

CHARLIE BAKER
Governor



KARYN POLITO
Lt. Governor

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CONTACT

Sarah Finlaw

sarah.finlaw@state.ma.us



Governor Baker Issues Order Limiting Large Gatherings in the Commonwealth

Most gatherings of over 250 people will be prohibited

BOSTON – Today, Governor Charlie Baker issued an [emergency order](#) prohibiting most gatherings of over 250 people in an effort to limit the spread of the Coronavirus. The order includes, but is not limited, to the following events: community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based events, sporting events with spectators, concerts, conventions, fundraisers, parades, fairs, festivals, and any similar event or activity that brings together 250 or more persons in a single room or single space at the same time in a venue such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, theatre, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space.

“Everyone has a role to play in stopping the spread of the Coronavirus, and by limiting large gatherings, we can further mitigate the spread of the disease,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “It is important to take these steps now to further protect the residents of the Commonwealth, and we will continue to encourage residents to maintain social distancing, and practice healthy personal hygiene to stop the spread of the virus.”

“Limiting attendance at large events will help our communities address Coronavirus at this crucial time,” **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito**. “Our administration will continue to work with partners at all levels of government to address the virus and we urge residents to continue to pay close attention to official guidance to stop the spread of the Coronavirus.”

The Governor also directed the Department of Public Health (DPH) to issue guidance implementing the terms of the Emergency Order. The full DPH guidance is as follows:

1. Gatherings subject to this Order include, but are not limited to: community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based events, sporting events with spectators, concerts, conventions, fundraisers, parades, fairs, festivals, and any similar event or activity that brings together 250 or more persons in a single room or single space at the same time in a venue such as an auditorium,

stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, theatre, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space.

2. The Order does not apply to normal operations at airports, bus and train stations, medical facilities, libraries, shopping malls and centers, polling locations, grocery or retail stores, or other spaces where 250 or more persons may be in transit.
3. The Order does not apply to restaurants, provided that they should, when possible, encourage social distancing.
4. The Order does not apply to typical office environments, government buildings, or factories where large numbers of people are present, but it is unusual for them to be within arm's length of one another.
5. The Order does not apply to higher education or K-12 schools when classes are in session; provided, that assemblies or classes of more than 250 people are prohibited.
6. The Order does not apply to events that exclude spectators; provided, however, that members of the media may attend the event. Athletic and other events do not need to be cancelled or postponed if spectators and other attendees are excluded. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall issue guidance that shall govern scholastic athletic events.
7. This guidance shall take effect immediately and remain in full force and effect until the State of Emergency declared by the Governor no longer exists or the Order is rescinded, whichever is earlier.
8. Regardless of whether an event or gathering falls within the scope of the Order, all persons are urged to maintain social distancing (approximately six feet away from other people) whenever possible and to continue to wash hands, utilize hand sanitizer and practice proper respiratory etiquette.
9. Regardless of whether an event or gathering falls within the scope of the Order, all higher risk individuals should avoid large gatherings. Higher risk individuals include older adults, anyone with underlying health conditions, such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, anyone with weakened immune systems, and anyone who is pregnant.

The guidance takes effect today, March 13, and for the full order, please click [here](#).

Earlier today, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education also issued updated guidance to superintendents. Click [here](#) for the full guidance.

The Administration will continue to update the public on further developments and individuals are encouraged to consult both the [Department of Public Health](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) websites for the most up to date information.

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