

WHA RESIDENT NEWSLETTER

URGENT UPDATE – NOVEMBER 13, 2020

Over the last month, there has been a **MAJOR** rise in new coronavirus infections across the state, the city, and most concerning, among our WHA residents. The vast majority of these exposures continue to be the result of a careless close interaction with an infected friend or family member, unmasked and unprotected. **THIS IS NOT OK.**

We continue to see friends and family members, particularly at our family sites, such as Great Brook Valley, Curtis Apartments, and Lakeside Apartments, congregating together, holding gatherings, and visiting with people outside of their circle without a care in the world. Understand that doing this puts you and everyone around you at risk and **it must stop. PEOPLE ARE DYING.**

It is **CRITICAL** that you think of others when you are out and about and **assume that everyone around you is infected with COVID-19.** We implore you to use good judgment and consider your family, friends, and their families before putting yourself in a situation where you may be exposed or expose the people around you. This is not hard. ***You must follow safety guidelines.***

Important items to note:

Effective Friday, November 6th, Governor Baker has instituted new regulations. These new regulations may result in fines if violated, and include:

- **A “curfew” from 10:00 p.m. – 5:00 a.m.** All bars, restaurants, and entertainment venues will close at 9:30 p.m. for in-person service. Stay home!
- **A statewide mask mandate.** Masks are required in ALL public places, including ALL WHA sites, at ALL times, even when social distancing is possible. Public Safety will be watching.
- **Limits on the number of visitors to your home.** You must do everything you can to avoid inviting people who do not live with you into your apartment. This includes holiday gatherings.

Please do your part. **SOCIAL DISTANCE! WEAR YOUR MASK! DO NOT GATHER TOGETHER!** Do it for your elderly relatives, your children, and for those you care about. Remind your neighbors, family, and friends. It's getting worse and we cannot do this alone. We all must do our part to prevent an outbreak. **IT STARTS WITH YOU.**

Thank you.

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THE NUMBERS

- **In Massachusetts:** Cases are up by 278% and hospitalizations have increased by 145% since Labor Day.
- **In Worcester:** 266 new COVID cases were diagnosed last week – the largest jump in infections since May. A total of 302 city residents have died due to the virus.
- **At our properties,** the numbers continue to rise – we had 10 new cases in August; 13 in September; and 24 in October.
 - A total of **144 WHA residents have been infected** with the virus since the beginning of the pandemic.
 - A total of **4 WHA residents have died** from this virus.
 - The biggest increases in infections are at our family sites: **GBV, Curtis, Lakeside.**

SAFETY TIPS

We are all tired of this virus, but this virus is not tired of us. Stay vigilant! Remind each other to wear your masks, distance, and be safe.

- **WEAR YOUR MASK** any time and every time you leave your private area. Wear it properly, fully covering your mouth **and** nose.
- **MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCE** of at least six feet from others. Do not share food or drink. Do not shake hands or hug. Do not host or attend parties or gatherings.
- **WASH YOUR HANDS** frequently with soap and warm water. Use hand sanitizer when not near a sink or after handling items such as mail, or groceries.
- **DON'T TOUCH YOUR FACE.** The virus spreads through droplets entering the mouth, nose, or eyes. The less you touch your face, the less chance of those droplets getting in!

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- **Need a COVID test?** Free testing is available via the “Stop the Spread” campaign (click here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/stop-the-spread>), or through the City of Worcester Department of Health & Human Services (click here: <https://www.facebook.com/WorcesterHHS>).
- The City of Worcester has established a **COVID-19 hotline** with up to date information, and an option to speak with a nurse. **Call 508-799-1019**, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This line is available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Albanian.
- **Infected or exposed to the virus?** Contact your Property Manager, or WHA Resident Services at 508-635-3306 for assistance and resources so you can quarantine safely.
- The WHA posts regular COVID-19 updates on its dedicated website, available here: <http://www.worcesterha.org/covid19.html>. Sign up for text alerts by texting WHACOVID to 67076.