

NOTICE of FIRST POSITIVE TEST for COVID-19 in HAMILTON

Today, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has informed our Public Health Nurse that a Hamilton resident has tested positive for COVID-19. Our Public Health Nurse is following protocols from the DPH to provide isolation guidance and follow-up, and to provide close contacts with education about quarantine measures. Given what we now know about community transmission, we are expecting additional cases.

At this moment, it's important to highlight once again how the virus spreads. Current understanding is that COVID-19 is a highly contagious and virulent respiratory virus generally spread through respiratory secretions (droplets from coughs and sneezes) of an infected person to another person and also by touching surfaces contaminated with the virus. Symptoms of COVID-19 include, but are not limited to the following: fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. Importantly, some individuals with COVID-19 may be asymptomatic but are still contagious, and some may have symptoms but have difficulty getting tested.

The current risk of infection for our community is elevated and this remains a rapidly evolving situation. Your own and our community risk depends on everyone's adherence to the recommendations of our public health agencies. If we neglect critical social distancing guidance, we will increase the risk of community spread. An outbreak in a small community, such as ours, could last a long time. We encourage our residents to remain cautious but calm. We are confident that as a community, we are taking the necessary steps to reduce risk of infection.

This notice is thus intended to underscore the need for our residents to work together to slow the spread and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our community. To reduce the risk of exposure and contracting COVID-19, everyone is strongly advised to follow these steps:

- **Stay home when feeling sick.**
- Avoid any social gatherings.
- If going out in public, stay away from anyone who is sick, and ensure you keep your hands clean and away from your face. Avoid touching any "high-touch" surfaces, e.g., door handles, handrails, etc.
- Practice social distancing. Maintain a space of **at least** 6 feet between yourself and others, and NO handshaking, sharing personal items including toys and balls as well as eating utensils, hand towels etc.
- Wash hands often, rub your lathered hands with soap for at least 20 seconds before rinsing (insert hyperlink of handwashing instructions), especially before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) when unable to wash hands.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue that you then discard; otherwise, use your elbow to cover nose and mouth.
- Avoid touching your face: eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a household disinfectant spray or wipe, including phones, tablets, keyboards, doorknobs, light switches, faucet handles, toilet flushes, countertops, etc.

Getting the facts from reliable sources can help prevent the spread of rumors. For up-to-date factual information, please go to [CDC website](#) and the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health website](#).

Finally, we will keep you updated as we continue to learn about any new information pertaining to COVID-19 in our community. For questions, please contact the Board of Health at 978-468-5579

Signed:

Town Manager: Joseph Domelowicz

Board of Health: David Smith (Chair), Dr. Giselle Perez, Christopher Small