

## EMERGENCY ALERTS

## Coronavirus Update

Preregister for the COVID-19 vaccine: Sign up to be notified about available appointments *Apr. 10th, 2021, 5:00 pm*

[Read more](#) ♦

For the latest information on COVID-19: Guidance, regulations, case data, vaccine information *Apr. 26th, 2021, 5:00 pm*

[Read more](#) ♦

HIDE ALERTS

Mass.gov

## PRESS RELEASE

# Baker-Polito Administration Announces Extension of Capacity and Gathering Limits, New Guidance for Hospital ICU Staffing, Elective Surgeries

Capacity Limits for Most Industries, Gathering Limits Extended Until at Least January 24

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

1/07/2021

Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

Governor's Press Office

Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Department of Public Health

Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

## MEDIA CONTACT

Sarah Finlaw, Press Secretary, Governor's Office

Phone

(617) 725-4025 (tel:6177254025)

Online

[gov.press@state.ma.us](mailto:gov.press@state.ma.us) (mailto:gov.press@state.ma.us)



BOSTON — Today, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the extension of further restrictions and new hospital guidance to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in the Commonwealth.

Industry restrictions for capacity limits and reduced gathering limits went into effect on Saturday, December 26<sup>th</sup>, and will now be extended for at least two more weeks to January 24<sup>th</sup>.

Read a summary of the restrictions [here \(/info-details/temporary-capacity-and-gathering-limits\)](/info-details/temporary-capacity-and-gathering-limits).

Read the emergency order [here \(/doc/covid-19-order-60/download\)](/doc/covid-19-order-60/download).

#### INDUSTRY RESTRICTIONS & GATHERING LIMITS

Capacity Limits: Under the current restrictions that are being extended today, most industries in Massachusetts remain subject to a 25% capacity limit:

- Restaurants (based on permitted seating capacity)
- Close Contact Personal Services
- Theaters and Performance Venues
- Casinos

- Office Spaces
- Places of Worship
- Retail Businesses
- Driving and Flight Schools
- Golf Facilities (for indoor spaces)
- Libraries
- Lodging (for common areas)
- Arcades and Indoor Recreation Businesses
- Fitness Centers and Health Clubs
- Museums, Cultural Facilities and Guided Tours
- Workers and staff will not count towards the occupancy count for restaurants, places of worship, close contact personal services, and retail businesses.

All other rules and restrictions in each sector-specific guidance will continue to remain in effect.

**Gatherings Limit:** The current gathering limits in place since December 26 are also being extended. Indoor gatherings will remain limited to 10 people. Outdoor gatherings will remain limited to 25 people outside. The gatherings limit applies to private homes, event venues and public spaces.

#### NEW HOSPITAL GUIDANCE:

**Hospital Tier Escalation:** The Department of Public Health's [hospital guidance](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-public-health-guidance-and-directives#health-care-organizations-) ([/info-details/covid-19-public-health-guidance-and-directives#health-care-organizations-](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-public-health-guidance-and-directives#health-care-organizations-)), issued in early November, establishes a regional tiering system for hospitals to support continued collaboration among hospitals and sustain capacity. Since early December, all regions across the Commonwealth have been in Tier 3 status, which established a framework for greater coordination to balance patient load and ensure capacity.

Today, in response to the continued rise in hospitalizations, all regions across the state will be escalated to Tier 4 status. In Tier 4, the hospitals in each region will meet at least daily, and will continue to collaborate across regions where necessary, to address growing capacity constraints and continue to load balance as needed.

**ICU Nurse Staffing Ratios:** To support the health care system's continued response to the surge in cases and hospitalizations, the Commonwealth is allowing the deployment of acute nursing staffing under certain circumstances. Starting today, hospitals with severe capacity constraints may request a temporary exemption from the mandated nurse-to-patient ratios in the ICU. This option will only be available to hospitals with capacity of less than 20% who first attest to DPH that they have suspended all nonessential elective invasive procedures, including those conducted in an outpatient setting under the hospital's license. Additionally, hospitals must take every reasonable step to expand capacity prior to requesting a temporary exemption. If a hospital's bed capacity increases, or if the hospital re-starts nonessential elective invasive procedures, the hospital must resume compliance with the ICU staffing requirements.

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# Media Contact

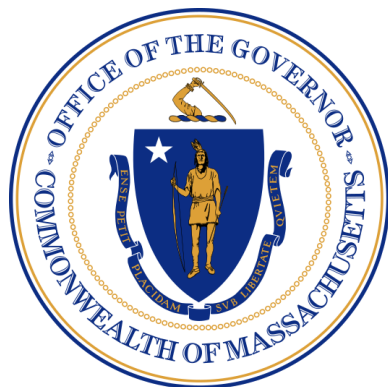
Sarah Finlaw, Press Secretary, Governor's Office

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## Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

[\(/orgs/office-of-the-governor\)](/orgs/office-of-the-governor)

Governor Charlie Baker, Lt. Governor Karyn Polito and the Baker-Polito Administration are committed to serving the people of Massachusetts and making the Commonwealth a great place to live, work and raise a family.

[More](#) [\(/orgs/office-of-the-governor\)](/orgs/office-of-the-governor)

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## Governor's Press Office [\(/orgs/governors-press-office\)](/orgs/governors-press-office)

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and  
Human Services

## Executive Office of Health and Human Services

[\(/orgs/executive-office-of-health-and-human-services\)](/orgs/executive-office-of-health-and-human-services)

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services is the largest secretariat in state government and is comprised of 12 agencies, in addition to 2 soldiers' homes and the MassHealth program. Our efforts are focused on the health, resilience, and independence of the one in four residents of the Commonwealth we serve. Our public health programs touch every community in the Commonwealth.

[More \(/orgs/executive-office-of-health-and-human-services\)](/orgs/executive-office-of-health-and-human-services)

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OF ADVANCING  
**PUBLIC**  
**HEALTH**

## Department of Public Health [\(/orgs/department-of-public-health\)](/orgs/department-of-public-health)

DPH promotes the health and well-being of all residents by ensuring access to high-quality public health and healthcare services, and by focusing on prevention, wellness, and health equity in all people.

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## Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

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The Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development promotes vibrant communities, growing businesses, and a strong middle class.

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