CITY OF FRAMINGHAM

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Morning COVID-19 UPDATE
Massachusetts Department of Public Health Issues Guidance around Issuing
Community-specific Data about New Positive COVID-19 Cases

Framingham - The Framingham Health Department, as well as all Health Departments and Boards of Health in all state municipalities, received relevant guidance yesterday from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) about issuing community-specific information about new positive COVID-19 cases. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of individuals who test positive for COVID-19, the MDPH only publicly shares positive case numbers and deaths by county.

The MDPH noted "that many boards of health find value in sharing community-specific data as part of a risk communication plan and to keep the public informed about the scope of the local public health effort." Framingham currently shares the number of new positive test cases daily.

The Department has not shared any additional information about those who have tested positive because of HIPAA privacy laws. The Health Department is in contact with the people who were potentially exposed to the positive cases and the owners of the businesses or place of employment where the potential exposures occurred to inform and counsel them on next steps.

The Framingham Health Department finds that there is value for Framingham residents to understand that the virus is spreading in the community. MDPH specified that "if [communities] choose to share the number of cases or deaths for these purposes, please do so with the highest regard for privacy and confidentiality by not including any information other than the case count." The City will continue to share these numbers with the highest regard for privacy and confidentiality by not including any additional information other than the case count in public announcements about new cases.

As of Friday, March 27, the number of people in the City who had tested positive for COVID-19 was reported as 37. With ten cases recovered and the City's first COVID-19 fatality (announced March 26), Framingham has 26 active cases.

 COVID-19 in Framingham: Information on COVID-19 in Framingham can be found at www.FraminghamMa.Gov/covid19, which is updated daily. Residents can find updates on the website, Facebook, and Twitter - @Framingham_MA. If there is an urgent update, the City will employ the City's "Alert Framingham" system, otherwise known as reverse 911. To sign up for the City's reverse 911 system, please go here: https://www.smart911.com/

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