

Friday, March 1, 2024

Mayor's Newton Update



Primary Day on Tuesday

Today (Friday, March 1, until 5:00 p.m.) is the last day to cast an early ballot in person at City Hall before next week's Tuesday, March 5 Presidential Primary in Massachusetts.

Through yesterday, Thursday, 583 Newtonians have cast ballots early in-person at City Hall.

Meanwhile, voters in Newton and across the state continue to vote by mail.

Mail-in ballots have been sent to the 14,237 Newtonians who requested them, and 5,817 have been returned so far.

Statewide, 754,145 ballots have been mailed out to voters of which 368,594 have been returned, as reported by the State House News Service. Turnout for early, in-person voting statewide stood at 31,455 as of Wednesday. In other words, less than 1 percent of voters have taken advantage of early in-person voting while 7.5% took advantage of mail in voting.

In Newton as of yesterday, 11% of the City's 60,117 registered voters have already cast ballots in the Presidential Primary, while 8.1% of the State's approximately 4.94 million registered voters have already voted.

Voting on Tuesday, March 5 Election Day

Polls are open on election day on Tuesday across Newton from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (Click [here](#) to find out your polling location, and click [here](#) for a map of polling locations in Newton.)

Each of the three recognized political parties in Massachusetts – Democratic, Republican and Libertarian – hold their own primary and separate ballots are printed for each. (Click [here](#) to see sample ballots for each party.)

In Massachusetts, all voters can participate in the primary. If you're registered in one party, however, you can only vote in that party's primary.

Unenrolled voters and members of "political designations" (click [here](#) for more information on political designations) can choose a party ballot when voting in person and as they check-in at a polling location. Choosing a ballot will not result in you being enrolled in that party.

Landmark Opioid Settlement Allows Newton To Expand Services

The City of Newton will receive more than \$3.8 million over the next 15 years to help residents of Newton with substance use issues and to provide support and services for prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery.

These funds are Newton's share from a set of landmark settlements by Massachusetts with opioid manufacturers, distributors, and retail pharmacies.

As we began anticipating receiving these funds, Newton Department of Health and Human Services staff created an advisory group. The [Newton Coalition for Community Wellness](#) advisory group is helping us prioritize the use of the funds. The Coalition for Community Wellness, formed in October of 2022, includes staff members from City Departments (Health and Human Services, Police, Fire, Senior Services, Newton Public Schools), community partners (Coastal Ambulance, City Council, Newton-Wellesley Hospital, Boston College, Newton Community Development Foundation), and Newton residents who have professional expertise and/or lived experience.

With their guidance, we have the following initiatives currently underway:

- Partnering with Newton-Wellesley Hospital Substance Use Services Clinic to provide care and support to Newtonians struggling with substance use disorder.
- Installing opioid overdose rescue kits in Newton public buildings.
- Offering prevention programs for Newton youth.
- Providing resources to Newton community members of all ages, including Narcan, substance use education, and referrals to care.

Newton Health and Human Services and the Coalition for Community Wellness will continue to explore ways to use these funds in sustainable, equitable and meaningful ways to address lives being impacted by the opioid and substance use epidemic.

If you have questions, input, or ideas, please email us at newtonccw@newtonma.gov.

Two New Ways to Get Food Waste Out of Our Trash

Expanded and Free Food Waste Drop-Off Locations

Approximately 30% of our trash in Newton is food scraps and compostable paper (collectively referred to as organics or compost). That's a lot.

Instead of being thrown away as trash, organics can be collected separately and become compost, a nutrient-rich soil amendment for our gardens, fields, and

trees. Keeping organics out of the trash also helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and saves all of us as taxpayers money.

We've had one drop-off location for organics at Newton's Resource Recovery Center at Rumford Avenue since 2020 and it's been well used. But, located on the edge of Newton close to the Waltham line, the Resource Recovery Center is not convenient for all residents.

We have launched a pilot program that expands the no-cost organics drop-off program to three new locations on the south, center and north sides of Newton.

Organics must be contained in a certified compostable or paper bag for drop off. Loose material and non-certified compostable bags are not accepted in order to keep our bins clean.

Black Earth Compost will collect the organics and process them into compost. (Click [here](#) to view the list of accepted materials. You can drop off not only food waste but also house plants, pet food, wine corks and more.)

Free Drop-Off Bin Locations for Organics:

- Albemarle Road, north bound, just past the baseball diamond
- War Memorial Circle at Newton City Hall, 1000 Comm Ave., by the bike rack
- Wheeler Road, directly across from Oak Hill Middle School (130 Wheeler Road), next to two Helpsy bins

[Register to Use the New Organics Drop-Off Bins](#)

You do have to register to use the drop-off organics bins as we are keeping them locked to prevent them from being used for trash. It's easy to register. Click [here](#) (or use the QR code below) to fill out a brief registration form to get the lock combination.

The new bins are available all year long and 24 hours a day. The current organics drop-off bins at Newton's Resource Recovery Center, 115 Rumford Avenue, will still be available and no registration is required to use them. Check our [website](#) for the Rumford Avenue Resource Recovery Center hours of operation.

Drop-Off Tips

Collect accepted materials in a reusable container lined with a 3-gallon bag that is certified compostable or made of paper only. It's handy to use a kitty litter bucket or 5-gallon bucket to transport organics a drop-off bin. Please help keep the drop-off bin area clean and free from debris by making sure all organic materials fit in the bin and are not left on the ground. Click [here](#) to learn more about composting.

Prefer Curbside Composting? Free Starter Kits for the Black Earth Curbside Composting Program are Available

Join the over 3,000 Newton households who subscribe with Black Earth Compost for curbside organics collection service. The service costs \$59.99 for six months of weekly collection. Newton has state funding to pay for organics collection starter kits (\$39 value) for residents setting up new service. The kit includes a 13-gallon locking cart.

Click [here](#) to learn more about composting. The cost of the starter kit will be automatically deducted at checkout when you sign up for service in Newton.

Questions? Email recycling@newtonma.gov.

Celebrate the Cooper Center Groundbreaking on March 7

With help from thousands of residents, elected and appointed officials, and city staff who have worked together for the past six years to bring the vision of a new center for our older residents and community to life, we're ready to celebrate.

Join us on Thursday, March 7 at 10:00 a.m. (rain or shine) as we officially break ground on the new Cooper Center for Active Living that will open next year at 345 Walnut Street in Newtonville.

We'll hear from those who have helped get us to this day, and open the time capsule from 1938 that had been buried at the former Newtonville Branch Library. What do think we'll find?

Help Us Reimagine our City Seal

The City Seal Team and [Sebastian Ebarb](#), graphic designer for the City Seal, invite you to provide input as we reconsider our City Seal:

- If you were to describe Newton in 3 words, what would they be?
- What would you like Newton to be known for?
- What concepts/images would you like to see in a design that represents Newton?
- What concepts/images would you rather *not* see in a design that represents Newton?

Join us for a community meeting on **Thursday, March 28 at 7:00 p.m.** in Druker Auditorium in the Newton Free Library (330 Homer St.) to hear from others and/or give a short response (of up to three minutes) to any or all those questions. If you cannot be at the meeting in-

person, you may join via Zoom (click [here](#) for the link). You may also email answers to these questions, or send feedback to cityseal@newtonma.gov, or provide input via an online [community feedback form](#).

Also, if you wish to receive email updates about the City Seal project and reminders about upcoming community meetings, please sign up [here](#).

Newtonian

Matthew Jefferson, a person of character, a public servant, an advocate for justice, a generous contributor to community and church, an outstanding leader, and a loving husband and father turned 100 a few weeks ago. I was honored to join the Myrtle Baptist community on Sunday to celebrate this truly exceptional person.

Matt has an outstanding record of public service to Newton. For example, he was appointed to the Board of Aldermen (now City Council) to fill a vacancy in 1969 becoming Newton's first Black member of the then Board. He went on to be elected citywide for an additional nine terms and was voted by his fellow Aldermen to serve as President for six of those years.

Read more about Matt's inspirational life in the Proclamation celebrating his birthday [here](#).

(By the way, if you know someone turning 100, we would be so pleased to honor them with a proclamation. Reach out to our Resident Assistance Officer, Amalia Timbers, at atimbers@newtonma.gov)

Team Newton

The 128th running of the Boston Marathon is Monday, April 15 with a field of 30,000 in-person runners. Forty-five of those runners are part of Team Newton.

As the longest stretch of the Boston Marathon, the City of Newton has received 45 invitational entry bibs from the Boston Athletic Association.

The Mayor's Office, the Newton Police Department and the Newton Fire Department distributed the bibs to Newton runners and charities.

View the terrific Team Newton [here](#).

All the runners and non-profits have a direct connection to Newton and you may want to consider supporting the runner or charity of your choice. Good luck to everyone training for the Marathon.

Huge Thank You, Rep. Kay Khan

State Representative Kay Khan who represents much of the north side of Newton announced that after 27 years serving all of us, she is not running for re-election.

Rep. Khan, a psychiatric mental health nurse by profession, founded the Mental Health Caucus and for more than a decade has chaired the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities at the State House. She has been an effective advocate for children, working to ban child marriages and conversion therapy for children under 18. She has used her soft yet powerful voice to advance public health, criminal justice reform, nursing reform, and disability services.

For decades, Rep. Khan has worked to improve the accessibility and service for our three commuter rail stations. I have been proud to work alongside Rep. Khan as we got a full commitment for the funding for the design and now, in large part because of her persistence, we have a real chance to move forward with the first phase of construction of a new, accessible commuter rail station in Newtonville.

Kay shows up for residents and organizations in Newton. She answers her phone and responds to emails. She persists. She cares. She stands up for the needs of people in Newton and the quality of life of her neighbors.

With gratitude and much thanks on behalf of the people of Newton, and with my personal respect and affection for Kay,

Ruthanne

P.S. Stop by for 15 minutes to donate blood at the **mobile blood drive at City Hall** on Thursday, March 7 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. You will help save three lives. Register [here](#), and click [here](#) for more information about donating blood. Thank you, Newton Health and Human Services and the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Blood Donor Center for making this so easy.

P.P.S. Join Cherry Street Music at the Allen Center for the Arts (35 Webster Street in West Newton) for **A Celtic Soiree** on Saturday, March 9 at 7:30 p.m. Enjoy a repertoire of traditional and updated Celtic music, played on flute, accordion, guitar, bouzouki, and uilleann pipes – with artists Matt and Shannon Heaton and Joey Abarta. Click [here](#) for more information.

P.P.P.S. Interested in eating locally grown fresh produce from June through October? Applications are now being accepted for **Newton Community Farm's 2024 Summer Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program**. The farm share program includes options to pick up fresh produce weekly (\$850) or every other week (\$460) at the farm in Newton at 303 Nahanton Street. Click [here](#) for more info.

P.P.P.P.S. Celebrate the arrival of spring on Thursday, March 20 with the Newton Public Schools "Goodbye Winter Hello

Spring" event and **consider walking, riding or rolling to school**. Click [here](#) for more info from Newton Safe Routes of School.

P.P.P.P.P.S. Join the Newton Schools Foundation and the Newton Public Schools at **Newton Inspires**, an evening of ideas and community on Thursday, March 14 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Newton South High School (140 Brandeis Road/1 Lion Dr.). The program of speakers includes keynote multimedia maker Anike Tourse, a Newton South High School graduate who wrote, helped produce, directed and acted in the award-winning film, *America's Family*. Click [here](#) for more info.

P.P.P.P.P.S. **Newton Porchfest 2024**, Newton's annual afternoon of free music performed outside people's homes, is right around the corner. This year's event in Auburndale, Lower Falls and Waban is scheduled for Saturday, June 1 from noon to 6:00 p.m. Interested in hosting an act? Performing? Volunteering? Click [here](#) for more info and to sign up and don't forget to put a "save the date" in your calendar.

P.P.P.P.P.P.S. **Haiku Newton** invites Newtonians to enter their three-line haiku poems about regeneration, rebirth and reimagining into this year's contest. Up to 24 selected poems will be featured on lawn signs throughout Newton. The deadline to submit an original poem is Wednesday, March 20. Click [here](#) for more info.



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