

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK

A summary of news, events, and other announcements for the week of February 22, 2022

Massachusetts Official Absentee Ballot Application

See reverse side for instructions

Voter Information

1

Name: _____

Legal Voting Residence: _____

Date of Birth: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Ballot

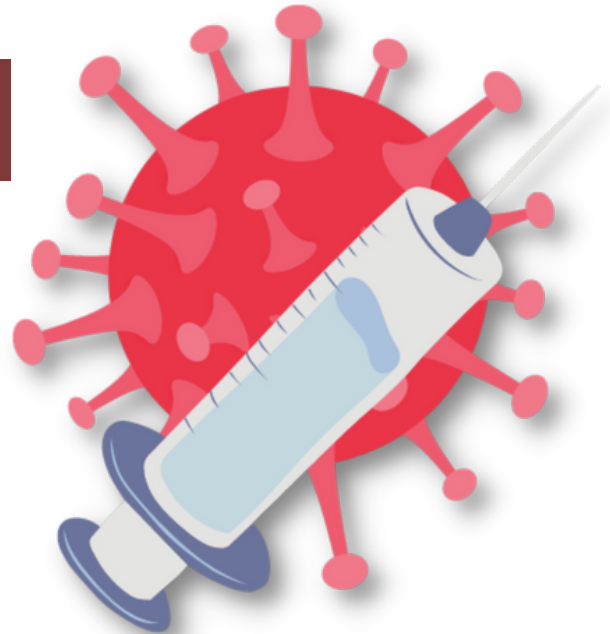
Mail Ballot to:

ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Absentee ballot applications are available for those who will not be able to vote in-person at the polls on Saturday, April 9, 2022. Read page 3 for instructions and for more information.

BOARD OF HEALTH UPDATE – FEBRUARY 18, 2022

The Board of Health reports that as of February 17, 2022, there have been a total of 4,882 confirmed COVID-19 cases in Dedham. Read their full report on page 3.



MASK REQUIREMENT IN TOWN BUILDINGS TO END FEBRUARY 28, 2022

Town Manager Leon Goodwin announced the mask requirement update at the February 17, 2022 Select Board meeting. Read the full update on page 5.





#EATLOCAL: DEDHAM RESTAURANTS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN 2022 RESTAURANT WEEK

APRIL 24-28

RESTAURANT WEEK

Support your local restaurants!

#REGIONALRESTAURANTWEEK



Regional Restaurant Week returns to Dedham and neighboring communities in April 2022. Read page 6 for more information about how to participate and how to support local restaurants.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING PROJECT UPDATES

The Public Safety Building project team is continuing to enclose the building to continue the interior work throughout the winter season. Read what to expect this week on page 6.



PUBLIC MEETINGS & UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

View this week's schedule, review posted agendas, and find out how to attend upcoming events and meetings on page 8.



ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Dedham Town Elections will be held on Saturday, April 9, 2022

If you are unable to vote at your polling place on the day of an election, due to disability, hospitalization, religious beliefs, or absence from Dedham, or if you are worried about coming to the polls because of COVID-19, you may vote by Absentee Ballot for the upcoming local election on Saturday, April 9, 2022. You must first submit an Absentee Ballot Application to the Town Clerk's office by mail (450 Washington Street, Dedham, MA 02026).

Click on the form above to access the Absentee Ballot Application Form

The application can also be dropped in the Town Clerk's Drop Box (rear entrance to Town Hall), or it can be emailed to pmunchbach@dedham-ma.gov. Applications must have original signature! Once we have received your completed application, a ballot will be mailed to you before the election.

- The deadline to request an Absentee Ballot by mail is **5:00 PM, Tuesday April 5, 2022**.
- Absentee voting in person is permitted by appointment through 12:00 PM, Friday, April 8, 2022.
- Please note, your completed Absentee Ballot must be received in the office of the Town Clerk by the close of polls on Election Day, Saturday, April 9, 2022.

Any questions please call the Town Clerks office **781-751-9200** and leave a message or email pmunchbach@dedham-ma.gov.

BOARD OF HEALTH UPDATE – FEBRUARY 18, 2022

There continues to be a decrease in COVID-19 cases in Town and across the Commonwealth. Below please find COVID-19 information as of February 17, 2022. More statistics can be found on www.mass.gov.

	Total Cases	New Cases	14-day Percent Positivity	Fully Vaccinated Residents
Dedham	4,882	21 (since Feb. 10, 2022)	6.27%	20,009
MA	1,525,644	1,653 (Feb. 15, 2022)	6.48%	5,259,939

NOTE: These numbers do not include people who tested positive with at-home antigen tests.

Updated Mask Advisory Across Commonwealth

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) updated their mask advisory on February 15, 2022. MDPH now recommends masking when indoors (and not at your own home) if you fit into the following categories:

- Not fully vaccinated
- Fully vaccinated with a weakened immune system

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

BOARD OF HEALTH UPDATE – FEBRUARY 18, 2022 - CONTINUED

- Fully vaccinated but at increased risk for severe illness due to age or underlying medical condition
- Someone in your household has a weakened immune system or is at increased risk for severe illness

Masks must continue to be worn in certain settings include transportation and health care facilities, and in compliance with isolation and quarantine guidelines.

Mask Requirements in Schools

On February 15, 2022, the Dedham Board of Health voted to support DESE's decision to lift the Mask Mandate in K-12 schools and childcare settings as of February 28, 2022. COVID-19 cases across the Dedham community and Public Schools have decreased since the Omicron surge during the first week of January. Dedham youth vaccination data as of February 1, 2022 shows that the following percentages of Dedham's youth population is fully vaccinated (received a full initial vaccination series):

- 5-11 years: 52%
- 12-15 years: 67%
- 16-19 years: 78%

The Board of Health supports the lifting of the Mask Mandate due to the preventive and protective measures that will continue to be implemented at the Dedham Public Schools. The Schools will provide KN95 masks to staff and students if desired and will continue to provide weekly pooled testing and free at-home antigen tests to students and staff as requested. The Board of Health feels that these measures, coupled with the fact that COVID-19 vaccines are readily available to residents ages 5 and older, puts the Dedham Public Schools in a strong position to move forward with unmasking on February 28th. Should data indicate school-based spread of COVID-19 in the Dedham Public Schools, the Board will revisit this recommendation.

At-Home COVID-19 Tests for Dedham Residents in Need

The Town of Dedham purchased a limited supply of at-home COVID-19 tests to distribute to residents disproportionately impacted by the pandemic using available funds through the American Rescue Plan Act, commonly referred to as "ARPA". The Town is using the below criteria to determine resident eligibility:

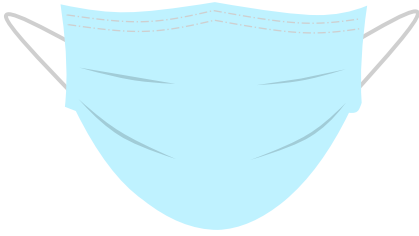
- Low-income status
- Mobility issues
- At-risk for severe illness (per CDC guidelines - including people over 65 and those with medical conditions)

At this time, the at-home test distribution is a one-time-only resource for residents that fit the criteria above and has been established to prioritize those in need within our community. Please contact the Health Department at (781) 751-9220 if you believe you are eligible and are interested in receiving a free at-home test.

COVID-19 Vaccine

Residents 5 years and older are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine and residents 12 years and older are eligible to get a COVID-19 booster. The Board encourages anyone who is eligible to get vaccinated. Vaccine appointments can be scheduled at vaxfinder.mass.gov.

MASK REQUIREMENT IN TOWN BUILDINGS TO END FEBRUARY 28, 2022



Town Press Release February 18, 2022: Town Manager Leon Goodwin announced at the February 17, 2022 Select Board meeting that masks/face coverings will no longer be required inside Town buildings as of February 28, 2022.

“Our COVID-19 Task Force has met regularly throughout the pandemic to review data and guidelines from the State to ensure we consistently follow practices that protect residents, visitors, and employees of the Town,” said Goodwin. **“With preventative and protective measures in place, the decline of new cases reported in Dedham, and the increased availability of vaccinations, tests, and personal protective equipment (commonly referred to as “PPE”), the Town will no longer require masks or face coverings when inside Town buildings.”**

Through an interactive dashboard, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) publishes data for cities and towns across the state to track COVID-19. According to the DPH, as of February 1, 2022, more than 20,000 Dedham residents have been fully vaccinated for COVID-19, and weekly data shows a drastic reduction in confirmed new cases in town (only 46 new cases in Dedham since February 3, 2022).

The following measures will remain in place in Town buildings to safeguard both employees and the public:

- Improved air filtration systems
- Enhanced cleaning in Town buildings
- Hand sanitization stations

Dedham Public Schools

Superintendent Michael Welch sent an email to parents and families on Wednesday, February 16, 2022 following the School Committee meeting that included discussion regarding the mask requirement in schools. As stated in his email, “the Dedham School Committee voted 6-0 to transition to masks being “highly recommended” (but not mandatory) for all students and faculty/staff whenever indoors in any Dedham Public School beginning on Monday, February 28, 2022. Until that date, mask wearing is still required for all faculty, staff, and students.” The vote by the School Committee follows the recommendation of the Board of Health, as voted 3-0 at their February 15, 2022 public meeting, to lift mask requirements in schools as of February 28, 2022.

For more information about the Dedham Public Schools, please visit their website at www.dedham.k12.ma.us/dps.

The Dedham Board of Health continues to encourage those who are eligible for the COVID-19 to get vaccinated. Currently, residents ages 5 years and older are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine and residents 12 years and older are eligible to get a COVID-19 booster. To schedule a vaccine appointment near you, please visit vaxfinder.mass.gov.

To sign up for future Town Manager updates and notifications and to receive weekly email updates from the Board of Health, subscribe on our website at www.dedham-ma.gov/subscribe.

#EATLOCAL: DEDHAM RESTAURANTS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN 2022 RESTAURANT WEEK



Following on the success of the event's first year, the Neponset River Regional Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) has announced the return of Restaurant Week in April 2022. In a collaboration with Dedham, Norwood, Walpole, Canton, and Westwood, the Chamber invites all local restaurants to participate in the 2022 Regional Restaurant Week, from Sunday, April 24, 2022 through Thursday, April 28, 2022.

“Everyone knows that restaurants have suffered greatly during the pandemic. We are eager to encourage everyone to dine out during Restaurant Week and of course to continue doing so afterwards”, said Chamber President, Tom O’Rourke.

Restaurants interested in participating this year can sign up online at <https://www.nrrchamber.com/regional-restaurant-week.html>. Each restaurant has the option to set their own special menu and pricing, and both restaurant owners and patrons can participate in social media giveaways, hosted by the Chamber. If you are a restaurant owner or operator and are interested in participating and have questions, please contact the Chamber at tom@nrrchamber.com.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING UPDATES

What to expect February 21, 2022 (Monday) through February 25, 2022 (Friday):

- The project site remains closed to the public.
- Roofing contractors will be working onsite this week to install roofing the south and east sides of the building.
- Crews will continue mechanical, electrical, fire protection, and plumbing installations this week.
- Repairs to the elevator shaft are expected to be completed this week. The anticipated delivery date of the elevator is March 1, 2022.
- The installation of the 4-inch concrete masonry unit wall in the garage is still underway. Masonry contractors will continue to install the stone veneer to the west side of the building this week.
- Installation of Stair #1 is underway and will continue this week.
- Eversource crews will return this week to relocate the existing overhead utility wires from the existing poles to the newly installed poles.
- The interior cold form metal framing work will continue this week and crews will work to finish installing the remaining Densglass sheathing and air/vapor barriers on the exterior of the building.
- Expect periodic entrance and exit of large trucks at the project site entrance, located at the intersection of Washington Street and Bryant Street. Please expect minor traffic delays at this intersection.
- No additional traffic impacts or pedestrian impacts are anticipated during this week.

Project Team Contact Information:

- Immediate issues or concerns, please contact the Dedham Town Manager’s Office at **781-751-9100**.
- For general questions or concerns, please contact the project team at **psb@dedham-ma.gov**
- For more information about the Public Safety Building Project, please visit the project website at **www.dedham-ma.gov/psb**
- Download our **[project team contact information flyer](#)** on the project website.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING UPDATES - CONTINUED

What to expect February 21, 2022 (Monday) through February 25, 2022 (Friday):

Click on the images below to enlarge



Caption: Photo of the roof installation underway taken using a drone on Wednesday, February 16, 2022.



Caption: Aerial photo of the east side of the building using a drone on Wednesday, February 16, 2022.

PUBLIC MEETINGS & COMMUNITY EVENTS THIS WEEK

Agendas and event information are linked below. Meeting information is also available on our website calendar

Tuesday, 2/22/22:

- **Dedham Housing Authority** at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom
- **Board of Health** at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Dedham-Westwood Water District** at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom

Wednesday 2/23/22:

- **Historic Districts Commission / Historical Commission** at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, Room 305

Events shown as listed on the Town calendar as of 2/22/22. Don't forget to check out the **Dedham Public Library events calendar** and the **Dedham Public Schools calendar**!

LET'S STAY CONNECTED!

The Town of Dedham strives to keep residents and visitors informed of Town projects, local government processes, meetings, and community events and is focusing on timely, sustainable, and consistent communications in 2022 and for years to come.

We currently use a variety of communication platforms and tools that enable us to share important information and encourage engagement with local departments and staff. We regularly review the effectiveness of these tools to help us continue to improve and reach as many people as possible.

We encourage you to sign-up to receive updates and notifications using the tools below:



Email Notifications

Visit www.dedham-ma.gov/subscribe to sign up today!



Social Media

Follow @DedhamThrives for Town-wide updates and notifications on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram



Find us on Nextdoor!

Dedham residents can sign up to join Nextdoor for free and follow the Town of Dedham for news and updates



CodeRed

Sign up for [CodeRED notifications](#) to receive emergency alerts



Dedham TV

The Town of Dedham maintains a strong collaborative relationship with Dedham TV who broadcasts public meetings, community events, educational specials, and more!



Local Media

The Town of Dedham is pleased to work closely with local news outlets like the Dedham Times and Patch to share updates and important news in print and online.