

Mayor's Update

COVID-19 Update and Losses

There are 789 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among Newton residents, according to preliminary data through July 21, 2020, an increase of 13 new cases since a week ago, July 14. While this is a bigger increase than we have experienced lately, the timing of when we receive the data is variable and therefore not always indicative of changes in community transmission rates.



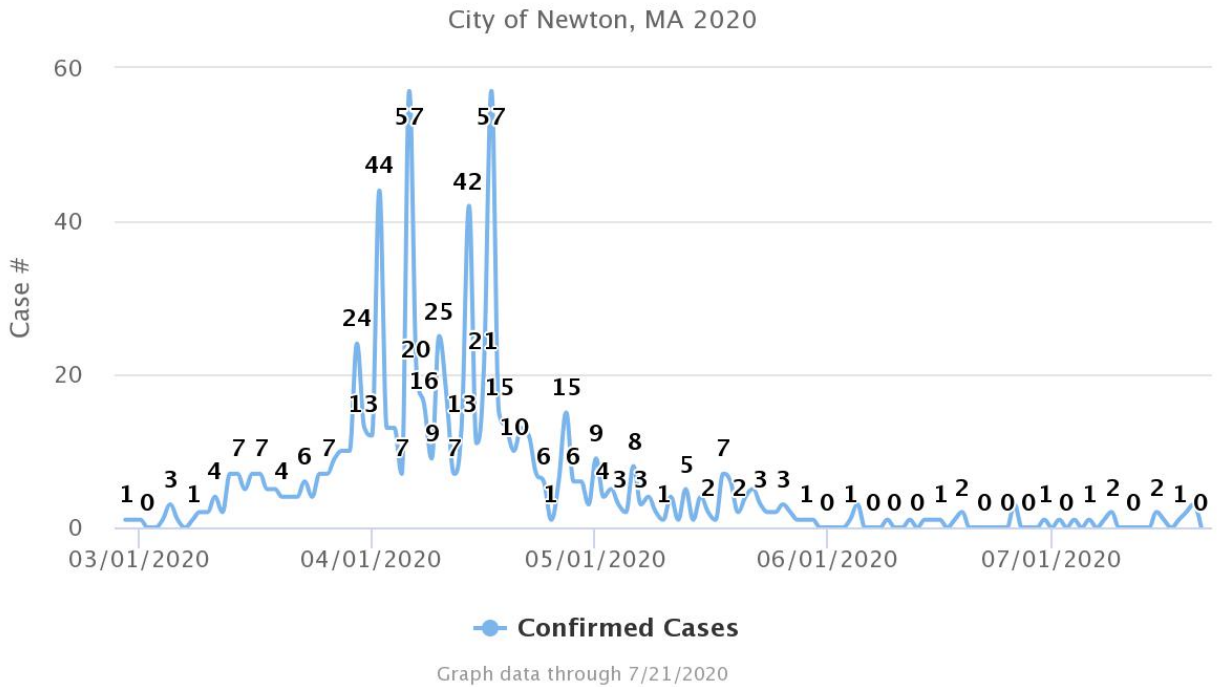
Please know that our public health staff are looking at our positive cases closely to monitor for any trends that could affect community transmission.

Approximately 82 percent of Newton confirmed cases (excluding people in long-term/assisted living facilities) have met the criteria to discontinue isolation (and are considered recovered). This is up from approximately 78 percent in late June and is stable from last week when we reported 83 percent.

COVID-19 in Newton

Total Cases	789
Total Deaths	122
<small>*As of 7/21</small>	

Newton Cases by Symptom Onset Date



With sadness, I also have to report that we received notification that three more Newton residents have died after testing positive for COVID-19, bringing our total losses to 122. These residents were often mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles, friends and neighbors. They were loved and are missed, and a

grim reminder that this crisis is not over. How can we help those who are grieving? Wear face coverings inside and out when we can't physically distance, wash our hands and stay home if not feeling well.

Newton's public health staff continues to provide updates on our COVID-19 data page [here](#), including the graph of all of Newton's confirmed cases, represented over time by symptom onset date or test date.

Interested in where testing is available? A list of testing sites is can be found [here](#).

More on Reopening Schools

Plans for opening the Newton Public Schools in September are well underway. As required by the state, NPS is developing three models: all in-person with safety protocols in place, a hybrid model (each student at school on some days and learning remotely on others) and full distance learning.

Importantly, the Newton Health and Human Services staff have recommended that 6 feet of distance be maintained in our schools between people when they are stationary for more than 10 minutes. As a result, fewer people can be in our classrooms at one time. This means the return to school of all students at the same time in September is all but impossible.

In person classes, even with fewer people in classrooms in the hybrid model, will involve required health and safety protocols and procedures. These will include physical distancing, face coverings, hand hygiene and cleaning, and avoiding exposure to illness (i.e., staying home if sick and testing).

Right now, an outline of some type of hybrid model with students attending school both in-person and online each week is coming into focus as the administrators, teachers and staff work to provide academic engagement and equity while keeping health and safety (both physical and social/emotional health) of students and educators at the forefront of the planning. NPS expects the plan for the start of school to be finalized over the next two weeks. Several critical pieces are still being worked out (e.g., bus transportation).


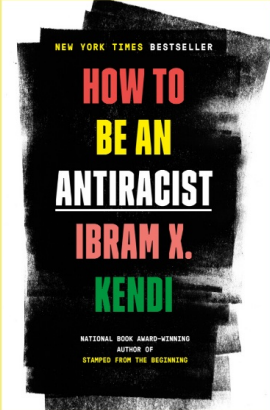
NPS is holding Zoom chat sessions with families tomorrow, Thursday, July 23 and Friday, July 24. The sessions will be conducted by grade level. These sessions will include initial feedback from the family survey, a review of the planning process, and a timeline for decision-making. You can find a Powerpoint presentation to the School Committee on planning for the 2020-2021 school year [here](#), and more information on the Zoom chat sessions [here](#).

Overdue: Confronting Race & Racism in Newton: A Virtual Conversation with Prof. Ibram X. Kendi

The exciting kickoff event for the [Overdue: Confronting Race & Racism in Newton](#) series is on Wednesday, August 12 at 6:30 p.m. Join a virtual

conversation with [Dr. Ibram X. Kendi](#) followed by a discussion about race and racism in Newton. Professor Kendi is a #1 New York Times bestselling author, professor of history and international studies, and the Director of the [Boston University Center for Antiracist Research](#). Dr. Brandon T. Crowley (Pastor of Myrtle Baptist Church) will moderate and thanks go to the Village Bank and the Trustees of the Newton Free Library for their support. This is the first event in a series and requires registering in advance [here](#). Closed captioning will be provided.

OVERDUE

**Confronting Race and Racism in Newton
A Conversation with Ibram X. Kendi
August 12 6:30-8:00pm**

[Overdue: Confronting Race & Racism in Newton](#) has been developed by a coalition of organizations (Newton Human Rights Commission, Families Organizing for Racial Justice (FORJ), Harmony Foundation, Newton Public Schools, and Newton Free Library) and individuals aiming to equip and empower our community with the understanding, knowledge and skills to actively fight racism in Newton and beyond.

The initiative will provide residents with opportunities to listen, to learn and to act in order to dismantle systemic racism within our city. This series of events will challenge us to do better and to examine the way we treat each other in order to make Newton a more welcoming place to live.

Vote by Mail in September

Applications for Vote by Mail ballots have been mailed by the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office to all registered voters in the State, and everyone in Newton should have received one for the September primary. If you did not receive one, you can download an application from the City of Newton's website [here](#).



I WANT TO VOTE!
Massachusetts Official Vote by Mail Application

<p>Voter Information: JOHN Q VOTER 1 MAIN STREET Party: NO PARTY Year of Birth: 1950</p> 	<p>Mail ballot to (if different): _____ _____ _____ Phone Number: _____</p>
<p>Ballot Requested For:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> September 1, 2020 Primary*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> November 3, 2020 Election</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> All 2020 Elections*</p>	<p>*Independents – Choose Your Primary Ballot:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Democratic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Republican</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Green-Rainbow</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Libertarian</p>
<p>➔ Signed: _____ Date: _____</p> <p><small>I swear (or affirm) under penalty of perjury that I am a qualified voter at the above listed legal voting residence. *ILLEGAL VOTING PUNISHABLE UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS</small></p> <p><small>William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth • Elections Division • One Ashburton Place, Room 1705, Boston, MA 02108</small></p>	

(Photos: A sample ballot application, and the mail delivery to the City Clerk's Office of applications for mail-in ballots for the September primary.)

Your completed and signed application can be mailed to the City of Newton Clerk's Office (1000 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton, MA 02459) or can be placed in one of the drop boxes in front of City Hall. You can also scan and e-mail your application to elections@newtonma.gov. Notably, applications for mail-in ballots *must* have a signature. (Applications with typed signatures



will not be accepted.)



Newton
POWERCHOICE
Clean electricity for Newton

Conserving Energy and Going Green

Hot weather means high electricity use. During peak demand periods, older, less efficient generation plants, which are more polluting, are brought on line. Mid-afternoon to early evening are typically the times of particularly heavy

demand on the electric power grid in heat waves.

We don't expect any disruption in Newton's electricity supply, but all of us can help New England reduce electricity demand, greenhouse gas emissions, and other pollutants by:

- Setting air conditioners at as high a temperature as you comfortably can (e.g., 74-76° F).
- Limiting the use of air conditioning if possible in rooms that are infrequently used.
- Making sure windows and doors in air conditioned spaces are closed when air conditioners are operating.
- Using ceiling fans if you have them.
- Closing shades or drapes where the sun is shining in.
- Shutting off lights that are not essential.
- Removing or unplugging unused appliances.

You can also opt up to 100% renewables as part of Newton Power Choice. As you may recall, in March 2019, the City of Newton started Newton Power Choice and switched the supply of the City's electricity customers that had Eversource basic service to 60 percent renewable sources such as solar and wind, significantly reducing the City's carbon footprint.

Want to opt-up to 100 percent renewable energy and make a significant individual impact on addressing climate change? You can do it online [here](#), or call customer support at 1-833-272-9592.

Need more information about Newton Power Choice? Click [here](#).

What exactly are the electric resources that are in Newton Power Choice and New England's electricity grid? Click [here](#) to see the Newton Power Choice and the region's fuel mix for the second quarter of 2020. For that period, all Newton's renewable energy came from New England solar, wind, and small hydro resources (not Canadian hydro). Although the link shows some amount of biomass and wood as part of the region's generation mix, Newton has specifically excluded those resources from its voluntary power purchase.

Newton COVID-19 Care Fund Raised \$670,000

The Newton COVID-19 Care Fund, established early in the COVID- 19 crisis to offer immediate financial assistance to people financially impacted by the pandemic, raised a total of \$670,000 from more than 1,000 generous donors.

Together with community leaders (especially Rob Gifford, Anne Larner, Claire Sokoloff, Gloria Gavriss and Susie Heyman) and partners at the United Way Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley (with special kudos to Gail Sokoloff,

Sarah Link, and Connie French) and Family Access (Jon Firger and Karen Seniuk: our heroes), we helped 339 individuals and families with checks distributed for needs from \$9.00 to \$2,500.

Consistent with the group's mission as a short-term emergency fund, 441 applications were accepted through June 5, 2020. The 102 applicants who did not receive funds were either ineligible, never completed their application process or communicated that they were no longer in need of assistance.

The single most common request for funds was related to housing expenses, either rent or mortgage assistance. The second most common request was for help with utility expenses. Other expenses that were high on the list of requests included car-related bills, health care-related bills, childcare, and funeral expenses.

Many thanks to each and every donor. The generosity of so many Newtonians helped members of our community at a very challenging, distressing time.

Still need help?

Applications are still being accepted for Newton's Emergency Housing Assistance Fund. Newton residents who are experiencing a reduced income as a direct result of COVID-19 and earn 80% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI) at the time their application is submitted are encouraged to apply. Income-eligible Newton households may receive up to three months of rental or mortgage assistance (mortgage assistance only available to owners of affordable deed-restricted units). The assistance has a monthly cap of \$2,500 per household, or \$7,500 per household, for three months.

Metro West Collaborative Development is administering this program on behalf of the City of Newton. To apply, contact Metro West at robyn@metrowestcd.org (preferred method) or 617-923-3505 x5. The details of this program can be found [here](#).

More information on additional community resources is available [here](#).

Warmly,

Ruthanne



P.S. Music is coming back to our parks. The New Phil Strings will be playing this Sunday, July 26 at the Newton Centre Playground. The grounds will be marked for physical distancing and audience members should wear face coverings. Tickets are free but space is limited to maintain 6 feet between

households. Register at [Eventbrite](#). Thanks go to Newton Community Pride for sponsoring the performance.



