

Mayor's Update

Current Cases and Losses

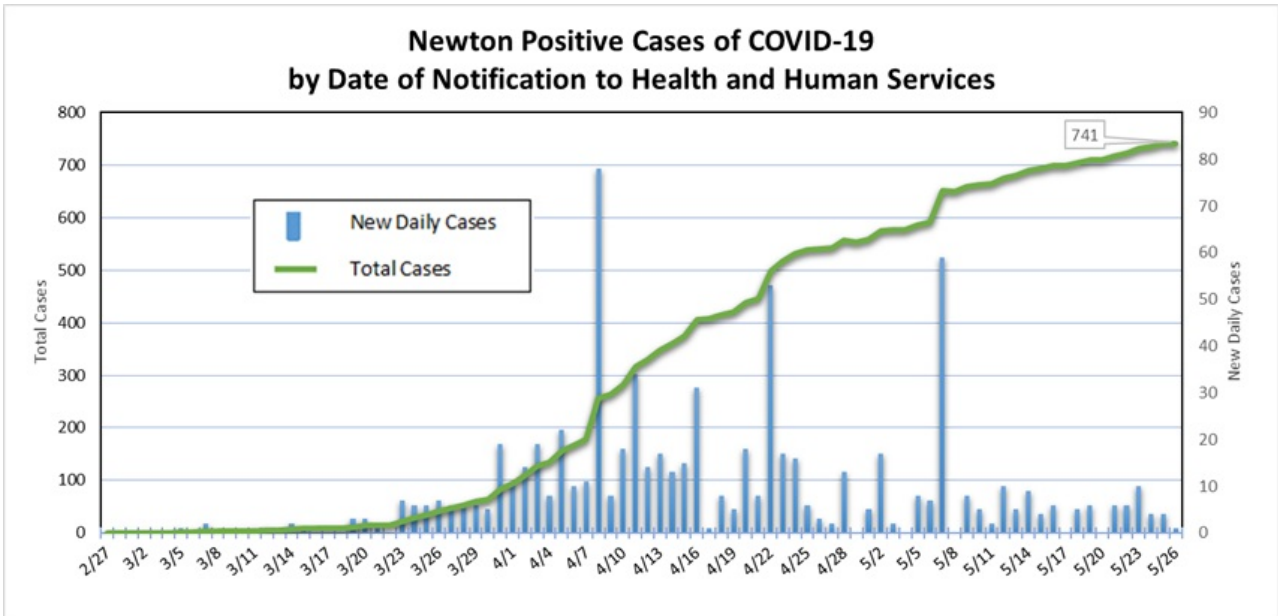
Newton's COVID-19 data indicators continue to present an improving public health picture. We are experiencing fewer newly reported infections and deaths each of the last few weeks.



Please, please, please continue to abide by the ["safer at home"](#) advisory and minimize exposure to people outside your household as much as possible. That's how these declining rates will be maintained.

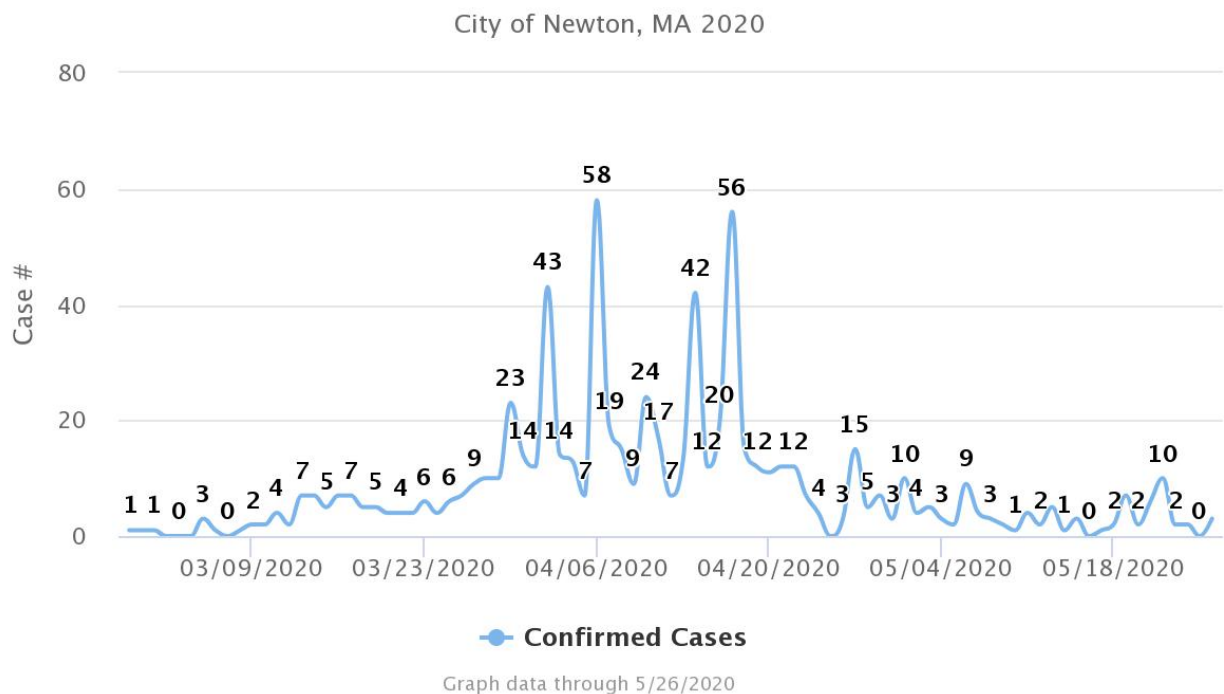
Today, we can report the cumulative total of confirmed COVID-19 cases among Newton residents stands at 741 people, according to preliminary data through Tuesday, May 26. Of the 741 cases, approximately 43 percent are residents of Newton nursing homes and assisted living facilities. One week ago, there were 710 confirmed cases (data through May 19). A graphic representation of our positive cases based on the date of our notification shows a reassuring decline with some major spikes when the results from group tests from long-term care facilities come in.

COVID-19 in Newton	
Total Cases	741
Total Deaths	107
*As of 5/26	



The symptom onset graph is an even better way of looking at Newton's positive cases. It is also updated and shows Newton's 741 cases by symptom onset date (or by test date if symptom onset date is unavailable). The bell curve continues to be reassuring.

Newton Cases by Symptom Onset Date



The percentage of people in Newton “post-isolation,” meaning they have met the criteria to discontinue isolation after a COVID-19 diagnosis and are considered “recovered,” remains relatively consistent. Seventy-one (71) percent of people in Newton diagnosed with COVID-19 (outside nursing homes and assisted living facilities) are post-isolation.

This past week, we learned of two Newton residents who had a COVID-19 positive diagnosis and died. The preliminary cumulative total for Newton is now 107 people. As this infectious disease has moved so quickly through our City, our Commonwealth and our Country, we are still trying to find ways to grieve, to comfort those in mourning, and to remember those we have lost; we are trying but, speaking for myself, I still feel like I have much more to do given the scale and significance of our losses.

The MDPH city/town specific information is available [here](#).

You may have noticed on the front page of the Boston Globe this morning that Middlesex County (which includes Newton as well as Cambridge, Somerville, Framingham, Lowell and 32 other communities) has the 11th highest absolute number of deaths of any county in the United States. What’s going on? Middlesex County, with 1.5 million people, is by far the most populous county in Massachusetts. The next biggest in Massachusetts is Worcester County with approximately 798,000, followed by Essex (which includes Salem and Lawrence) with approximately 743,000, and Suffolk (which includes Boston) with approximately 722,000.

Switching from the absolute number of deaths to looking instead at the per capita rate of deaths, Middlesex County drops down to the 5th highest county in Massachusetts with 94 deaths per 100,000 people.

Still, the data shows that Massachusetts and Middlesex County are experiencing

higher levels of COVID-19 positive cases and deaths compared to other areas of the country. Middlesex County, which ranks 11th in terms of total deaths, is approximately the 22nd most populous county in the United States.

Farmers' Markets Will Open at New Location

We are happy to announce that Newton Farmers' Markets will be open twice weekly beginning in June. To make sure they are safe and allow for sufficient physical distancing, we're moving both the Farmers' Markets from Cold Spring Park/Newton Centre (Tuesdays) and Elm Street/West Newton (Saturdays) to Newton South High School.

The times are a bit different this summer. Our Saturday market will open on June 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and the Tuesday market will open on June 30 from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. So far there are more vendors lined up for the Tuesday market.

Newton Farmers' Markets
at
Newton South High School
140 Brandeis Road, Newton Centre

Tuesdays 2:00 – 6:00 pm, June 20
Saturdays 9:00 – 1:00 pm, June 30

Newton South High School has easy access (the State requires access via a single entrance and single exit) and plenty of parking, lots of space for our vendors and customers, and is available throughout the summer.

We will also be offering pay-in-advance, curbside pickup and no-touch shopping. Stay tuned for more details.

This summer we could use some extra volunteers to help our customers. Interested? Please contact (the amazing!) Judy Dore at jdore@newtonma.gov.

Not familiar with Newton South High School? Put 140 Brandeis Road, Newton Centre into your GPS. The market will be easy to find in the parking areas along the solar panel arrays. We have rigorous screening and cleaning protocols in place for our vendors and safe shopping guidance for customers.

We ask everyone to wear a mask for the duration of their stay at the market (unless you have a medical condition that precludes wearing one). Credit cards and SNAP cards will be accepted.

This year we are suggesting that children do not attend the market and please leave your dogs at home this summer as well.

More information about the Farmers' Markets can be found [here](#).

"Library To-Go" Starts Next Week

Miss borrowing physical books, dvds, music and more from Newton's library? The wait is nearly over.

The Newton Free Library is preparing to launch "Library To-Go," their new contactless hold and pickup service, next week. Please note that this will be by appointment only initially.

Now is a great time to place holds on library items through the online [catalog](#)

so you are ready to take advantage of this new service. Our Library staff will also soon be contacting residents who already have items ready for pickup and sharing instructions on how to schedule a pickup reservation. Please note that we are only able to fulfill requests with items physically in our Newton Free Library building at this time until the Minuteman delivery system which connects us to many other libraries is restored.

Need suggestions on what to read next? Newton's librarians have shared over 1000 personalized book suggestions for readers of all ages in the last month or two. Complete this quick [survey](#) to receive your personalized recommendations.

Have a book or video to return? The Library is accepting returns via the book drop near the Library's Homer Street entrance. (FYI: Returned materials will be held for a few days before they are checked in and readied for the next borrower, out of an abundance of caution.)

June 3 Deadline for Housing Relief Fund Applications

Interested in the Newton Emergency Housing Relief Program and emergency help with your rent (or mortgage in specific types of housing)?

Last night, our partner, Metro West Collaborative Development, held a Drive-Up Application Workshop for residents to apply. Another Drive-Up Workshop will be held next Tuesday, June 2 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in front of their office at 79 Chapel Street in Newton. Bring your applications, documents and all your questions.

Newton's program assists income-eligible households who are facing a loss of income due to COVID-19 and are now struggling to pay their housing costs. Metro West is administering the program on behalf of the City and is now working with more than 400 households to complete applications.

Metro West staff will help you get started with your application, whether from the safety of your car or over the phone or via email.

For more information on how to apply for emergency rental or mortgage assistance, contact Metro West at robyn@metrowestcd.org (preferred method) or 617-923-3505 x5. The **application deadline is Wednesday, June 3, 2020** and the lottery will be held June 10, 2020. The details of this program, including program guidelines, can also be found at newtonma.gov/housingrelief.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

NEWTON FREE LIBRARY *TO-GO!*



**HOLD PICKUP RESERVATIONS
STARTING SOON!**

P.S. Hope, appreciation and compassion infused our virtual 46th Annual Newton Mayor's Community Breakfast this morning. Many thanks to the Newton Interfaith Clergy Association, the Harmony Foundation, and the 200+ participants ... check it out on the recorded version courtesy of NewTV and Newton's IT Department.



P.P.S. Summer Leaf Blower rules started on Monday. Through Labor Day, remember only one electric or battery-powered leaf blower is allowed and all gas-powered leaf blowers, regardless of decibel levels, are prohibited. No matter the season, all leaf blowers above 65 decibels are not allowed in our City.

P.P.P.S. Interested in an online strength class? Newton's Senior Center has two options, both free. Try Nicole's Muscle Conditioning for a short, vigorous class intended for active older residents starting in June on Tuesdays and Fridays at 10:00 a.m. Alternatively, try Pearl's Seated Strength & Balance starting in June on Mondays and Wednesday at 1:00 p.m, intended for those with less built-up strength or people who use a wheelchair. Learn more and find the Zoom link for these classes [here](#).

