



BULLETIN #58/2020 MAY 5, 2020

_CORONAVIRUS UPDATE #44

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[This bulletin supplements our previous bulletins #11 and #16 through #57 on this subject matter. These bulletins are intended to be cumulative so we can avoid repeating the same information.]

Gov. Baker’s Mandatory Statewide Mask Order Kicks In Tomorrow

Tomorrow the Baker-Polito administration’s mask order takes effect requiring the use of masks or face coverings in public places by individuals where they cannot socially distance from others.

On May 1 Governor Charlie Baker issued an executive order, available [here](#), that mandates all residents over the age of two to use a face covering or mask in public places where maintaining proper social distancing measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are not possible. This statewide order goes into effect on May 6 and supersedes [previously issued guidance](#) relative to mask use.

This order applies to all workers and customers of businesses and other organizations that are currently open to the public and permitted to operate as [COVID-19 Essential Businesses](#), such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and other retail stores. Residents are also required to wear a mask or face covering at all times when using any means of transportation service or public mass transit.

A face covering may include anything that covers your nose and mouth, including a mask, scarf, or bandana. Health care masks should not be used and should be preserved for health care workers and first responders. Cloth masks should not be worn by young children under the age of two, persons with difficulty breathing, or those who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.



unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. Instructions on how to make a cloth mask are available from the CDC [here](#).

Baker Seeing “Right Kinds of Trends”

[Courtesy of *State House News Service*]

Key indicators about the COVID-19 outbreak in Massachusetts have for the first time moved in an encouraging direction for several days straight, Gov. Charlie Baker said today, but as other states are opening up economic activity, officials here still want to see at least two weeks of steady progress.

Ten percent of the new tests reported Monday came back positive, the lowest daily rate since late March when Massachusetts had roughly half the testing capacity. The number of patients actively hospitalized because of the highly infectious virus has also moved on a downward slope in recent days.

While Baker said the state has now seen "for the first time, a few days in a row, the right kinds of trends," he hinted that a phased reopening of closed businesses cannot safely take place unless the patterns continue.

"We're still very much in the fight against the virus, but it's encouraging, I think, for everybody to see progress, given how much hard work and how much sacrifice has been invested in this," Baker told reporters after he toured a manufacturing facility in Fall River. "As we come to the other side of this and start to determine next steps for going forward, we need to see these numbers continue to fall."

The [newest data](#) released Tuesday afternoon -- after Baker's press availability -- held close to the trends Baker cited. Patients hospitalized for COVID-19 increased by three, from 3,539 to 3,542, while the most recent rate of new tests that came back positive slightly increased to 13 percent.

Total confirmed COVID-19 cases in Massachusetts since the outbreak began surpassed 70,000 on Tuesday, reaching 70,271, while 122 additional fatalities brought the death toll to 4,212.

Asked later in his press conference if he wanted to see two weeks' worth of downward movement in the most informative COVID-19 figures, Baker replied, "No one thinks you need less than 14 days, let's put it that way."

Poll results released Tuesday indicate that Massachusetts residents by a wide margin support the shutdown decisions Baker's administration has made. Eighty-five percent of respondents said they approve of his handling of the crisis, and the same number backed his decision to extend orders closing non-essential businesses and banning large gatherings until at least May 18.

The [poll](#) of 500 residents, conducted by Suffolk University, WGBH and the Boston Globe between April 29 and May 2, found that 56 percent of respondents are concerned about



their financial situations or employment.

Baker voiced gratitude Tuesday for the millions of residents across the state who have adjusted to a new reality and endured economic hardship to help limit the spread of the virus.

"From my point of view, the most amazing part of all this is people understand and have communicated that they get the trade-offs," Baker said. "They understand that slowing the spread, doing the distancing, sheltering in place, whatever you want to call it, losing an opportunity to work for some period of time, is something that has to be part of the answer to how we actually get back to work in a safe and effective way."

Daily Massachusetts COVID-19 Tracker

For the latest COVID-19 data released today by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, click [here](#).

Cong. McGovern: Economic Growth at Risk in "Quick Re-opening"

[Courtesy of *State House News Service*]

With pressure mounting on governors around the country to begin re-opening parts of their economies, U.S. Rep. James McGovern said today he supports a more cautious approach, worried that acting too quickly could risk a resurgence of the COVID-19 virus.

McGovern, a Worcester Democrat and chairman of the powerful House Rules Committee, said "testing, testing, testing" was going to be the key to successfully relaxing the strict social distancing guidelines in place in Massachusetts and around the country.

And he called House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy "tone deaf" for bucking even leaders in his own party for suggesting members of Congress should be given priority testing so they can return to the Capitol to work.

"Give me a break. Give me a break," McGovern said on a Zoom video conference with hundreds of New England business leaders. "I want to get tested when everyone can get tested."

McGovern was the featured guest Tuesday of the New England Council, which has resorted during the pandemic to moving its popular breakfast speaker series online. The veteran Democratic leader spoke from his home in Worcester wearing a dark Polo shirt.

"Those who are out there trying to urge a quick re-opening against the advice of our medical experts are doing so in a way that will jeopardize long-term economic growth," McGovern said.

A couple hundred protesters crowded outside the State House on Monday to voice their frustration with Gov. Charlie Baker's approach to the economy so far, but a new Suffolk University/WGBH/Boston Globe poll found that 85 percent of residents support Baker's decision to keep business closed through May 18.



McGovern did not discuss Massachusetts or Baker specifically, but said that if the economy is to have a strong rebound consumers need to have confidence that they will be safe when they go out shopping or to dine in a restaurant.

"If you re-open the economy and we don't have strict rules in place about how we conduct ourselves safely we could have another surge and we'd have to shut down again and that could be devastating," he said.

Like Congressman Richard Neal, who is helping to write the House's next stimulus bill, McGovern said he's hopeful that an outline will be ready next week and that a vote could happen in two or three weeks.

"My advice? We ought to go big, because this is a big crisis and we ought to respond to it in a way that will address all the challenges this crisis has brought forward," he said.

McGovern said he expects the bill to have more direct aid for state and local governments with "maximum flexibility" in how it gets spent, and would like to see financial support for K-12 education, public and private colleges, law enforcement, tribes, and public health departments.

McGovern also said the federal government needs to make more resources available to states to increase their COVID-19 testing efforts. Some funding for testing was included in the last Coronavirus relief package passed by Congress.

"I continue to believe that the key to the safe re-opening of our economy is going to depend on testing, testing, testing," McGovern said.

McGovern also said he would support additional relief for regional airports like Worcester's, the Post Office and enhanced food benefits for low-income families to reduce the lines he has seen at food pantries.

"If we can enhance the SNAP benefit then those people can go to the supermarket and buy food rather than wait in line," McGovern said. "We have a little ideological battle going on about that with Republicans right now, but we need to get over it."

McGovern said he wasn't worried right now about borrowing too much money and adding to the national debt.

"This is not a time to be timid," he said. "For some I know this goes against their ideological beliefs to invest big amounts into the economy, but we're going to have to. If not, I think it will take a lot longer to get the country back on its feet."

The Rules Committee chairman also discussed Congress inability to adapt to the crisis from a technical standpoint, showcasing how the Massachusetts Legislature isn't the only body of government that has struggled to figure out how to operate remotely.

McGovern has proposed a voting-by-proxy system that would allow Congress to function



during the pandemic without members being in the capital, but Republican leaders have objected.

McGovern said that at the very least committee hearings should be taking place over video conference platforms like Zoom.

"Let's knock some sense into people and see if we can function better," McGovern said.

Webinar: “Making Sense of Unemployment for Employers during COVID-19” – May 6, 11 a.m. ET

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about changes to every part of business. One area that has been hit particularly hard has been human resources. From facing staffing issues to understanding new unemployment benefits offered, the challenges for HR professionals seem to grow by the day.

On Wednesday, May 6, at 11:00 a.m., MSADA associate member Blum Shapiro will conduct a webinar *Making Sense of Unemployment for Employers during COVID-19* to give dealers and their HR personnel a better understanding of:

- How Federal & State Unemployment Insurance Programs Work
- The CARES ACT and Enhanced Unemployment Benefits Under COVID-19
- How to Avoid Layoffs With Reduced Hours AKA “Workshare” Programs
- Challenges and Solutions Around Bringing Employees Back to Work
- Managing Unemployment Claims During COVID-19
- FAQs

Please submit your questions regarding this topic in the registration form. Blum Shapiro will organize your submissions and address your questions and concerns during the webinar. To register, [click here](#).

Next NADA Dealership Lifeline Webinar Friday, May 8

NADA is working around the clock to make sure dealers have the information they need to combat COVID-19 disruptions. There’s no such thing as too many good ideas, so register ASAP.

• **Friday, May 8, 1pm-2pm ET:** [Accelerating Automotive Trends that Google is Seeing in Times of COVID-19](#). Lissette Gole, Google's head of Automotive Retail, will do a deep dive on today’s faster industry cycle and how dealers can take stay on top of new trends.