacity under 5,000 are subject to the indoor and outdoor performance venue guidance. Large venues will be required to submit a safety plan to DPH. Overnight camps will be allowed to open for summer 2021. Exhibition and convention halls may reopen, subject to gathering limits and event rules. Dance floors may open at weddings and events only. All other phase 4 industries will not be able to open until a future reopening step.

Q: Food courts, convenience stores? Bingo, music?

A: Food courts are still closed and sit down dining in convenience stores was never allowed. You are supposed to be wearing a mask at all times in a retail establishment. Bingo nights are allowed under indoor performances. Brass and wood instruments are still discouraged but are allowed. Some guidance on distancing exists for bands, and we encourage people to review those.

Q: Is the guidance still “work from home if you can”? Retail businesses currently include staff and workers, will staff still be counted towards the 50% for retail businesses?

A: Working from home has never been a requirement even early on. Retail limits includes all customers but excludes employees.

Q: Plexiglass barriers in restaurants if less than 6 ft?

A: Still required.

Q: Event being held in a conference room?

A: 50% max or 100 people indoors

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



Q: Buffets at a wedding venue?

A: Self-serve buffets are prohibited.

Q: Dancing?

A: Only at weddings, no dancing at bars

Q: Ballroom dancing?

A: Falls under youth and amateur sports guidance, specially dance class requirements.

Q: Saunas?

A: Not listed as being able to open up in phase 4 step 1. However, TBD.

Q: Calculation capacity in settings where they don't have clear occupancy guidance?

A: 10 persons / 1k sq. ft. instead of the 8 per 1k

Q: Indoor comedians?

A: If it's a singing comedian, not allowed, but they should be wearing a mask and social distancing.

Q: St. Patrick's day?

A: No specific guidance on that right now.

Questions from Q&A answered out loud:

Connie Dolan - 9:03 AM

Q: Is it permissible for muni's to vaccinated teachers?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:04 AM

A: Not at this time, Group 3 includes teachers and is next to be called up

Shannon Sullivan - 9:04 AM

Q: are board meetings considered a public setting?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:05 AM

A: municipal board meetings, except for Board of Selectpersons, City Council, or Town Meeting, are subject to the gather limitations.

Dawn McCullough - 9:03 AM

Q: Which guideline do outdoor social clubs fall under for capacity? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:06 AM

A: It depends on how they are operating. If they are open as a restaurant they would follow those requirements. If they are open as an event space they would follow that standard.

Marianne Sullivan - 9:06 AM

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



Q: Could you please clarify 50% occupancy of office spaces if employees are exempted from the capacity restrictions? Does this mean all employees can be in office spaces and visitors are restricted to 50%?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:07 AM

A: Employees are not exempted in for capacity limits in offices.

Dan McCormack - 9:07 AM

Q: will all communities move to Phase 3 Step 2 on Monday regardless of their towns "color coding" (Red, Yellow, Green, Grey)? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:07 AM

A: Yes

Shelly Newhouse - 9:10 AM

Q: In the email yesterday it states employees are exempt in the 50% capacity?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:14 AM

A: That was inaccurate. Employees DO count towards capacity in offices.

Kristin Kennedy - 9:15 AM

Q: singer in restaurant- proper distance? Performance venue says 25', is it the same?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:17 AM

A: Singing is not allowed indoors per the performance standard.

6179726446 Ramdin - 9:04 AM

Q: Jana, Thank you and the entire DPH team for all your work over the year as we trudged through COVID response-

-Jana Ferguson - 9:19 AM

A: Thank you, Larry. Thank you too. I hope we can have an adult beverage at the end of this.

joanne belanger - 9:17 AM

Q: I have heard that municipalities (city and town halls) are exempt from the capacity guidance - is that true? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:20 AM

A: It is not true. Only legislative bodies are exempt..

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



Felix Zemel - 9:18 AM

Q: The meeting yesterday morning said that singing and performances will be permitted in restaurants. Is this now incorrect?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:22 AM

A: Performances are allowed indoors and outdoors at restaurants, except singing. Singing is only allowed outdoors.

Fran Fortino - 9:18 AM

Q: so if singing not allowed, what music in restaurant is allowed at which distance?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:23 AM

A: All other performances are allowed, although the playing of brass and wind instruments is discouraged. See the Theater Standard for distances.

Karen O'Neil - 9:20 AM

Q: What guidance is being given for employees when having post-vaccination symptoms in regards to needing Covid testing? -

-Ben Wood - 9:23 AM

A: questions: covid19survey@mass.gov

Eduardo St. Louis - 9:18 AM

Q: Would indoor stand up comedy show be allowed in a restaurant setting starting Monday? or would it fall under no singing criteria?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:23 AM

A: All other performances are allowed, although the playing of brass and wind instruments is discouraged. See the Theater Standard for distances.

5083781612 Mulloy - 9:21 AM

Q: My Council on Aging is looking for guidance on when they should reopen and specific guidance some of their activities like exercise classes. -

-Mike Coughlin - 9:24 AM

A: The state has not issued specific guidance for COAs. The MA Councils on Aging organizations has some useful information here: <https://mcoaonline.com/recommendations-for-reopening/>

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



Mark Morin - 9:25 AM

Q: What will the status of golf courses and restrictions be when they can reopen with regards to carts and masking-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:26 AM

A: Please see the standard at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-golf-facilities#key-documents-for-reopening->

Robert Duncanson - 9:30 AM

Q: Please clarify if employees are or are not included in the office space capacity limit. Written info from DPH says they are exempt. -

-Mike Coughlin - 9:31 AM

A: Employees are included in the limits for the office standards. The communication that went out yesterday was in error regarding that standard.

Amy Donovan-Palmer - 9:29 AM

Q: I've been told town halls employees are essential workers and are exempt from office capacity guidance but below you say that is not true. So town halls must follow office capacity limits? -

-Mike Coughlin - 9:32 AM

A: municipalities have the authority to declare specific services as critical and can exceed the office standard limit only for those services.

Shanene Pierce - 9:26 AM

Q: A local business is asking us when their employees can take off their masks. They have 6ft cubicles. Our interpretation is that they must wear masks UNLESS they are completely alone in a closed office (walls to ceiling; closed doors). Is this correct?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:39 AM

A: Per the standard, "Workers and visitors must wear face coverings at all times, except when in their own individual workspace and alone" Face coverings are required in all common areas and in meeting rooms, even when 6 feet of distance can be maintained."

Helen Symobs - 9:30 AM

Q: How does 211 work if you are deaf?-

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



-Ron O'Connor - 9:40 AM

A: Callers can use Mass Relay (7-1-1). People can simply dial 7-1-1 from any phone to reach someone who uses a standard phone or a TTY. An operator will relay verbatim the conversation between the parties.

Can also chat online at mass211.org

Robin Williams - 9:43 AM

Q: Can you please clarify the question asked regarding office space and wearing a mask. The answer is not entirely clear and this question comes up a lot.-

-Adam Kinney - 9:44 AM

A: Email me with the specific question at adam.kinney@mass.gov

Mark Morin - 9:45 AM

Q: Must masks be worn on the courses? This was changed at the end of last year but earlier in 2020 players could avoid wearing masks outside as long as they were socially distanced-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:46 AM

A: Please review the standard for more information

7743664158 Blondeau - 9:46 AM

Q: Will the capacity limit also be raised to 50% on March 1st for Indoor and Outdoor activities such as banquet halls?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:48 AM

A: Yes, with a max of 100 indoors and 150 outdoors.

Stephanie Fitch - 9:48 AM

Q: Does music in restaurants include singing?-

-Adam Kinney - 9:48 AM

A: No, singing is not allowed indoors

Kelly Pawluczonek - 9:48 AM

Q: St. Patricks day festivities in restaurants with music, is this considered an event-

-Adam Kinney - 9:50 AM

A: Email me, adam.kinney@mass.gov. The specifics make is change.

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



bonnie dufresne - 9:49 AM

Q: High School football games played in a less than 5,000 seat outdoor stadium - what standards do we follow for capacity limits?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:51 AM

A: Follow the EEA youth and adult sports standards.

wendy machmuller - 9:50 AM

Q: What is max timeframe between 1st and 2nd dose for vaccine efficacy (for people having a hard time scheduling their 2nd dose)What is efficacy for Moderna 1st dose + Pfizer 2nd dose-

-laurie courtney - 9:52 AM

A: Similar efficacy between the two. See <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html> for details on minimum and maximum intervals between doses.

Rike Sterrett - 9:50 AM

Q: Are wedding venues starting Monday allowed to have 100 people indoor wedding receptions? Or does this fall under a private event? Thank you!-

-Adam Kinney - 9:52 AM

A: That increase takes place March 22nd

Barry Potvin - 9:50 AM

Q: Is bar seating in restaurants still restricted?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:55 AM

A: Yes

Michelle Donovan - 9:57 AM

Q: Any information on Proms/graduation?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:56 AM

A: Not as yet.-

-Michael Flanagan - 10:00 AM

A: Follow the Events standard

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 2/26/2021



Donna Weber - 9:59 AM

Q: where should you report when an establishment is NOT following the guidelines?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:58 AM

A: The local board of health should be the first contact for a complaint regarding noncompliance.

Marykate Franks - 9:55 AM

Q: I couldn't hear Mike's answer on self-serve buffets. Are those allowed at restaurants and events? -

-Michael Flanagan - 10:01 AM

A: No