

Town of Southwick Board of Health and Select Board COVID-19 Update for December 23, 2020

As of Wednesday, December 23, 2020, there have been 270 positive cases of COVID-19 in the Town of Southwick. The Southwick Board of Health would like to stress that this is not a complete profile of the status of COVID-19 in the Town of Southwick. This number reflects those individuals who have received positive test results and *not* those awaiting results, untested symptomatic individuals, and those who might currently be asymptomatic. Additional information on case numbers can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting>.

This week, Governor Baker announced a temporary Executive Order and revised COVID-19 measures to reduce the spread of the virus in Massachusetts. The temporary Executive Order will outline the following measures that will take effect at **12:01 a.m. on Saturday, December 26th** and will continue until Sunday, January 10th, with a possibility of an extension of another week based upon available data. This pause will reduce allowable occupancy from current capacity levels of 40% to 25% in multiple sectors.

1. Notably, this capacity limit will now apply to restaurants. Capacity will be set at 25% of pre-COVID seating capacity and distancing between tables and other requirements will remain in place. Indoor and Outdoor seating capacity must be calculated separately (rather than combining them).
2. Small spaces (such as personal services) and other spaces without clear occupancy standards may use 5 people / 1000 square feet as an alternative to the 25% occupancy.
3. The 25% limit will not apply to manufacturing, laboratories, drive in movie theaters, or construction
4. Employees/staff are exempted from the capacity count
5. Limits at indoor event venues are being reduced to 10 people.
6. Limits at outdoor event venues are being reduced to 25 people.
7. Current limits at private residences remain the same (10 indoors and 25 outdoors)
8. Limits at movie theaters will be reduced to 25% (no more than 50 people per theater)
9. Limits outdoor performance venues will remain 25% (with the max number reduced to 25 from 50).
10. Office spaces will be required to reduce capacity to 25%, but there will continue to be allowances for offices with “critical services”, such as public safety, public health, and other critical services. There is no approval required for these exemptions.
11. K-12 schools continue to be exempted from these capacity limits and will need to follow DESE standards and guidelines.

Please visit <https://www.mass.gov/resource/reopening-sector-specific-protocols-and-best-practices> for more information regarding specific protocols for each sector.

All visitors and returning residents entering Massachusetts must follow the [new travel orders](#). All travelers arriving to Massachusetts – including Massachusetts residents returning home – are instructed to complete the [Massachusetts Travel Form](#) prior to arrival and to self-quarantine for 14 days, **except travelers from Hawaii**. All persons are instructed not to travel to Massachusetts if they are displaying symptoms of COVID-19. For more information, including the most current list of lower-risk states, exemptions, business guidance and other details, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order>.

The Town Hall north side lobby is open to the public for Town Clerk, Treasurer, Collector, and Assessors services. All other offices are available by phone, on-line, and by appointment. Due to the nature of our operations during

the pandemic, please call these other offices before visiting Town Hall. All efforts have been made to ensure that customers and staff are kept safe. The Town of Southwick asks all visitors entering the building to abide by all posted signage.

Due to the continued rise in cases of COVID-19 in Massachusetts, residents are urged to continue to follow all public health precautions for reducing the spread of COVID-19: stay home unless absolutely necessary; if you must go out in public, practicing social distancing and proper hygiene etiquette; wear face coverings when inside retail stores and when social distancing cannot be maintained; and if you are experiencing signs of illness - fever, cough, shortness of breath – call your primary care provider for advice.

The Southwick Board of Health and Select Board continue to post case numbers and updated information regarding COVID-19 every week at southwickma.org. For additional up-to-date information please visit mass.gov/2019coronavirus and cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov. For non-emergency information and assistance, please call 2-1-1 or visit mass211.org.