# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATES & GUIDANCE



## **URGENT UPDATE – DECEMBER 22, 2020**

We are in the midst of a true crisis across the nation in regard to COVID-19. Infection rates across the country are skyrocketing and quickly surpassing anything we saw in the spring. **The "second wave" is here.** 



#### WEAR YOUR MASK - IT'S MANDATORY

#### It is CRITICAL that we all stay vigilant.

We have received a number of reports that residents and visitors are continuing to move about the properties without masks.

### Masks are REQUIRED on all WHA properties.

WHA staff will be visiting our properties over the next few weeks to:

- Remind residents/visitors to wear masks.
- Hand out masks to ensure compliance.

Follow the WHA's Facebook page to see our "Mask Up" campaign, where every week, your neighbors, friends, and community members tell us why they are masking-up for your safety and their own. Return the favor - wear a mask!

#### THE VACCINE IS COMING

There is a light at the end of this long tunnel – the vaccine is on the way! **However, it will likely be months at a minimum before the majority of us are able to get the vaccine.** Health care workers, people in long-term care facilities, essential workers/front-line personnel, and the elderly will get the vaccine first. Public health officials estimate that 70-75% of the population needs to be vaccinated before we can begin getting "back to normal." Individuals with questions about what phase they can be vaccinated in can send an email to <a href="mailto:covid-19-Vaccine-Plan-MA@mass.gov">covid-19-Vaccine-Plan-MA@mass.gov</a>. Read more about the vaccine here: https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/14/well/live/covid-vaccine-guestions.html.

#### **GATHER SAFELY FOR THE HOLIDAYS – GO VIRTUAL**

Once again, the holidays are upon us. However you celebrate, please do it safely. Public health officials note that many of the infections we are seeing now are as a result of Thanksgiving gatherings. Do not invite people to your unit who do not live with you. Do not share food or drink. Do not congregate in groups. There are a number of video services available like Zoom, Google Meet, FaceTime, and Facebook chat where you can safely celebrate with your family, from a distance.

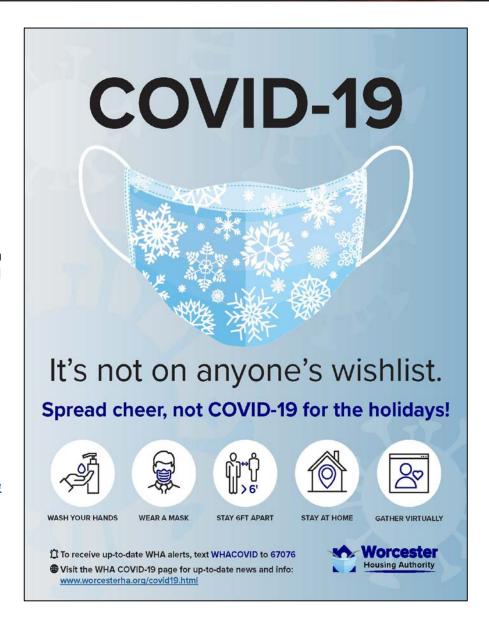
The best gift you can give to your loved ones this year is the gift of good health - stay home!

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### **RESOURCES**

- Need a COVID test?
  - https://www.mass.gov/infodetails/stop-the-spread
  - <a href="https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-testing">https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-testing</a>.
- City of Worcester COVID-19
   hotline: 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?
   Contact your Property Manager, or WHA Resident Services at 508-635-3306 for assistance and resources to guarantine safely.
- WHA COVID-19 updates:
  - http://www.worcesterha.org/covid 19.html
  - <a href="https://www.facebook.com/Worce">https://www.facebook.com/Worce</a> sterHousing
  - Sign up for text alerts by texting WHACOVID to 67076.



## THE NUMBERS

- In Massachusetts: As of December 20th, there were **82,617 active COVID cases across the state**. 1,919 patients are hospitalized and 387 are in an intensive care unit.
- **In Worcester:** One out of every four tests in Worcester is coming back positive. From December  $10^{th} 18^{th}$ , 1,390 new cases were diagnosed and eight more people died.
- At our properties, the numbers continue to rise, particularly at our family sites and in higher numbers at GBV, Curtis, and Lakeside Apartments. Current WHA statistics:
  - 36 active cases; 28 positive for COVID-19; 8 in quarantine pending results; 5 resident deaths.