

TOWN OF HARWICH



BOARD OF HEALTH
732 Main Street Harwich, MA 02645
508-430-7509 – Fax 508-430-7531
E-mail: health@town.harwich.ma.us



TOWN OF HARWICH BOARD OF HEALTH
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2021-2:00 P.M.
HARWICH TOWN HALL – DONN B GRIFFIN ROOM
AGENDA

As required by law, the Town may audio or video record this meeting. Any person intending to either audio or video record this open session is required to inform the Chair

I CALL TO ORDER

II NEW BUSINESS

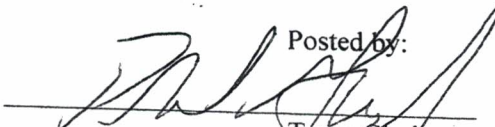
A. Board of Health discussion regarding potential face covering requirement during Board, Committee, and Town Meetings- *Vote to accept/deny/take this under consideration*

III ADJOURN- *Vote to accept/deny/take under consideration*

Authorized posting officer:

Jennifer Clarke
Signature

Date

Posted by: 
Town Clerk

Date

Per the Attorney General's Office: The committee may hold an open session for topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting following "New Business." If you are deaf or hard of hearing or a person with a disability who requires an accommodation, contact the Selectmen's Office at 508-430-7513



**Town of Harwich
Board of Health**

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September 8, 2021

Suggested motion:

“Due to the current resurgence in COVID-19 cases, and the number of breakthrough cases of vaccinated individuals in the Town, the Board of Health hereby orders, effective immediately, that face coverings shall be worn by anyone age 2 years or older attending an indoor public meeting of a Town Board, Commission or Committee, including Town Meeting, except as provided below:

- The Chair (or in the case of Town Meeting, the Moderator) may excuse, upon advance request and for good cause shown, any individual attendee’s face covering requirement for medical reasons;
- The Chair (or in the case of Town Meeting, the Moderator) may allow attendees to remove face coverings temporarily to speak to the meeting, or entirely, provided that attendees can maintain social distancing of 6’ or greater throughout the meeting.

As used herein, attendees shall include members of a Town Board, Commission or Committee.

All attendees shall be required to provide either an email address or phone number to the Town at the meeting for contact tracing purposes.

This order shall remain in effect until further notice. The Board of Health will revisit this order at one of its duly-noticed, upcoming, regularly-scheduled meetings, likely Tuesday October 19, 2021, at which time it may consider, among other things, either rescinding or continuing the face covering requirement.”



Massachusetts Department of Public Health | COVID-19 Dashboard

Weekly Data by City and Town

Report date: September 2, 2021
 With data starting: August 15, 2021
 and ending on: August 28, 2021
 *These data are updated once per week.

Navigation

Testing Data

Data by City and Town

Data by County

Today's Overview

Overview Trends

COVID-19 Cases

COVID-19 Testing

Hospitalizations

COVID-19 Deaths

Higher Ed & LTCF

Patient Breakdown

City & Town Data

Resources

Data Archive

Select an Indicator:

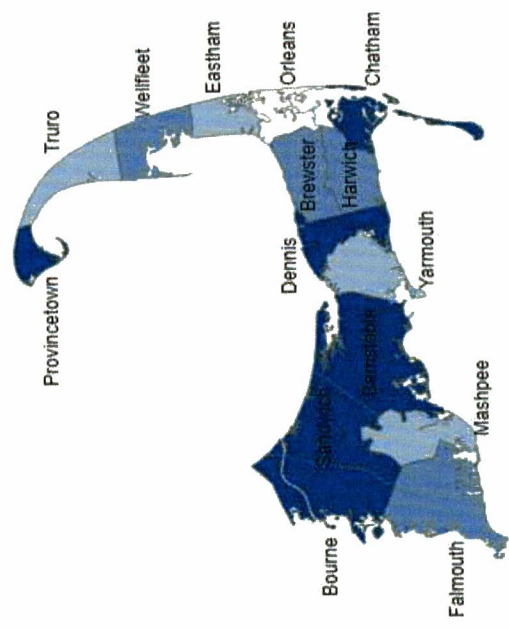
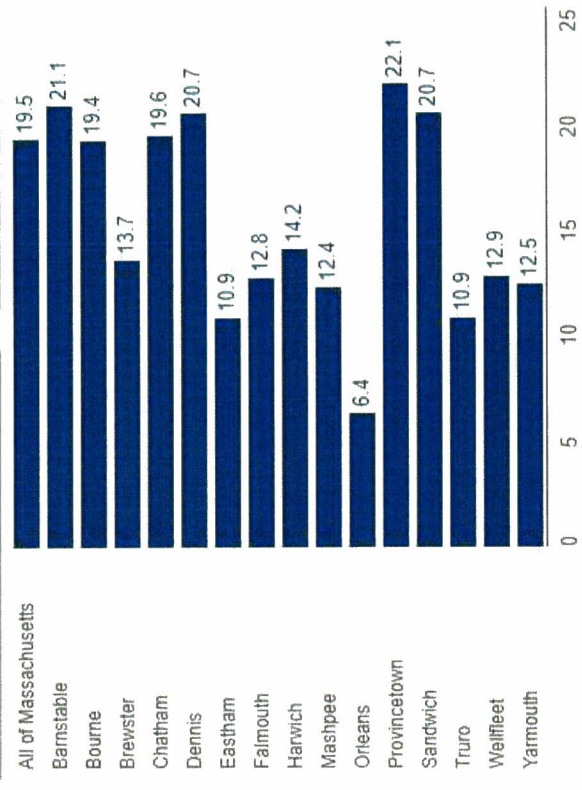
14-day Average Daily Incidence Rate

Select Counties:

(Multiple values)

Select a Date:

9/2/2021



The most recent 4 weeks of data are viewable on this page. To view data outside of this range, please visit our data archive and download the raw data. *Cells with fewer than 5 observations have been suppressed. All data included in this dashboard are preliminary and subject to change. Data Sources: COVID-19 Data provided by the Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences and the Registry of Vital Records and Statistics; Created by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences, Office of Integrated Surveillance and Informatics Services. MDPH calculates rates per 100,000 population using denominators estimated by the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute using a modified Hamilton-Perry model (Strate S, et al. Small Area Population Estimates for 2011 through 2020, report, Oct 2016.) Please note: Data for these tables are based on information available in the MDPH surveillance database at a single point in time. Case counts for specific cities, towns, and counties change as data cleaning occurs (removal of duplicate reports within the system) and new demographic information (assigning cases to their city or town of residence) is obtained. Testing rates are calculated from the number of tests conducted in the geographic area divided by the population denominator (the number of people living in that geographic area). Rates are used to compare data between geographic areas that have different population sizes.



Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Vaccine Data – Tuesday, September 7, 2021

COVID-19 Cases in Fully Vaccinated Individuals

The COVID-19 Cases in Fully Vaccinated Individuals Report is updated weekly and posted on Tuesday. Additional data on vaccines are published in the Daily Vaccine Report (posted Monday-Friday) and the Weekly Vaccination Dashboard (posted on Thursday).



Please note: Identification of cases in vaccinated people relies on matching data between the system of record for cases and vaccinations. The number of cases in vaccinated people may be undercounted due to discrepancies in the names and dates of birth of individuals, resulting in an inability to match records across systems. Hospitalization data is likely also undercounted as identification and reporting of hospitalized cases relies on that information being obtainable by case investigators through patient interview.

*Vaccination began December 14, 2020; the earliest date at which individuals would be considered fully vaccinated is January 19, 2021

COVID-19 Cases in Fully Vaccinated Individuals

- COVID-19 cases in vaccinated people are counted as those who test positive more than 14 days after the final dose of vaccine*
- As of September 4, 2021 there were 4,522,279 fully vaccinated people and there were 23,858 cases in vaccinated people
- 762 of those 23,858 cases resulted in hospitalization and 162 cases resulted in death based on information reported to date

Cases

Cumulative count through last week (reported 8/28)	Cumulative count this week (reported 9/4)	% of All Fully Vaccinated Individuals*
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19,443

23,858

0.53%

Hospitalizations among cases

651

762

0.02%

Deaths among cases

144

162

0.004%

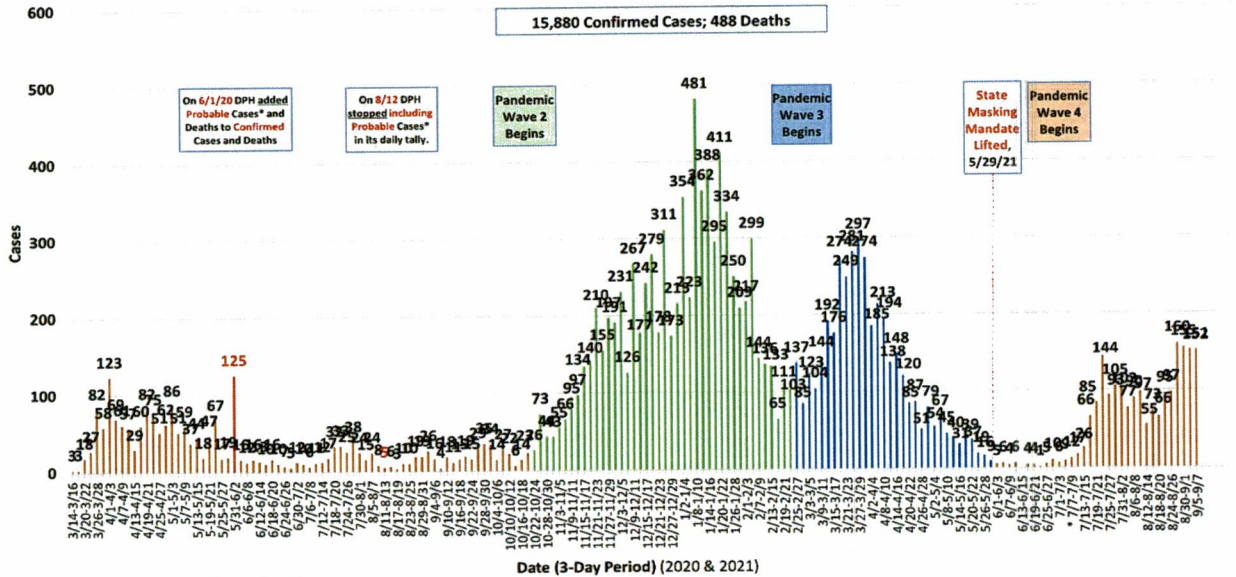
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*Vaccination began December 14, 2020; the earliest date at which individuals would be considered fully vaccinated is January 19, 2021

COVID-19 Epidemiological Curve--New Cases (Confirmed)

Barnstable County, as of 9/7/21 5:00 pm
(New Cases per 3-Day Period)

15,800 Confirmed Cases; 488 Deaths

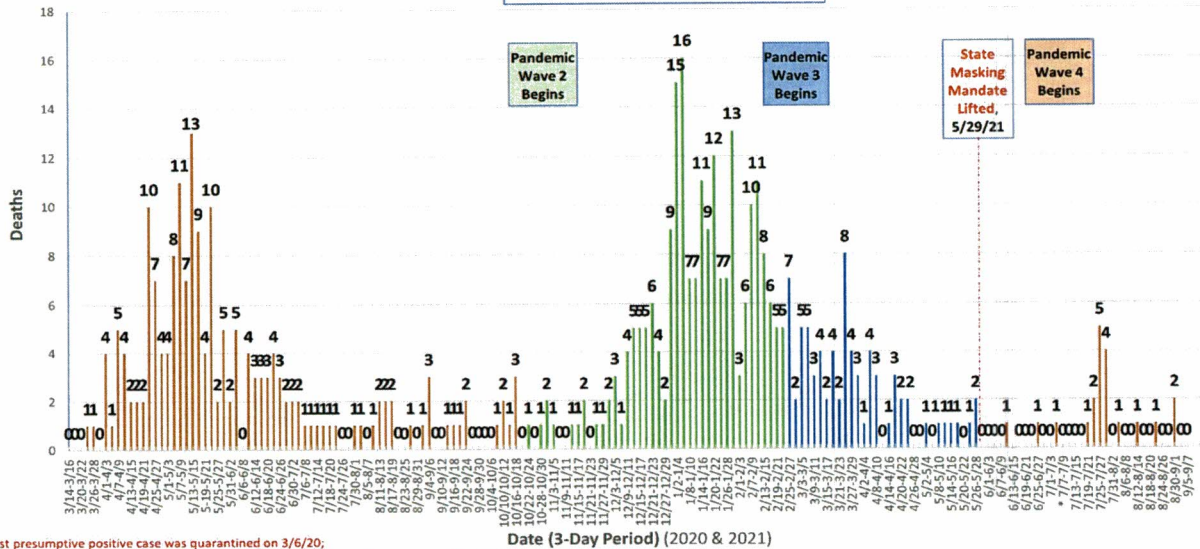


First presumptive positive case was quarantined on 3/6/20;
Incubation Period = 14 Days; Data presented in 3-day periods which equal ~1/4 of the Incubation Period;
* Since 7/1/21, to smooth reports covering weekends and holidays, case reports covering several days prior have been divided by the number of days to show a daily average for the period.
Source: V. Harik, BCDHS

COVID-19 Epidemiological Curve--New Deaths (Confirmed + Probable)

Barnstable County, as of 9/7/21 5:00 pm
(New Deaths per 3-Day Period)

488 Deaths; 15,800 Confirmed Cases*



First presumptive positive case was quarantined on 3/6/20;
Incubation Period = 14 Days; Data presented in 3-day periods which equal ~1/4 of the Incubation Period
* Probable cases have not been charted since 12/6/20 and numbered 531 at that time.
Source: V. Harik, BCDHS; Using data provided by the MA Department of Public Health

Hospitalizations, Last Report:		Not Cumulative		Cumulative		3-Day Avg. of Persons in Hosp. (Med/Surg + ICU)	ICU Percent of Beds Occupied
		Med/Surg Beds Occupied (Last Report)	ICU Beds Occupied (Last Report)	Barnstable County Cases (Confirmed)	Barnstable County Deaths		
9/6/2021 (3pm)	Cape Cod Hospital	11	1				
	Falmouth Hospital	4	1				
		15	2	15,880	488	13.7	12%

Case numbers in Barnstable County remain elevated since early July yet have fallen since the end of the Provincetown Cluster (7/3 to 7/31). Case increases on Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard remain problematic.

As noted, in Barnstable County the case increases associated with the Provincetown Cluster have abated, yet we are still picking up anywhere from 15 to 40 new cases per day. On the Islands we have seen significant case increases over the past five weeks which have begun to abate on Nantucket but not yet on Martha's Vineyard

The spread of the **Delta variant** has caused this resurgence in cases across Cape Cod and on the Islands and is the variant associated with increasing cases numbers across our region and the state. **Note that, nationwide, approximately 20% of new cases identified via testing are among fully vaccinated persons. In MA 20% to 30% of patients hospitalized for COVID are fully vaccinated.** Again, the larger-than-expected numbers of cases among vaccinated persons is attributed to the presence of the Delta variant. As such nearly all public health authorities--national, state, and local--recommend resumption of masking in indoor public spaces, physical distancing, and continuation of handwashing and other hygienic precautions.

1. Provincetown Cluster:

Epidemiologic surveillance of the Provincetown cluster ended on Saturday 8/28, and final numbers are noted below.

As noted, **a case cluster associated with Provincetown was declared by the DPH in early July.** Cases associated with exposures in Provincetown for the period 7/3/21 through 7/17/21 and positive test result through 7/31 numbered **1,143** on Friday (8/27). **Note that this cluster case number includes all persons associated with the cluster (residents of Provincetown, other towns on Cape Cod, other towns in MA, and from other states).** In essence, exposures among residents and visitors to Provincetown during the July 4th holiday weekend and afterward resulted in this case cluster. Provincetown issued a Public Health Advisory and will maintained Masking Mandate through 8/21.

- Of the 1,143 cluster cases **247 were among Provincetown residents.** A further **60** cluster-associated cases were among residents of other Barnstable County towns (see table below), notably towns of the Outer Cape. Nearly all of the Provincetown cluster cases have been released from observation and are considered recovered.

- 75% of the Massachusetts cases (from whom we have the most complete data) were among fully vaccinated persons.
- 88% of the cases (1,000) were symptomatic, however in most cases the symptoms are mild.
- 8 hospitalizations were associated with this cluster, 6 of which were MA residents. 7 of the 8 hospitalized patients were fully vaccinated.
- There were no fatalities associated with the cluster.

On **5/29/21** the Statewide masking mandate was lifted. **However:**

- Businesses whose activities involve staff contact with patrons indoors and/or patrons' close contact with one another (within 6 feet, for >15 minutes) may wish to **re-assert masking and physical distancing requirements**.
- At a minimum, **all unvaccinated persons, including children, are advised to mask** indoors in public spaces and outdoors when physical distancing is not possible.
- DPH recommends that **all persons, vaccinated or not, experiencing COVID symptoms or having had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID be tested themselves**. Guidance on testing, isolation, and quarantine can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing>, <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-isolation-and-quarantine-information>

3. Hospitalizations and Fatalities: The 3-day avg. hospitalization rate at CCH and FH is **12.0** (its recent peak was 14.0 on 8/23). Hospitalizations remain relatively low and are far below what has been seen during prior case surges. This is due to the efficacy of the vaccines at preventing severe illness and hospitalizations among cases. **15 fatalities have been reported since the beginning of this Delta surge in late June/early July.**

CCH and Falmouth Hospitals remain open to visitation but **have again tightened their visitation policies somewhat**. As with all healthcare providers CCHC's masking protocols remain in place. ICU and med/surg patients are now younger than were seen during prior case surges.

4. Schools and Childcare Centers: Schools and childcare centers remain subject to the following guidance from DESE and the DPH:

- **K-12 Schools:** <https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>. Last week **DESE Commissioner Riley was granted the authority to mandate masks for all K-12 public schools through 10/1/21**, at least. After October 1, the commissioner's policy would allow middle and high schools to lift the mask mandate for vaccinated students and staff only if the school meets a certain vaccination rate – at least 80 percent of students and staff in a school building are vaccinated. Unvaccinated students and staff would still be required to wear masks. The mandate would include exceptions for students who cannot wear a mask due to medical conditions or behavioral needs. Further information can be found

here: <file:///C:/Users/Vaira/Downloads/DESE%20Implementation%20of%20Mask%20Requirement%208.25.21.pdf>

- Childcare/Early Education: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/eec-covid-19-resources-updates-and-information>