

Jeff Cyr, Chair  
 Sarah Etelman, Vice-Chair  
 Christopher Geraghty, Clerk  
 Andrea Miles  
 Bruce Forcier

Michael J. Sullivan  
 Town Administrator

## Town Administrator’s Report to the Selectboard December 10, 2020

Honorable Selectboard.

Please consider and review the information presented in this report. Thank you for your attention, sacrifice, and leadership!

### COVID 19 Update

It is readily apparent within South Hadley, the region and the throughout the Commonwealth the battle with COVID 19 is raging nearly out of control. It is no surprise citizens are operating on some severely frayed nerves. We have now started to also see some outbreaks among employees.

All contractions of the virus have been outside the workplace and identified by the parties before returning to work (proper steps taken before they return), plus the fact we are working in isolation within the building, masks are worn in common areas and most interactions even in the building are via Google Meet or via phone. I have been here on days where there is a full complement of employees, yet I never see a soul from 8 to 5. It is a very depressing time for all of us.

Below you can see the meteoric rise in cases - well over 100 new cases (confirmed, contact, probable) since last week (in red) - and when you look a month back it is even more evident we are in a significant spike. While this week South Hadley is still listed as a “yellow” community, I expect we will join the sea of red communities which surround us.

#### LBOH Count - Events Per Disease and Classification in Jurisdiction

Classification: confirmed,contact,probable,revoked,suspect

Event Dates from 03/01/2020 to 12/09/2020

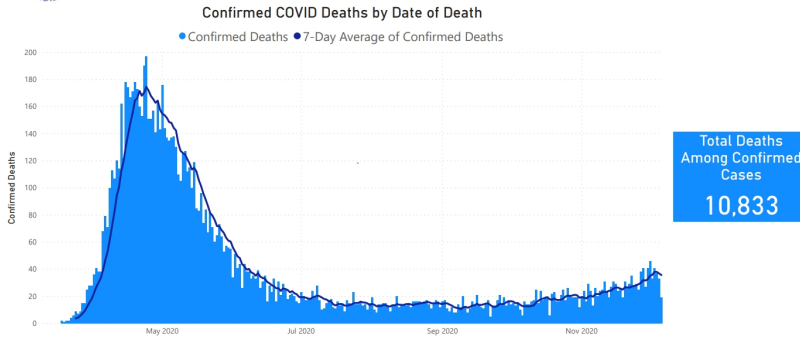
Jurisdiction(s) selected: SOUTH HADLEY

Jurisdiction(s) used for report: SOUTH HADLEY

Disease	Status	Num of Cases	12/1/2020	11/10/2020
Novel Coronavirus	CONFIRMED	368	300	252
Novel Coronavirus	CONTACT	357	311	253
Novel Coronavirus	PROBABLE	20	14	12
Novel Coronavirus	SUSPECT	16	14	11

If there is any ever so slight of a “silver lining,” we see a statewide smaller number of deaths in this spike compared to the spring spike. This, according to DPH, is due to several factors: younger people are contracting the virus who are better able to survive in many cases, there are more informed treatments and testing is identifying cases earlier so those treatments can be administered early in the disease progression.

Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard- Tuesday, December 08, 2020  
**Daily Confirmed Deaths (Since March)**



Data Sources: COVID-19 Data provided by the Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences; State Population Estimate 2019; Small Area Population Estimates 2011-2020, version 2019, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Environmental Health, Tables and Figures created by the Office of Population Health. Note: All data are current as of 11:59pm on 12/7/2020.

I realize I inundate these reports with charts and graphs. Please know I do whittle down the vast amount of data we look at to what I feel the public would be most interested in related to COVID 19.

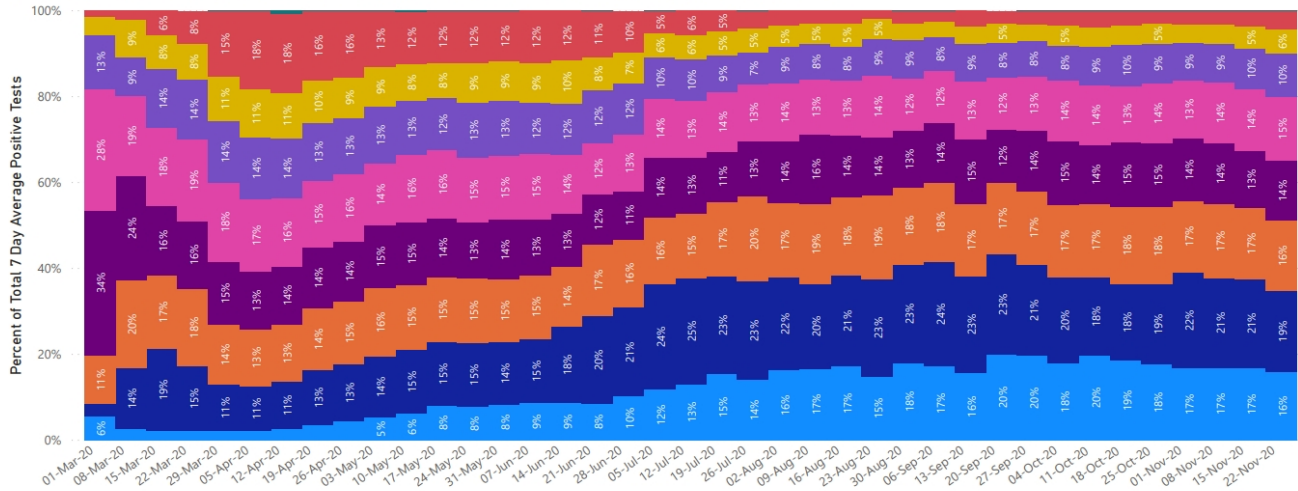
Going back to the a few areas, it is interesting that people 19 and younger are not being infected at a much higher rate than in the spring of 20. In the state data I saw that prior to November 1 there were 27 outbreaks in schools (yes it does

measure a period where most schools were closed). From November 1 to November 28 there was 106 outbreaks reported in school settings. The graph below shows how some of the shift as far as age groups go.

Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard- Tuesday, December 08, 2020  
**Positive Tests by Age Group**

Percent Positive by Week and Age Group

Age Group ● 0-19 years ● 20-29 years ● 30-39 years ● 40-49 years ● 50-59 years ● 60-69 years ● 70-79 years ● 80+ years ● Unknown



Full Week of Testing Starting on the Date Shown

Data Sources: COVID-19 Data provided by the Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences; Tables and Figures created by the Office of Population Health. Note: this data was last updated on Wednesday, 12/2/2020 . This includes individuals who have had more than one molecular test.

The positivity rate for South Hadley continues to increase and now sits at 2.41% where just 10 weeks ago we were considerably below 1%. This rate is one of the most useful barometers of the levels of concern related to the novel corona virus. It also speaks to how important testing continues to be.



Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard – Thursday, December 3, 2020

**Count and Rate of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Tests Performed in MA by City/Town, January 1, 2020 – December 1, 2020**

City/Town	Total Case Count	Case Count (Last 14 Days)	Average Daily Incidence Rate per 100,000 (Last 14 days) <sup>1</sup>	Relative Change in Case Counts <sup>2</sup>	Total Tests	Total Tests (Last 14 days)	Total Positive Tests (Last 14 days)	Percent Positivity (Last 14 days)	Change in Percent Positivity <sup>3</sup>
Somerset	656	130	50.1	Lower	14831	1860	148	7.96%	Lower
Somerville	2196	375	35.4	Lower	208540	34964	424	1.21%	Lower
South Hadley	328	46	18.2	No Change	19577	2364	57	2.41%	Higher
Southampton	74	13	15.4	Higher	4565	581	15	2.58%	Higher
Southborough	134	33	24.4	Higher	13476	1636	35	2.14%	Higher
Southbridge	498	147	62.6	Higher	12358	1421	157	11.05%	Higher
Southwick	192	52	37.9	Lower	6350	797	58	7.28%	Lower

The chart below is something which recently appeared in the South Hadley “dashboard.” We are requesting DPH provide this breakdown locally as it would overtime give us an indication how what our South Hadley recovery rate may be. This does not include people who are hospitalized, and this is also the number for a date in time. I suspect this could change by thousands over a day or so.



Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard - Thursday, December 03, 2020

**Massachusetts Residents Quarantined due to COVID-19**

Data are accurate as of 12/1/2020 at 5p.m.

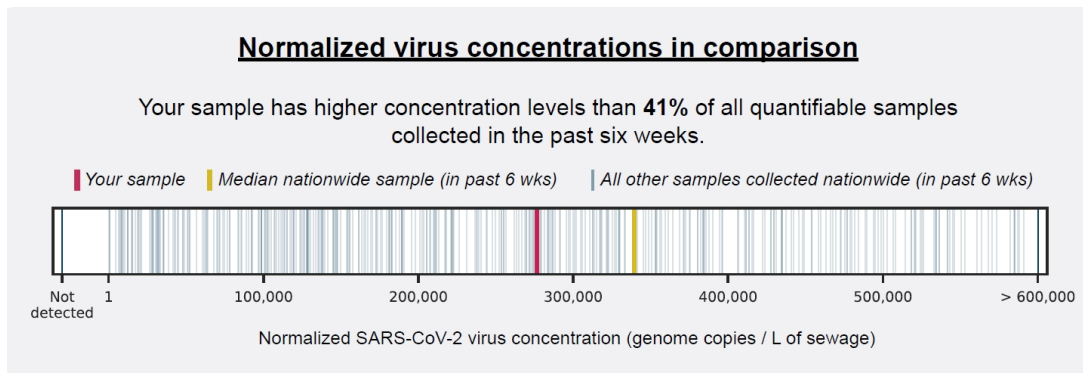
Massachusetts Residents Subject to COVID-19 Quarantine by Current Status as of December 2, 2020	Number of Residents
Total of Individuals who have Completed Monitoring (no longer in Quarantine)	123,052
Total of Individuals Currently Undergoing Monitoring/Under Quarantine	10,018
<b>Total of Individuals Subject to Quarantine</b>	<b>133,070</b>



We have added the more portable “lawn signs” to our communication mix. They have been going up over the last few days and we will be moving them around hopefully to get a wider audience. I would like to thank Linda and Doug Young for taking some signs to distribute.. We do not have a lot left, but if someone would like to get one and has a good spot please email me at [msullivan@southhadley.ma.gov](mailto:msullivan@southhadley.ma.gov).

The success or failure of any public campaign relies on cooperation. We and the state will do what we can in terms of enforcement, but it is reasonable to say if the public does not buy in, if we do not encourage our neighbors and friends, if we do not act with diligence, we will not succeed in beating back this threat.

Below I have placed the BioBot data which reflects the RNA tracing from the South Hadley Wastewater Plant. This is a lead indicator of virus present in South Hadley and as you can see it remains much higher than earlier in the year. The full report and more information can be seen at [southhadley.org/COVID19](http://southhadley.org/COVID19).



**Biobot COVID19 incidence estimate\***

*\* using Biobot's current analysis model v2.0, which reflects active R&D and will change over time with developing research*

**10 new cases / day**  
(0.06% incidence rate)

Using a reported flow rate of 5.34 MGD

For more information, read the whitepaper:  
<https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.06.15.20117747>

This incidence estimate represents the projected average of **confirmed new clinical cases (per day)** that will be reported in your community 7 days from the sampling date. This estimate reflects active R&D.

This number is derived from Biobot's latest proprietary case model, leveraging thousands of samples analyzed for Covid-19. For context, USAFacts reports **30 new cases** on this sampling date and an average of **39.3 cases** per day for the past 7 days in **Hampshire County, MA**.

Visit our website for more details behind the process:  
<https://www.biobot.io/case-estimates>  
<https://www.biobot.io/updated-model>

This recent public Zoom forum held on Tuesday December 8 (recording here: <https://vimeo.com/489076642>) was meant to let the public know of the work being done, particularly with employees, to grow our understanding of bias and how we all must play a part in becoming a more accepting and inclusive community.

I greatly appreciate the contributions made to this edition of the Symposium of Understanding (SOU) by the panelists and the attendees. Deputy Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz shaped some of the trainings and development material we are or have offered to employees. Chief Jennifer Gundersen gave a quick overview of work being done at the police department to support their efforts to continue to be the type of police department we respect and can be proud of. Vice Chair Sarah Etelman, the founder of the SOU, spoke about some of the history and where the future may take us.

I can say without reservation that there is a strong commitment at all levels in all departments and through the community to evolve to a more accepting and socially conscious civic entity. Again, thank you to the public for doing their part and to all that attended this event and the prior gatherings - more to come.

### **Transfer Station Christmas Tree Drop-Off**



This year, or should I say next year, will be a little different for Christmas tree removal. Residents will be able to bring their tree to the Transfer Station without a time slot scheduled to drop off the tree - just the tree - Jan 8 & 9 and Jan. 15 & 16 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This will allow us to do an additional yard waste pick up in the spring. That pick up can include your tree, you will just

have to either cut it up and put it in the appropriate bags or bundle it according to the requirements. I know this is another change, but we hope the majority of the citizenry will recognize the larger benefit to the entire community.

**Virtual Santa**

This project is a joint effort between the Friends of BATTERY Brook and the South Hadley Recreation Department.

If you contact the address below Santa will know to “Zoom” down your chimney and safely discuss what will be instore for good little boys and girls. On that point remember it has been a tough year for all of us

Please spread the word as we try to bring some normalcy to families in South Hadley.

**Senator Comerford, Chair/Vice Chair Meeting**

I would just like to thank Senator Comerford and her staff for making time to meet with Chair Cyr, Vice Chair Etelman and I monthly to discuss the challenges we are facing in these difficult times.

The senator has been very helpful and resourceful in meeting advocating for grant opportunities, regional initiatives and upcoming issues facing the Commonwealth. She has been able to keep Representative Carey, Governor Baker and other offices informed about South Hadley needs and challenges.

We again thank Governor Baker, Representative Carey and Senator Comerford for the recent MassWorks grant award of over \$2.7 million. Reviewing the list of other cities and towns who received awards and the amounts it is clear we did very well. These funds will enhance infrastructure of all types in and around the Newton and Lyman intersection (more details at southhadley.org ).

Thank you and I hope all who read this report have a wonderful holiday season, no matter what you celebrate, how or if you worship or what you believe. I am sure we all can agree there is a great want for all of us to look back on 2020. I wish all of South Hadley a healthy, and happy New Year! (even though there will be one more report before the end of the year) Stay safe!!!!

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J Sullivan  
Town of South Hadley, Administrator