

# STATEMENT FROM LOCAL OFFICIALS: How We're Addressing the COVID-19 Surge

Friday, August 20, 2021

For the past several weeks, COVID-19 case numbers have climbed steadily across the nation due to the more transmissible Delta variant. We are encouraged that Massachusetts has among the nation's highest vaccination rates and has therefore experienced less serious impacts of this new variant than other states in our nation.

Nevertheless, we remain deeply concerned about the Delta variant and its potential public health impacts, especially among residents who are not yet vaccinated, residents who are vulnerable because of their age or health status, and children who are below the allowable age for vaccination.

We are committed to providing clear and consistent guidance for our residents, grounded in the most up-to-date data and science. We, the undersigned Mayors, City and Town Managers, and Town Administrators, are working collaboratively to address the current surge in COVID-19 cases.

These are some of the additional public health measures we have already undertaken or are currently exploring:

- **Requiring masks in schools.** We hope to make this school year as normal as possible for our students, teachers, and support staff. Working with our school boards, superintendents, and teachers, we hope to restore the mask requirement in our schools, at least until the end of 2021, because we believe it will help to ensure the safety and well-being of all of the members of our school communities.
- **Ongoing testing in schools.** Regular testing in schools gives us an opportunity to learn about outbreaks and help to contain them before they spread widely. These tests are provided at no cost to districts.
- **Requiring masks in municipal buildings.** Beyond the school setting, we are working to establish mask requirements for everyone working and entering non-school municipal buildings.
- **Consider pursuing proof of vaccination or regular testing for municipal workers.** We will be working with our department heads and labor representatives to consider having all municipal and school staff show proof of vaccination (or a medical or religious exemption), or submit to regular testing, demonstrating our mutual commitment to keeping all staff and visitors as safe as possible and reducing the likelihood of community spread; and
- **Encouraging people to consider masking in public indoor spaces.** We will strongly encourage masks in publicly accessible indoor spaces where individuals gather, including places such as shops, restaurants, hair salons, gyms, halls, and function rooms.

As we implement these steps, we will continue to work with state and federal officials to adjust our guidance in response to emerging scientific data, encourage and help all residents to become fully vaccinated, and ensure that adequate testing remains available to all who may need it.

**Signatories:**

**Adam Chapdelaine**  
Town Manager of Arlington

**Michael P. Cahill**  
Mayor of Beverly

**Kim Janey**  
Mayor of Boston

**Robert F. Sullivan**  
Mayor of Brockton

**Melvin A. Kleckner**  
Town Manager of Brookline

**Louis A. DePasquale**  
City Manager of Cambridge

**Sumbul Siddiqui**  
Mayor of Cambridge

**Thomas G. Ambrosino**  
City Manager of Chelsea

**Carlo DeMaria**  
Mayor of Everett

**Dr. Yvonne M. Spicer**  
Mayor of Framingham

**Thomas M. McGee**  
Mayor of Lynn

**Gary J. Christenson**  
Mayor of Malden

**Paul Brodeur**  
Mayor of Melrose  
Vice Chair, Metropolitan Mayors Coalition

**Ruthanne Fuller**  
Mayor of Newton

**Brian M. Arrigo**  
Mayor of Revere

**Kimberley Driscoll**  
Mayor of Salem  
Chair, North Shore Coalition

**Joseph A. Curtatone**  
Mayor of Somerville  
Chair, Metropolitan Mayors Coalition