

# Norfolk County-8 Coalition

*MDPH/LBOH Webinar 4/2/2021*



## Inter-agency Staff on the Webinar

- Jana Ferguson, Assistant Commissioner, DPH
- Ron O'Connor, Office of Local and Regional Health, DPH
- Dr. Catherine Brown, Dawn Fukuda, Glynnis LaRosa, 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
- Anne Gilligan, 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
- Kristina Crandall, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Disaster Recovery Unit

### **Announcements:**

**DESE:** 2 guidance documents released yesterday. [Career/Vocational Technical Education Reopening Guidelines and Supplemental Guidance for Student Groups and School Events \(includes prom\)](#). The Department strongly recommends that schools do not host prom and explore opportunities to substitute alternative celebrations for seniors. This is a local decision, if you choose to have a prom this year, it is strongly recommended to wait as long as possible to host the event.

**Public Health Week (April 5-11):** Virtual events hosted by National Public Health Week for next week. Themes include: Monday “Rebuilding”; Tuesday “Advancing Racial Equity”; Wednesday “Strengthening Community”; Thursday “Galvanizing Climate Justice”; Friday “Constructing COVID-19 Resilience”; Saturday “Uplifting Mental Health and Wellness”; Sunday “Elevating the Essential and Health Workforce”. More information [here](#). Massachusetts Public Health Museum will also be hosting events. Tuesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> @7pm “Public Health Nursing: Looking Back While Moving Forward”; Wednesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> @7pm “Speckled Monsters, Destroying Angels, and Strangling Distempers: A Plague of Epidemics”; Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup> @6pm-8pm “Public Health Trivia Night”. More info [here](#).

### **Vaccine resources:**

**Print outs:** Interim clinical considerations and vaccine administration errors and deviations resources from CDC. Easy to print out, but the information changes often so make sure you

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have the most up to date information. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html>

**Training:** CDC also has great resources to provide training and education for several roles involved in vaccine administration. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/training-education/resources.html>

**FEMA Mobile Vaccination:** FEMA working with Massachusetts to increase vaccine available at Hynes Convention Center, adding 6,000 doses a day. Also working with mobile vaccination programs to work with Chelsea, Revere, Boston, Fall River, and New Bedford. These cities were selected from CDC's Social Vulnerability Index along with their proximity to Hynes. FEMA mobile truck will be able to administer 500 doses a day in these communities in Suffolk and Bristol county.

**More mobile vaccination news:** DPH has contracted with 6 mobile vaccine providers. If you have farm workers or others who you would like to optimize vaccination for through mobile deployment, let Dawn Fukuda know. They can work with you to make this happen. One page overview of the program and a form to complete and send to Dawn.

**Equity Outreach Initiatives:** Beginning next week, over 200 bi-lingual, locally hired community organizers will hold 83 outreach events in neighborhoods across each of our 20 equity communities for business walks and door-to-door canvassing and will also start phone-banking efforts to support vaccine appointment registration. Archipelago Strategies Group (ASG), a minority-women owned business and Health Care for All have been working closely with the Department of Public health and our equity communities to build a robust outreach program that is tailored to the needs of each community.

**\$4.7 Million in Grants to 20 Equity Communities:** Immunization grant awarded and distributed by the CDC to these communities to combat vaccine hesitancy among other initiatives. DPH will be providing an update about the equity initiative overall and the work happening around these communities.

**MA Vaccination stats:** As of 3/30, over 32% of MA Residents have received at least one dose; over 18% are fully vaccinated (more than 1.3 million individuals); MA ranks #1 for first doses administered per capita amongst the states with 5M people (Bloomberg 3/28); ranked #1 for total doses administered (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>) per capita amongst the states with 5M people (CDC 3/28); #6 for first doses administered per capita among all states (Bloomberg 3/28); 82% of Massachusetts' residents aged 75+ have received a first dose, exceeding the national average of 71% (CDC 3/28); every MA county has at least 69% of its 75+ population vaccinated; MA is tied for 2<sup>nd</sup> for % of Black residents who have received at least one dose (Bloomberg); 20% of our

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Black residents and 13% of our Hispanic residents have received a first dose (including J&J), exceeding the national average avg. (7.9% of Black residents and 6.4% of Hispanic residents, CDC 3/28).

**Vaccine eligibility:** List of eligible conditions on Mass.gov will change to align with CDC list.

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic lung diseases, including COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), asthma (moderate-to-severe), interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, and pulmonary hypertension
- Dementia or other neurological conditions
- Diabetes (type 1 or type 2)
- Down syndrome
- Heart conditions (such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies or hypertension)

- HIV infection
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system)
- Liver disease
- Overweight and obesity (body mass index (BMI) > 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup>)
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease or thalassemia
- Smoking, current or former
- Solid organ or blood stem cell transplant
- Stroke or cerebrovascular disease, which affects blood flow to the brain
- Substance use disorders

### **Ways to support the vaccination effort:**

Promoting those who are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and encouraging them to [pre-register for a vaccine appointment](#) at a mass vax site and to use [vaxfinder.mass.gov](https://vaxfinder.mass.gov) to find an available appointment. Setting expectations is also important, indicating to individuals that it may take several weeks to get an appointment. Educate and engage your residents about the safety and efficacy of approved vaccines and the importance of getting vaccinated. For materials, please visit the [Stop COVID-19 Vaccine Education and Outreach Materials](#).

**Dr. Brown updates:** Good news about the real world efficacy of the vaccines is really encouraging. EEE updates, starting to think about. This year should be the last year of the outbreak cycle of EEE, but anticipating we might have another bad year. Last year was washed out in the fog of covid, but it was an outbreak EEE year. This is consistent with outbreak years. We are starting to plan for this year. Arbovirus Surveillance and Response Plan is being updated, no significant changes to the process, just updating numbers. Also, surveillance summary from last year will be available. By end of April, might also have some data from mosquito larvae collection being done to understand the population and what that might look like as we start the season.

### **Questions from Q&A answered out loud:**

**Q:** Schools have been using the same BinaxNOW tests for symptomatic students/teachers/staff, can the schools use these tests for people coming back from school vacation?

**A:** Going to take this back and a response will be available on Tuesday.

**Q:** J&J offered at mass vax sites?

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**A:** No pre-registration available for other locations that have J&J. We don't yet have a consistent supply of J&J coming into the Commonwealth, and the manufacturing challenges they had in Maryland will also impact this. No mass vax sites have them yet.

**Q:** With expanded list of eligibility, will DPH reengage LHDs and send them vaccine supply to support?

**A:** Not enough vaccine supply right now.

**Q:** Dance recitals?

**A:** Going to follow EEA standards if at the studio, but if at an event, follow theatre performance venue guidance.

**Q:** Update on variants?

**A:** Variant cases increasing rapidly, the B.1.1.7 strain is the most widespread variant in Massachusetts. P.1 variant still a concern because it has the potential to make vaccines less effective.

### **Questions from Q&A not answered out loud:**

-Nancy Funder - 9:08 AM

**Q:** DESE says 3 ft between desks, CDC says quarantine anyone within 6 ft. Our schools now having to quarantine whole classrooms . This seems punitive if we want kids back in the classroom. Thoughts? Change?-

-Anne Gilligan - 9:09 AM

A: Nancy,-

-Anne Gilligan - 9:33 AM

**A:** <https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop.html>-

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-Timothy McDonald - 9:01 AM

**Q:** In thinking about community locations like senior centers gradually re-opening, is it possible for a municipality to require proof of vaccination before allowing participation in some events or programs (the fitness room, for example)? Or even to allow access to the space itself?-

-Cheryl Sbarra - 9:14 AM

**A:** Employers can require their workers to get vaccinated, but requiring proof for the general public is problematic. We don't know how long immunity lasts, so a vaccination card might not be sufficient. Private businesses have more leeway.-

-Jana Ferguson - 9:37 AM

**A:** I would also strongly recommend that this be reviewed by Town Counsel. There is no current plan for this to be a MA policy. -

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-James White - 9:17 AM

**Q:** Does Massachusetts plan to offer a vaccination passport?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:18 AM

**A:** We do not.-

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-michael Theroux - 9:17 AM

**Q:** My Little League is going to be starting soon. Does every player have to wear a mask at all times due to the Governor's mask mandate in public?-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:19 AM

**A:** The EEA sports guidance now requires all participants to wear a face covering unless there's a medical reason they cannot.-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:23 AM

**A:** <https://www.mass.gov/doc/safety-standards-for-youth-and-adult-amateur-sports-activities-phase-iv-step-1-effective-32221/download->

-Mike Coughlin - 9:24 AM

**A:** there are limited exceptions in the standard at the link above-

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-Karina Scott - 9:28 AM

**Q:** Are the text message reminders when you pre-register in different languages? -

-Jana Ferguson - 9:31 AM

**A:** These are available in English and Spanish. -

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-Joanne Belanger - 9:30 AM

**Q:** are dance competitions allowed and do the dancers have to wear masks during their routines-

-Mike Coughlin - 9:33 AM

**A:** Dance falls under the EEA sports guidance, competitions are allowed, masks are required with limited exceptions.-

-Adam Kinney - 9:34 AM

**A:** With that it was stated that it depends on the nature of the venue. If they are putting some chairs up for spectators to watch in a dance studio, this would just stay under the EEA Sports Guidance. If they are hosting the recital at a facility that has a stage and audience seating (designed for such performances), then they would also need to comply with the Theater and Performance Venue guidance. -

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-Jill Conselino - 9:27 AM

**Q:** can someone please advise on completing the vaccine series if someone can't find the same vaccine appt at the appropriate timeframe? Can we advise residents that they can choose a different vaccine if that's all they are able to find as long as they are at least 28 days apart? please advise-

-Laurie Courtney - 9:34 AM

**A:** This is discussed in the Clinical Considerations. If it is not feasible to adhere to the recommended interval and a delay in vaccination is unavoidable, the second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines may be administered up to 6 weeks (42 days) after the first dose. Currently, only limited data are available on efficacy of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines administered beyond this window. If unable to get within 6 weeks, get asap (no need to restart series)-

-Laurie Courtney - 9:37 AM

**A:** The advice is to get the same vaccine whenever possible, even if you have to wait. That is preferable to mixing the vaccine types. If an extreme circumstance, and unable to get the same mRNA vaccine, then ok to get the other mRNA vaccine. If absolutely unable to get another mRNA vaccine, then go ahead and get JNJ (but then you have a complete series of JNJ, not a mixed vaccine series)-

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-Tara Beuoy - 9:23 AM

**Q:** If students in school are slightly more than 6 feet at lunch time would you still consider surrounding students to be close contacts-

-Anne Gilligan - 9:36 AM

**A:** <https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop.html>-

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-Jeanne Galloway - 9:36 AM

**Q:** Happy National Public Health Week!!-

-Laurie Courtney - 9:38 AM

**A:** THANK YOU!!!-

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-Wesley Chin - 9:33 AM

**Q:** What's the reason for delaying prom so we can share with parents?-

-Anne Gilligan - 9:39 AM

**A:** If schools do choose to hold proms, it is strongly recommended that they delay the prom until after the end of the school year, ideally delaying until such time when most students attending prom will have been vaccinated. -

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-Jill Conselino - 9:36 AM

**Q:** Follow-up to the dance question.... I'm getting some questions about dance recitals. Which guidelines would a recital fall under? Just the indoor/outdoor event standards?-

-Adam Kinney - 9:40 AM

**A:** It depends on the nature of the venue. If they are putting some chairs up for spectators to watch in a dance studio, this would just stay under the EEA Sports Guidance. If they are hosting the recital at a facility that has a stage and audience seating (designed for such performances), then they would also need to comply with the Theater and Performance Venue guidance. -

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-Flor Amaya - 9:38 AM

**Q:** How does one report an extra dose of Moderna? -

-Laurie Courtney - 9:41 AM

**A:** Report it the same way you report any vaccine dose (in EHR, MIIS, etc). But, since this is an error, a VAERS report should be submitted (at <https://vaers.hhs.gov/index.html> ). By reporting this deviation/error you'll be helping the safety data accumulation!-

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-Robin Williams - 9:28 AM

**Q:** If a sport team was observed not wearing a mask, would the \$300 citation be for each player not wearing a mask or just \$300 for not wearing a mask?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:46 AM

**A:** Penalties have been given as a single fine of \$300, and not per person found to not be wearing a face covering. If there are additional violations, such as failure to distance or exceeding max capacity those would also be additional \$300 fines.-

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-Karen Young - 9:46 AM

**Q:** FDA approved BinaxNOW for asymptomatic screening. Will DESE update their guidance to include this rather than only symptomatic individuals?-

-Anne Gilligan - 9:47 AM

A: Karen,-

-Anne Gilligan - 9:47 AM

**A:** Karen, we will get a response to your question as well for next Tuesday.-

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-Allyson Larsen - 9:31 AM

**Q:** In a high school gym, do we go by 50% occupancy for the number of people allowed or use the square footage to determine how many people can be in the space? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:48 AM

**A:** It depends on what the gym is being used for. If it is an event it would need to follow those standards, if it is a game it would follow those, if a cafeteria then those. -

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-Eduardo St. Louis - 9:35 AM

**Q:** Are outdoor funerals on church grounds subjected to the indoor/outdoor guidance or the the place of worship guidance? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:49 AM

**A:** The services would be subject to Places of Worship. If there is a gathering afterwards it would be subject to the events standard. -

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-kathleen brown - 9:43 AM

**Q:** For performing arts events, how are "staff" defined? Some parent volunteers want to be counted as staff to avoid contributing to the headcount. -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:51 AM

**A:** It is, "staff or other workers". That implies they would have to be paid staff. -

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-Wesley Chin - 9:50 AM

**Q:** Can a high school prom be held on a Boston Harbor Cruise for a senior class of 250 students? -

-Michael Flanagan - 9:51 AM

**A:** See DESE guidance on proms -

-Anne Gilligan - 9:52 AM

**A:** Proms held in private venues need to follow DLS guidance. -

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-Maribeth Ting - 9:52 AM

**Q:** could you please direct me to the guidance on an additional moderna vaccine being an error - back when we were vaccinating in February - we did receive extra doses - we did not mix from vials - it being an error is new information to me. is there any problem for the folks who receive the "bonus" dose from the vial? -

-Laurie Courtney - 9:55 AM

**A:** Sorry - I thought you meant an individual person getting a third (extra) dose! -

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-Laurie Courtney - 9:57 AM

**A:** If you happen to get an 11th dose out of a vial of Moderna (remember never poop residuals from multiple doses to get a full dose), document as usual. There is no special documentation.-

-Laurie Courtney - 10:00 AM

**A:** \*pool residuals :-)

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-James Philbrook - 9:57 AM

**Q:** So schools can now make public health decisions, not acceptable!-

-Anne Gilligan - 9:56 AM

**A:** All decisions should be made jointly between LBOH and schools.

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-Allyson Larsen - 9:52 AM

**Q:** It would be a graduation in the athletic center , in case of rain. Is there a cap on the number attending or is the number only capped due to how many people can fit in with 6ft distancing ?-

-Michael Flanagan - 9:58 AM

**A:** It would be required to follow the Indoor and Outdoor Event Standard-

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-Teresa Riley-Singh - 9:57 AM

**Q:** Also, a second question- can you get the vaccine before the 21 or 28 day period?-

-Laurie Courtney - 9:59 AM

**A:** Doses should be scheduled no earlier than the minimal interval. There is a 4-day grace period, which should only be used retrospectively when reviewing records, not for scheduling doses. A COVID-19 vaccine dose administered early still counts as valid, but should not be common practice.-

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-Bill Murphy - 9:59 AM

**Q:** A reenactment march is planned on Patriots Day in my town. Fife and Drum, through the streets, etc. Is a "march" a "parade"?-

-Michael Flanagan - 10:01 AM

**A:** Yes-