











COVID-19 Support Guide

	<p>MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)</p>	<p>Due to office closures, families applying for Emergency Assistance shelter through the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) can only apply by calling this phone number:  1-866-584-0653.</p> <p> For more information visit http://mahomeless.org/advocacy/item/coronavirus</p>
	<p>Project Bread FoodSource Hotline</p>	<p>Hotline counselors will refer you to food resources in your community. This includes information about school meals, summer meal sites for kids, elder meals programs, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) application support.</p> <p> 1-800-645-8333 or TTY 1-800-377-1292 available Monday-Friday 8:00am to 7:00pm, Saturday 10:00am to 2:00pm</p>
	<p><u>FOR SENIORS</u> Exclusive grocery store hours</p>	<p>STOP & SHOP Grocery Stores have adjusted their hours and announced that individuals 60yrs and over are permitted exclusive shopping hours between 6:00am and 7:30 am to enable a safer shopping environment.</p> <p>Market Basket has designated hours to accommodate senior shoppers on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, the store will be open only to those 60 years and older from 5:30am to 7:00am.</p>
	<p><u>FOR CHILDREN</u> Free Breakfast & Lunch pick-up at Boston & Cambridge Public Schools</p>	<p>Boston Public Schools (BPS) and Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) are providing meal pick-ups while schools are closed. More information can be found at their websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BPS will continue to provide grab-and-go breakfast and lunch to all Boston Students. For nearest location and hours visit https://www.boston.gov/departments/food-access/map-meal-sites-boston - CPS is providing Cambridge Students meals as requested. To complete a meal request form and identify nearest location and hours visit https://www.cpsd.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=3042869&pageId=69472870
	<p>Prescription Delivery Services</p>	<p>MassHealth & BMC Health Plan are now allowing 90 days' supplies to be filled, where previously they only covered 30 days. They are also allowing emergency supplies and early refills at the pharmacist's discretion. You can get your prescription mailed to you by contacting Cornerstone Health Solutions mail order pharmacy at  1-844-319-7588 option #1 to enroll.</p>
	<p>Massachusetts Transportation Services</p>	<p>If you, your family member, or your consumers need to get to local or long distance medical appointments in Massachusetts, some transportation service options may be available. (Note: This is not COVID-19 specific)</p> <p> www.mass.gov/service-details/health-care-transportation</p>
	<p>Utilities Shut-off protection</p>	<p>National Grid has suspended bill-related collections, and will not shut off service due to non-payment, until the end of April.</p> <p>Columbia Gas of Massachusetts has given customers a break on outstanding bills. They are suspending late payment charges until May 1 and offering flexible payment plans for those who impacted by the virus outbreak.</p> <p>Eversource Energy has suspended residential customer disconnections indefinitely and will work with business customers who contact them about possible adjustments to their monthly bill.</p>

	<p>Unemployment Resource Updates</p>	<p>The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) and the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA), in coordination with the US Department of Labor (USDOL), are taking a series of actions to assist workers and employers.</p> <p>Under the USDOL guidance, DUA may now pay unemployment benefits if a worker is quarantined due to an order by a civil authority or medical professional or leaves employment due to reasonable risk of exposure or infection or to care for a family member and does not intend to or is not allowed to return to work.</p> <p>To assist individuals who cannot work due to the impact of COVID-19, the Administration is filing emergency legislation that will allow new claims to be paid more quickly by waiving the one week waiting period for unemployment benefits.</p> <p> https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-guidance-and-directives#businesses-&-employers-</p> <p>EOLWD and DUA are also filing emergency regulations that will allow people impacted by COVID-19 to collect unemployment in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The workplace is shut down and expects to reopen in four or fewer weeks. Workers must remain in contact with their employer and be available for any work their employer may have for them that they are able to do. • An employer may extend the period of the shut-down to eight weeks, and the employees will remain eligible for the longer period under the same conditions described above. <p> To file claims online visit: https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-unemployment-benefits</p>
	<p>Fair Labor Hotline</p>	<p>For complains about sick time and employment protection during this emergency you can call the Fair Labor Hotline  6177273465 Monday through Friday, 10:00am – 4:00pm  https://www.mass.gov/how-to/file-a-workplace-complaint</p>
	<p>Scholastic Learn At Home</p>	<p>Free digital learning hub designed to support virtual learning plans allows open access to daily learning journeys divided into four grade spans—Pre-K–K, Grades 1–2, Grades 3–5, and Grades 6–9+, covering ELA, STEM, Science, Social Studies, and Social-Emotional Learning.</p> <p>Screen reader support enabled.</p> <p> https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html</p>
	<p>ABCD Boston</p>	<p>Multiple locations throughout the city with various programs to support with childcare, employment, energy, essentials, housing, immigration, and tax assistance.</p> <p> 617.348.6000  https://bostonabcd.org/</p>
	<p>MASS THRIVE Directory</p>	<p>To find other free or reduced cost resources in your area, please access  MASSTHRIVE.ORG on your phone, tablet or computer. This website will allow you to find thousands of community resources in your zipcode.</p>

Other relevant information and COVID19 updates:

1. **The Families First Coronavirus Response Act has been signed into law as of March 18th**
 - This bill provides paid sick leave, free coronavirus diagnostic testing, expands food assistance (i.e. WIC, TEFAP, SNAP, nutrition assistance grants, and nutrition programs to assist the elderly), unemployment benefits (including federal emergency paid leave benefits program for employees taking unpaid leave due to the outbreak and a requirement for employers to provide paid sick leave to employees), and requires employers to provide additional protections for health care workers.
 - <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/6201>
2. **Partnership announced to impose moratorium on eviction proceedings in Boston to protect residents.**
 - Mayor Martin J. Walsh, the Greater Boston Real Estate Board and its entity the Massachusetts Apartment Association, and the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations announced they have created a partnership to impose a moratorium on evictions while Massachusetts is under a state of emergency. <https://www.boston.gov/news/partnership-announced-impose-moratorium-eviction-proceedings-boston-protect-residents>
3. **Paying for Testing & Treatment) The Department of Public Health has issued the following guidance:**
 - All commercial insurers and the Group Insurance Commission are required to cover medically necessary telehealth services in the same manner they cover in-person services.
 - Insurers must cover COVID-19 related treatment and testing without requiring cost-sharing of any kind – such as co-pays and coinsurance – for testing and treatment.
 - Additionally, insurers cannot require prior authorization for these services.
 - <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-guidance-and-directives#insurance->
4. **Public charge does not apply to COVID19 testing or care, so all should seek medical treatment as needed.**
 - US Citizenship and Immigration Services Department is encouraging all those with symptoms that resemble Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) (fever, cough, shortness of breath) to seek necessary medical treatment or preventive services. Such treatment or preventive services will not negatively affect any individual as part of a future Public Charge analysis. <http://www.uscis.gov/greencard/public-charge>
5. **Department of Transitional Assistance is stopping all negative cash assistance case actions during the COVID19 crisis**
 - This means that, prospectively, no one should be terminated or reduced for any reason-- including sanctions, failure to verify information, reaching the time limit, etc.
6. **Center for Disease Control's recommendations for managing Anxiety & Stress during the Coronavirus outbreak**
 - This website shares tips and resources that can help you support yourself and others you care for during this crisis. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>