

Norfolk County-8 Coalition

MDPH/LBOH Webinar 3/19/2021



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 and Laurie A. Courtney, Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences, DPH
- Donna Quinn and Mary Clark, Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management, DPH
- Michael Flanagan and Adam Kinney, Department of Labor Standards
- Helene Bettencourt, Anne Gilligan, and Anne Marie Stronach, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Dr. John Welch, Community Tracing Collaborative
- Cheryl Sbarra, Massachusetts Association of Health Boards
- Chief Edward Dunne, Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association
- Jeff Farnsworth, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

Announcements:

COVID-19 Order No. 66: Advancement to Phase IV, Step 1:

Section 1: All municipalities may move into this step, effective March 22nd. Order No. 66 sets capacity limits for the following large capacity venues (5,000 people or more) at a strict 12% capacity limit (unsure where this % came from) after submitting a plan to DPH and rescinds COVID-19 orders 35 and 43 regarding spectators at professional sports events. Venues include indoor and outdoor stadiums, arenas, ballparks. Also, Order No. 66 replaces travel order with travel advisory. Gathering limits set in COVID-19 Order No. 64 are adjusted beginning March 22nd found in the appendix.

Appendix: adjusts gathering limits effective March 22nd as follows: gatherings at private residences (and other places not event venues or public settings) are limited to a maximum of 10 people indoors and are limited to a maximum of 25 people outdoors. Gatherings at an event venue/not a private residence are limited to a maximum of 100 people indoors, and maximum 150 people in a single venue or space outdoors. You can pass hors d'oeuvres, and servers can take orders and bring drinks to people, but can't have a bar. Restaurants must continue to follow restaurant standards except for the 90 minutes limit for patrons. Events also do not need to be cut off at 90 min. Dance floors will be permitted at weddings and other events only. Dance floors can be open, don't need to be socially distanced but do need to wear face covering. DESE going to put our information about proms that occur at school and other school end activities. Food courts are now open. Self-serve beverages in all settings are open i.e. fast food, not just convenience stores like Cumby's. Fitness centers' social distancing reduced to 6 ft from 14 ft. Museum walking tour size is now 25. Theatres/drive in and other types of performance venues allows for beverage stands to be open as long as they follow restaurant

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rules. Overnight summer camps will be allowed to operate this summer.

Exhibition and convention halls may also be allowed to operate this summer, following gatherings limits and event protocols. Phase IV, Step 2 enterprises must remain closed.

Convention centers not subject to 5k capacity, only adhere to following gathering limits and events. Similar facilities with capacities less than 5k must follow applicable sector-specific rules for activities.

Section 2: Capacity/Safety for large capacity venues. Safety plan must be submitted to DPH at least 10 days prior to opening. These plans include measures for maintaining social distance and capacity limitations; staffing and operations plans; hygiene protocols; and cleaning protocols. DPH may require revisions to safety plan at any time for unsafe conditions.

Occupancy counts include all spectators and attendees but may exclude workers and staff employed by the venue. LBOHs do not need to review these safety plans.

Section 3: Sector-specific rules for large capacity venues specified in section 2 of the orders.

Requirements for compliance with sector-specific safety rules and mechanisms for enforcement in COVID-19 order No. 43 apply to Phase IV, Step 1 enterprises. Any penalty issued in an enforcement action shall be administered as provided in COVID-19 order number 48.

Section 4: [Travel advisory.](#) Going from order to advisory means not subject to the penalty/fine.

All visitors entering Massachusetts, including returning residents, are advised to quarantine for 10 days upon arrival. Exemptions from travel advisory: negative test up to 72 hours prior to arrival. If not obtained before entry to MA, a test may be obtained after arrival, as long as travelers quarantine until a negative test result has been received; returning to MA after an absence of fewer than 24 hours; workers who enter MA to perform critical infrastructure functions while they are commuting to or from or while at work; travelers who are fully vaccinated and who do not have symptoms.

Q: If someone is testing for the travel advisory, can they use an antigen test or PCR test to comply with travel order? Any time requirement between an antigen test and PCR test? If someone tests positive with antigen test and follow up PCR test is negative, does it have to be done again? What about travel advisory and DESE?

A: No clarity on this right now. Only EUA approved PCR tests or BinaxNOW tests are fair game, not just any antigen test. Still unsure how to treat other antigen tests. No time requirement, but should be tested sooner than later. Both tests are dependent on how much virus you have in your nasal and oral cavity. PCR is gold standard, if a PCR test is taken within 48 hours of an antigen test, if the results are different, the PCR result is what you go with. DESE never put out guidance about the travel order. They kept referencing the general travel order. Schools now have the ability to set up their own travel orders.

Q: Brass and wind instruments in performances? School bands?

A: Wind and brass instruments are discouraged but are allowed indoor. Except for singing, all indoor performances are allowed. Question about school bands in guidance that [DESE released last week.](#)

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Q: Travel order and applying to sports?

A: Although the travel order is being changed to an advisory, in some states the hockey interstate agreement between New England states still applies until end of this month. Hockey players are only allowed to participate in practices or clinics in other states, not games.

Voting legislation: A law signed by Gov. Charlie Baker provides a three-month extension for changes to voting procedures that were enacted last spring including early voting by mail. The new law does the following: Allows a city or town with a municipal caucus or annual or special municipal election scheduled before June 30th, 2021, to postpone such municipal caucus or municipal election to a date certain not later than Aug. 1, 2021. Allows the select board, board of selectmen, town council or board of registrars to vote to eliminate a municipal caucus scheduled to occur before July 31st, 2021, and, in the alternative, use nomination papers to nominate candidates. More information can be found on [MMA website](#).

COVID-19 vaccine updates: Will be transitioning people over to new registration system being used at mass vax sites called Color. The website puts you into a queue based on eligibility. If you register now and click you are a member of the general public, it won't tell you until April 19th about where you can get vaccinated. It triages you to an appropriate priority group.

www.mass.gov/COVIDVaccine

Questions from Q&A answered out loud:

Q: Plexiglass still being used. Should schools be taking them down?

A: No, but we are looking at that as a last resort option.

Q: Proms?

A: Working on this. In the interim schools can use last year's planning.

Q: Does PrepMod still require health insurance information?

A: PrepMod has never required health insurance, you can click no insurance.

Q: Which enterprises and activities are still closed?

A: Amusement parks/theme parks, outdoor/indoor water parks, street festivals, parades, road races, agricultural events, dance clubs, beer gardens/wineries not providing seated food service are also closed.

Q: Postal workers included in next group on Monday?

A: if you feel confident that the group applies to you, check off attestation and sign up for an appointment.

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Q: Can US citizens schedule appointments for vaccine?

A: Vaccines are available for anyone who lives, works, or studies in MA. Not required to be documented. We are trying to have as few barriers as possible to getting a vaccine.

Q: If someone wanted to decrease quarantine period by testing out with a negative antigen test, how will health department know they had the antigen test?

A: You can't know from what is reported on MAVEN, no way to detect this. BinaxNOW is not generally widespread. It's possible, but somewhat unlikely to have the BinaxNOW to test out for travel purposes.

Q: Parents want to know if teachers have been vaccinated. Is there a person or number to see if they can figure this out? Administration is applying pressure on this as an issue of privacy.

A: Go to school committee and legal counsel and take it from here. Issue of privacy.

Q: 3ft apart in the classroom and 6 ft apart for close contacts?

A: Distancing for contact tracing has not changed. We rely on our partners from DPH advisory board for this information. All of this is still in place. But we want to reiterate that guidance for schools using 3ft distancing is found in latest in-person learning requirements.

Q: Does pre-registration for vaccine give you a preference for location?

A: No. Automatically connects you to closest mass vax site. Regional collaborations offering vaccine should get on this system too to be on the list.

Q: Is self-serve just beverages? Any food?

A: Just for beverages, no food. Buffets still need to be managed by a server.

Questions from Q&A not answered out loud:

-Heather Gallant - 8:59 AM

Q: Will singing / brass / wind instruments be allowed indoors at performance venues and restaurants Monday? What about capacities at indoor performance venues starting Monday?

Thank you.-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:01 AM

A: Hello-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:02 AM

A: No, singing indoors is not allowed. All other music is allowed, although wind and brass instruments are discouraged. Please see standards for capacity limits

-Lauren Saunders - 9:05 AM

Q: Can someone host an event in an indoor recreation venue, such as a bowling alley? The bowling alley has a bar area but serves a full menu. -

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-Michael Flanagan - 9:07 AM

A: Yes, but it would only be able to host the event in that room. All other activities and lanes would need to be closed.-

-Katie Tenaglia-O'Neill - 9:00 AM

Q: Will there be additional guidance around dance floors- specifically for prom? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:07 AM

A: Dance floors are allowed to be open. Social distancing is not required, but mask wearing is.-

-Helene Bettencourt - 9:11 AM

A: Katie, Schools and districts will need to follow EEA guidance for school-related events such as proms and banquets not held on school property.

-Jared Orsini - 9:04 AM

Q: Where would the guidelines for school band performance be found? My town want the school band to perform on Memorial Day. -

-Helene Bettencourt - 9:09 AM

A: Jared, guidance for school band can be found here:

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/return-to-school/supplement/additional-safety-guide.docx>-

-Susan Lumenello - 9:10 AM

Q: Where can we find a copy of Order No. 66?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:11 AM

A: The orders, once signed, are posted to <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-state-of-emergency>-

-Adrienne Klein - 9:10 AM

Q: Sorry can you repeat that? No there is no fine because its an advisory?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:12 AM

A: Correct.-

-emily harvey - 9:11 AM

Q: Is singing allowed in places of worship?-

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-Mike Coughlin - 9:12 AM

A: yes-

-Jessica Cliff - 7:10 AM

Q: If Prom is held on school property, would they be exempt from the indoor/outdoor event guidance? -

-Anne Gilligan - 9:12 AM

A: Proms held on school property will need to adhere to guidance for schools. The guidance for school events is currently being updated.-

-Helene Bettencourt - 9:15 AM

A: Jessica, Guidance for activities such as graduation is in the process of being updated. Schools can use last year's guidance for planning purposes.

-Maura Reimer - 9:03 AM

Q: Can you please clarify the new travel advisory with a focus on how children are managed-

-Jana Ferguson - 9:13 AM

A: The same as before. This does not apply to children under the age of 10.

-Vivian Zeng - 9:09 AM

Q: Are proms held on school property subject to capacity event venue limitations or are they excluded because of k-12 exceptions for school gatherings?-

-Helene Bettencourt - 9:15 AM

A: Vivian, Guidance for activities such as graduation is in the process of being updated. Schools can use last year's guidance for planning purposes.

-Susan Lumenello - 9:14 AM

Q: Is there an occupancy limit for venues based on the size of the venue?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:17 AM

A: The capacity limit indoors is 100, as long as 6 feet of distance can be maintained. If an event space is too small to maintain this distancing it would have to shrink capacity.-

-Matt Tanis - 9:15 AM

Q: Where would an outdoor, public car show fall under the updated gathering limits?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:17 AM

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A: It would be an outdoor event-

-Shannon Sullivan - 9:15 AM

Q: can self-serve hot dogs at gas stations be open? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:18 AM

A: No, only beverages-

-Heather Gallant - 9:14 AM

Q: did the showers at 50% open change for gyms and fitness centers-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:19 AM

A: No, it is still limited to 50%

-Cynthia Decristofaro - 9:15 AM

Q: Will served buffets be allowed at gatherings?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:19 AM

A: Yes

-Fran Fortino - 9:16 AM

Q: Are road and bike races allowed next week?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:19 AM

A: No

-Lauren Saunders - 9:16 AM

Q: I assume since dance floors are able to be open, guests at events can network and do not need to stay seated?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:19 AM

A: Correct

-Marlene Johnson - 9:16 AM

Q: Are food buffets/self service areas still closed?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:20 AM

A: Yes, they have to be served to be open-

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-rebecca LeBlanc - 9:17 AM

Q: Can you please clarify if you said 25 people are allowed at indoor museums? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:20 AM

A: On a walking tour-

-Shaun McAuliffe - 9:17 AM

Q: Is a self-serve yogurt station or topping bar permitted, given the the fountain drink allowance?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:21 AM

A: No-

-Meegan Lancaster - 9:20 AM

Q: Can restaurants have a DJ?-

-Adam Kinney - 9:22 AM

A: They can, however in a restaurant or bar setting, the dance floor is closed

-MAX SCHENK - 9:18 AM

Q: Hi Michael - Can you re-state the new policy on passed hors d'oeuvres?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:23 AM

A: They are allowed at events when passed by servers-

-Emily Lachance - 9:12 AM

Q: how does the change to a travel *advisory* affect schools? can they allow students/staff to return from vacation without testing/quarantine?-

-Jana Ferguson - 9:23 AM

A: People should comply with the advisory.

-Natasha Waden - 9:20 AM

Q: Sorry, I am wondering if the outdoor performance and theater guidelines can be applied to a field or if those guidelines are for already established venues such as the half shell. -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:24 AM

A: They would be for any venue where a performance is taking place.-

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-Jamie Terry - 9:24 AM

Q: Can a car cruise/show occur in a large open field? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:25 AM

A: It would be required to follow the events standard-

-Jessica Cliff - 7:20 AM

Q: How have the cases been with current sports? Is cheerleading a cause of concern? -

-Cheryl Sbarra - 9:27 AM

A: There is an article in the Globe relative to a cheerleading cluster in Weymouth today.-

-Tammy Spencer - 8:28 AM

Q: If a town is in the red, will they be able to move forward to Phase 4?

-Michael Flanagan - 9:28 AM

A: Yes, all towns are moving to Phase 4 Step 1-

-Julia Junghanns - 9:20 AM

Q: what about singing in school-

-Helene Bettencourt - 9:31 AM

A: Julia, guidance for singing in school is found here:

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/return-to-school/supplement/additional-safety-guide.docx>-

-Kathleen Carney - 9:33 AM

Q: Can you repeat the DESE help desk number-

-Anne Gilligan - 9:33 AM

A: 781-338-3500-

-Helene Bettencourt - 9:35 AM

A: 781-338-3500, press option 2.-

-Peter Faticanti - 9:29 AM

Q: Will phase 4 cause a change in youth and amateur sports or are we still working off the March 1 guidelines for phase 3 step 2?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:35 AM

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A: Yes, EEA is posting that today.-

-Larry Ramdin - 9:30 AM

Q: Are street fairs allowed, I have a question about an Arts fair outdoor event, -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:36 AM

A: No-

-Joseph Reale - 9:32 AM

Q: Hi Michael, if a school holds an outdoor event under a tent on a baseball field and wants to have food trucks on site, would a separate seating area be required with table servers? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:38 AM

A: Each food truck would need a separate staffed seating area and it would have to follow the restaurant standard.-

-Connie Dolan - 9:35 AM

Q: The slide showed 150 outdoor capacity for venues. Was this previously 250? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:38 AM

A: No, it was 25.

-Mary Ann Jackson - 9:34 AM

Q: Will the CDC definition of a close contact remain in effect, even when the desks are allowed to be 3 feet apart in the classroom?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:40 AM

A: yes-

-Fran Fortino - 9:40 AM

Q: Michael, again are road or bike races allowed next week?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:40 AM

A: No

-David Tapscott - 9:27 AM

Q: My understanding is the preregistration is NOT for the new regional sites either.-

-Jana Ferguson - 9:44 AM

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A: That's correct. Not yet-

-Deborah Vondal - 9:44 AM

Q: can escape rooms open-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:44 AM

A: Yes, see <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-arcades-and-other-indoor-and-outdoor-game-and->

-Ruth Clay - 9:44 AM

Q: so there are no square footage requirements for indoor events anymore?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:45 AM

A: Correct-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:45 AM

A: Based on ability to socially distance.-

-Shannon Sullivan - 9:46 AM

Q: is there any updated swimming pool guidance?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:47 AM

A: pool guidance was updated on March 1-

-Shannon Sullivan - 9:47 AM

Q: where's that guidance?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:48 AM

A: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/safety-standards-for-public-and-semi-public-swimming-pools-phase-iii-step-2-effective-3121/download->

-Mark Oram - 9:52 AM

Q: Are there planned changes for the service from a bar, such as a bartender being able to serve the tables set as part of the bar?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:54 AM

A: bar service has not changed and is spelled out in the standard. I will post it-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:54 AM

A: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-restaurants->

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-Jamie Terry - 9:53 AM

Q: If an outdoor club meets on a large outdoor area what are the limitations? -

-Anne Gilligan - 9:54 AM

A: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop.html> Guidance on In person learning.-

-Douglas Telling - 9:41 AM

Q: Can you say no insurance even if you have it?-

-Jana Ferguson - 9:56 AM

A: There is not a rule about this either way. -

-Kelly Constantino - 9:58 AM

Q: In a school setting, how should we manage children under 10 who travel and the adults in their party are fully vaccinated?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:59 AM

A: they have the same status as the adults they travel with