

Mayor's Update

Current Cases

We have 716 Newton residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 through Thursday, May 21, according to preliminary data. This is six more people since Wednesday evening, May 20, when there were 710 positive cases.



Resources for Mental Health and Substance Use

Our schedules have been turned upside down, our lives have changed, our paychecks have been impacted and, for many of us, coping with life's new stressors can be challenging during these unprecedented and complicated times. In Newton, our emergency personnel are seeing firsthand mental health crises and substance use-related issues.

This is a time to check in with one another to make sure everyone has the support and the resources they need. It's good to reach out if you or someone you care about needs help. We are all in this together. Please pay special attention to the most vulnerable among us, which may include children, older adults, and people with disabilities; if you are worried, ask for help on their behalf.

As always, call 911 in an emergency.

Below are a few resources to keep on hand, including an upcoming free virtual suicide prevention training webinar.

[Suicide Prevention Training- Online Webinar](#) Wednesday, June 4, 3:00-4:30 p.m. - *Learn Question Persuade Refer (QPR)*, an evidence-based, simple technique that offers everyone strategies and approaches to responding to someone experiencing a suicidal crisis and information about how to get the expert help required. This training will be held virtually on Wednesday, June 4th at 3 p.m. on Zoom. To attend, please respond via: surveymonkey.com/JuneQPR. For more information, visit newtonma.gov/newtoncares

[Mass Call2Talk \(508-532-2255\) or Text C2T to 741741](#)- Provides mental health, emotional support and suicide prevention, run by Mass211.

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline \(800-273-8255\)](#) - Support for people in distress with prevention and crisis resources 24/7, free and confidential.

[Report Child Abuse \(DCF\) \(781-641-8500\)](#)- If you suspect a child may be in danger from abuse or neglect, you can call and report this. Remember, young people aren't in their usual settings of school and programs so we need to pay even more attention to this risk. Call if you are worried.

[Report Elder Abuse- Mass Elder Abuse Hotline \(800-922-2275\)](#)- You can also report elder abuse [here](#).

Gavin Foundation (857-207-5883) - Provides comprehensive community-based substance use education, prevention and treatment programs, referrals to mental health services, community-based peer-to-peer support, substance use support groups, referrals to detox, and more.

Newton Wellesley Substance Use Services (617-243-6062)- Provides substance use disorder consultation, medication management of alcohol and opioid use disorders, education, counseling service referrals, and support group referrals.

St. Elizabeth's Comprehensive Addiction Program (SECAP) (617-789-2574) - Cares for individuals suffering from Substance Use Disorder by providing emergency screening, inpatient monitoring, immediate access to medical specialists and spiritual care.

Depression Screening - If you are worried about someone in your family who maybe struggling with depression, [here](#) is an online screening tool to help.

Parenting in the Time of Corona: A Webinar for Elementary School Parents– Learn social-emotional learning (SEL) skills with the Social Emotional Learning Alliance for Newton on Wednesday, May 27 at 7:00 p.m. Register [here](#).

Social Services - In addition to these important resources, people are encouraged to visit Newton's Health and Human Services webpage at [here](#) for more resources for issues including domestic violence and food insecurity, as well as instructions for applying to MassHealth for health insurance, unemployment, utilities assistance and more.

Need Financial Help with Your Rent or Mortgage?

The City of Newton's COVID-19 Emergency Housing Relief Program has \$2.5 million in funding with an application deadline of June 3, 2020.

Applicants are eligible for:

- Up to three months of housing assistance
- The program will cover 70% of a household's monthly rent, with a maximum monthly assistance amount of \$2,500 per household (or \$7,500 per household for three months)
- Mortgage assistance is available to those income eligible households who reside in affordable deed restricted units. The program will cover 70% of a household's monthly deed-restricted mortgage payment, with a maximum monthly assistance amount of \$2,500 per household (or \$7,500 per household for three months)

The Program is a lottery, and is being administered by Metro West Collaborative Development on behalf of the City of Newton.

As of today, Thursday, May 22, MetroWest Collaborative Development has already received 266 email inquiries, 66 phone inquiries, and 41 applications.

MetroWest Collaborative Development is now providing drive up application assistance. Please come by to get assistance with your application.

Tuesday, May 26th and Tuesday, June 2nd, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Bring your documents, questions or just get started from the safety of your car; staff will be able to help with application assistance, including scanning and copying documents for you while you are safely distanced from them. Please be sure to wear a mask.

The program flyer is available for download in the following languages:

[Arabic](#) الترجمة العربية ; [Chinese](#) 中文 ; [Japanese](#) 日本語 ; [Korean](#) 한국어 ; [Portuguese](#) português; [Russian](#) русский; [Spanish](#) español; [Turkish](#) Türk Dili; and [Vietnamese](#) Tiếng Việt

TTY users, please call 711.

Questions? Need free translation assistance? Call Robyn Rufo at 617-923-3505 x 5. or email her at robyn@metrowestcd.org.

For detailed information on Newton's COVID-19 EMERGENCY HOUSING RELIEF PROGRAM, please read the [Program Guidelines](#).

Tennis Courts Opening

Nicole Banks, our Commissioner of Parks, Recreation & Culture, and I are excited to announce that we are able to begin the opening of tennis courts within the city. We will be opening the courts on a rolling basis as we get them prepared and ready for play. The tennis courts at our two high schools, Newton South and Newton North, are ready to go for this weekend.

We are able to open these courts during the Governor's Phase 1 of re-opening with three important stipulations:

1. Games are restricted to players from the same household.
2. Masks are required to be worn when physical distancing is not possible. Players must wear masks, for example, when accessing the courts and waiting for court availability ... in essence at all times when people are not playing.
3. As we will only have these two facilities open this weekend, we are limiting play to 1 hour with turnover on the hour when other players are waiting. (Newton's Parks maintenance crews will work to get other courts open over the next few weeks.)

Please check www.newtonma.gov/parks for updates on the opening of additional courts.

Rumford Resource Recovery Center Opening by Appointment

Have you been doing some house cleaning in the last eight weeks? Good news. Director of Sustainable Materials Management Waneta Trabert and I are excited to announce that the Newton Resource Recovery Center at Rumford Avenue will reopen again starting on Tuesday, June 2. But, we're opening by appointment only due to public health and physical distancing issues.

You can schedule an appointment starting next week on Wednesday, May 27 by calling Newton Customer Service at 617-796-1000. (Customer Service hours are

Monday -Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

Newton's Resource Recovery Center hours will be 7:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, again, by appointment only until further notice. Residents will be greeted at the gate by an attendant who will confirm the appointment time. Only one vehicle per appointment is allowed. Unfortunately, residents without an appointment will not be able to enter the site and will be asked to come back when they have made an appointment. We greatly appreciate everyone's patience and cooperation with the new appointment system. We look forward to the time when we can reopen without an appointment.

As a reminder, the Resource Recovery Center only takes recyclable materials. See the list of acceptable materials [here](#) which includes cardboard, paper, rigid plastics, and textiles. The list does NOT include wood furniture (a.k.a. bulky items) or overflow household trash. More information on overflow trash collection is [here](#).

Don't Be Scammed

The Newton Police Department has recently seen a nasty fraud scheme re-emerge. A caller reaches out to victims, usually older residents, who identifies himself/herself as their grandchild. Another person will then get on the phone and tell the victim that their grandchild has been arrested and they need to pay money to get their grandchild bailed out. The caller will either tell the victim to send the money or someone will come to their house to pick up the money (usually thousands of dollars).

If you get this kind of call, hang up and call the Newton Police at (617) 796-2100.

Memorial Day

On Monday morning, Memorial Day, we will gather at 10:00 a.m. at the Newton Cemetery to lay wreaths in the lots where Newton war veterans are buried. This solemn tradition honors and remembers those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom.

This year's wreath laying ceremony will reflect our time – we are capping the number of official guests at 10, we will stand 6 feet apart and we will have masks ready in case circumstances move us closer together.

As we begin Memorial Day Weekend and the process of transitioning from *Staying at Home* to being *Safer at Home*, we continue our traditions and adapt them to our times. Let's enjoy our barbecues while staying physically distanced from those who are not in our household, and let's continue wearing our masks. That's how we honor our neighbors right now.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

P.S. Thanks go to over 200 residents and Michelle Luo of the Chinese American Association of Newton (CAAN) for a Newton Asian Community Virtual Town Hall Meeting last night with Superintendent Fleishman, Lt. Bruce Apotheker, and myself and a great discussion of Newton's COVID-19 response, distance learning, and how our city can stand together in the face of intolerance and racism.



P.P.S. They can't be together this year, but Girls on the Run is still on the move. Join their virtual 5K on Saturday, June 6 and run, walk, bike, dance or do whatever makes you happy along a 5K (3.1 miles) route of your choosing. As long as you can maintain appropriate physical distancing, you can do it! Learn more or sign up [here](#).

