

# Mayor's Update

## COVID-19 Updates and Losses

### Newton Cases

We had 71 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 over the past seven days from Feb. 24 – March 3, the first time since just before Thanksgiving that there have been fewer than 100 new people who tested positive in Newton during a single week. These additional cases bring Newton's cumulative total to 3,617.



The data continue to show that we're flattening another curve in the pandemic. Over the two-week tracking period used by the State from Feb. 14 – 27, Newton had 214 cases, compared to 209 during the previous two weeks, and 206 during the period prior to that. (The prior two periods saw 261 and 367 new cases respectively.)

## Newton COVID-19 Cases



Our incidence rate in Newton also held essentially steady, with just a slight uptick to 16.7 cases per 100,000 this week from 16.3 over the past two State reporting periods.

Newton's positivity rate is also again under 1% this week. Of the 36,660 tests administered to Newton residents over the past two week reporting period, 0.64% came back

## COVID-19 in Newton

**Total Cases**  
**3,617**

**Total Deaths**  
**203**

\*As of 3/3/21

positive, a very slight decrease from the 0.66% reported over the previous two weeks. The statewide positivity rate is now 1.93%, from 2.15% last week (with 1.25 million tests performed in Massachusetts during the current two-week reporting period).

The news is also improving at Boston College. The Boston College community accounted for 24% of the positive COVID-19 cases in Newton over the past two-week reporting period, a decline from the 40% over the previous two weeks. The Boston College [website](#) today shows 18 total positive cases reported starting on Monday, March 1.

(FYI – The other colleges and universities in Newton have consistently accounted for a very small percentage of Newton cases since the start of the pandemic.)

Find more statewide information on the Massachusetts Department of Public Health data dashboard [here](#).

The news is good, but it will only be sustained if we all continue to follow the safety protocols which by now are all too familiar: wear masks, wash hands, distance physically, limit gatherings, stay home when not feeling well, and follow travel orders.

### Newton Public School Data

We have 11 people in the Newton Public Schools who tested positive for COVID-19 during the seven day period of Feb. 25 – March 3, bringing the cumulative total to 286. This includes 7 students learning in person, 2 staff members working in person and 2 Distance Learning Academy/remote learning students. The Newton dashboard with week by week data is available [here](#).

### Vaccines

We just found out that our Health and Human Services staff can get access to data on Newtonians that have received vaccinations. We'll bring you that information next week. I'm glad educators, childcare workers and school staff will soon be able to sign up for an appointment. Our Health and Human Services staff are well prepared to give vaccinations to Newton Public School staff right here in Newton but the State so far is sending them to pharmacies or mass vaccination sites. If that changes, we'll let you know.

### Losses

This week we lost another two Newton residents, bringing the number of people in our community who died with COVID-19 to 203. As I write these words, I think of the beautiful tribute that appeared on our chair memorial on the lawn of City Hall over the weekend. A framed photo was placed on one of the chairs along with long-stemmed roses spread among the rows. The chairs may be empty, but the lives are not forgotten. May the memory of our 203 neighbors be as a blessing.



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## Summer Camps 2021

Thankfully Newton's Parks, Recreation and Culture Department can open some in-person camps this summer. They range from Summer Fun and Outdoor Adventure Camps for our younger campers to Sports and Golf Camps for our older ones.

The formats include half-day, full-day and extended day in-person options. We'll follow CDC and Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines with the campers grouped into cohorts. For safety reasons, campers won't be going on field trips or to off-site activities this summer. We'll also offer some virtual programs as well for families who prefer this format.

Interested?

Registration for our camps opens on Wednesday, March 17 at [newtonmarec.com](https://newtonmarec.com).

Information for each camp can be found at [newtonma.gov/camps](https://newtonma.gov/camps). Sign up to receive emails on our camps [here](#).

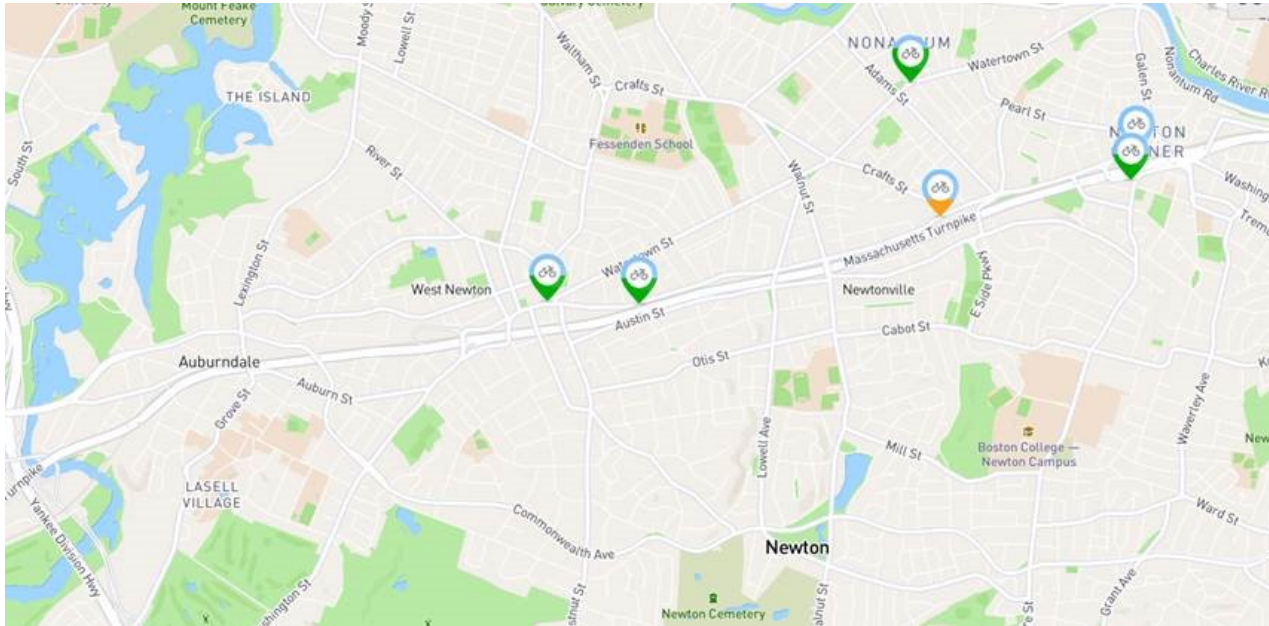
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## Bike Sharing Expanding

More good news for our bike sharing program— The City of Newton just secured from MassDOT a Winter Shared Streets grant for \$199,919 to fund 4 additional Bluebikes stations with 44 more bike share bicycles.

The City currently has 8 bike share stations (West Newton Square, just outside of West Newton Square at the Armory, Washington Street at Crafts Street near Whole Foods, two in Newton Centre at the Langley parking lot and on Union Street near the T station, two in Newton Corner on Washington Street at Centre Street and on Washington Street at Bacon Street, and one in Nonantum at the former library building). An additional station will be added shortly in Newtonville at the main Washington and Walnut Street intersection, bringing the total to 9 stations.

The beauty of having four more is the creation of a web of stations so people have more options for picking them up and dropping them off. Our neighbors in Watertown, Brookline and Boston are also part of Bluebikes.



We're starting the site planning for the new stations and expect to have them installed in May. Do you have a suggestion for where they should go? Send an email to Nicole Freedman at [nfreedman@newtonma.gov](mailto:nfreedman@newtonma.gov). Remember that they need to link up and be proximate to the ones we have now. (Here's a link to the map of where all the Bluebike stations are in Greater Boston [member.bluebikes.com/map](http://member.bluebikes.com/map).)

Please, please remember to bring your own helmet.

Want to sign up or get more info? Click [here](#). An annual membership ranges from \$9 to \$11 a month based on how often you pay the fee. There's also a monthly membership for \$25/month if you want to give it a try and check it out.





Celebrate women's achievements and rally for women's equity on Monday, March 8, International Women's Day; join me in wearing purple. Read more [here](#).

Warmly,

Ruthanne

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P.S. The Newton Police are looking for talented and diverse candidates to join the department. Interested? The first step is taking the civil service exam. Go to [mass.gov/civilservice](https://mass.gov/civilservice) to sign up for the 2021 Municipal Police Officer exam. The deadline to apply is Tuesday, April 20 and the exam date is Saturday, June 12. There's plenty of time to study.



P.P.S. Are you an artist or a lover of the arts? The Newton Cultural Council offers grants to develop and promote artistic excellence in the artistic, humanist and scientific community in the Garden City, thereby enriching Newton residents' lives with the arts. The Newton Culture Council wants your input on how best to distribute their grants. Help them by taking a few minutes to complete this survey. [Click for 5 minute survey.](#)

P.P.P.S Interested in keeping up with Zoning Redesign as we update our zoning code? Read the [February Newsletter](#) and learn more about recent City Council Zoning and Planning Committee meetings, urban planning in the context of Black History Month, the State's new Housing Choice bill, and the updated Zoning Redesign website. Sign up to receive the monthly newsletter [here](#).

P.P.P.P.S. For almost 50 years, the Congressional representative from the 4<sup>th</sup> District stretching from Newton to Fall River has been a Newtonian. Join our current U.S. Rep. Jake Auchincloss and former Representatives Joe Kennedy and Barney Frank next Tuesday, March 9 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. via Zoom for a virtual conversation about their experiences in Congress and the challenges in our district. Presented by the League of Women Voters Newton, you can find more information at [lvwnewton.org](https://wvnewton.org). Click [here](#) to register.

### Newton Project Takeout



**MORE INFO:**

[www.WelcomingNewton.org/post/newtonprojecttakeout](https://www.WelcomingNewton.org/post/newtonprojecttakeout)

P.P.P.P.P.S. Newton Neighbors Helping Neighbors (NNHN) has found a wonderful way to help Newton's restaurants and Newton's families in need. Here's how it works: Make a tax-deductible donation to the Newton Rotary Foundation and your donation will be used to purchase gift cards from local restaurants. Working with partner organizations, NNHN will distribute the gift cards to Newton families experiencing food insecurity. Learn more [here](#).

P.P.P.P.P.P.S. I know. Lots of postscripts. I can hear the collective groan!

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