

Town of Southwick Board of Health and Select Board COVID-19 Update for January 29, 2021

As of the most recent weekly public health report, there have been 385 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 mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting.

Earlier this week, the Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Program released an updated timeline for distribution of COVID-19 Vaccine. Currently, the State is in Phase 1 of this timeline, which covers such categories as health care workers, first responders, and congregate care facilities. Residents who fall into these categories are currently eligible to receive vaccine at participating clinics.

It was also announced that Phase 2 will begin on February 1st, with the priority group of individuals aged 75 and older. Following later in Phase 2 will be those aged 65 and older, those with multiple medical complications, select occupational categories, and finally, those with one medical complication. For those that fall into this category, there will be a variety of different locations that will be available to them – participating doctors' offices, pharmacies, and health care clinics, as well as regional and local clinics, will all be providing the opportunity for people to get vaccinated. For more information on the vaccine, the vaccine distribution plan, and to find a vaccine location, please visit mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine.

The Town of Southwick's Vaccine Taskforce is currently in the process of preparing for clinics to serve the 75 and older population. Once vaccine has been made available and a date has been set, another town wide message will go out informing eligible residents on how to sign up. Additionally, information will be posted on the Town's website, southwickma.org, and through Channel 15. In preparation for signing up for these clinics, it would be helpful for those interested to keep their insurance information handy and to talk to family members or people they trust to assist them with online registration. While the State is working on forming call centers for registration and the Town of Southwick is preparing for ways to aid residents without internet access, registering online when it is made available will be the most effective way to sign up for the vaccine.

All visitors and returning residents entering Massachusetts must follow the [travel orders](#). All travelers are instructed to complete the [Massachusetts Travel Form](#) prior to arrival and to self-quarantine for 10 days or produce a negative COVID-19 test result that has been administered up to 72-hours prior to your arrival in Massachusetts, except travelers from Hawaii. All persons are instructed not to travel to Massachusetts if they are displaying symptoms of COVID-19. Individuals who are COVID-19-recovered, meaning individuals who tested positive more than 10 days but less than 90 days ago and who do not have symptoms, do not need to obtain a negative PCR test prior to traveling to, or quarantine upon arrival to, Massachusetts.

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.