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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Launches Additional Intervention Initiatives for Communities With Highest Risk for COVID-19

COVID-19 Enforcement and Intervention Team to Add Resources, Begin Public Messaging Campaign for Chelsea, Everett, Lawrence, Lynn and Revere with Mass.gov/StopCOVID19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

9/03/2020

Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

Governor's Press Office

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BOSTON — Today, the Baker-Polito Administration stepped up its targeted initiative to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in communities across the Commonwealth with the highest number of positive cases. This initiative brings even greater focus to the top 5 highest-risk communities with regular neighborhood-level assessments and a comprehensive multi-lingual public messaging campaign.

The initiative focuses efforts on Chelsea, Everett, Lawrence, Lynn and Revere. The Commonwealth's COVID-19 Enforcement and Intervention Team (CEIT), in partnership with local community officials, is leading this effort. This targeted initiative includes regular meetings with local leadership to understand residential and business activities contributing to trends, an even greater level of state focus to stop the spread and a new public messaging campaign.

The goal of the public messaging campaign is to ensure residents know they live in a high-risk community and reiterate the importance of wearing a mask and other best practices to stop the spread. Built around a message of, "*You have the power to save a life*," the comprehensive campaign will encourage the use of masks and social distancing and will run in English, Portuguese, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, Arabic and other languages common to these communities. The campaign includes:

- A new online resource at **Mass.gov/StopCOVID19** (/stopCOVID19)
- Advertising on billboards, digital and social media
- Downloadable materials in multiple languages
- Multi-lingual field teams deployed in the communities

- Phone and text communications
- Outreach to local community groups

This new website **Mass.gov/StopCOVID19** (/stopCOVID19) provides residents and local business owners with information on how to stop the spread, state restrictions on gathering sizes, testing locations and materials that can be printed for display in apartment complexes, restaurants and community areas.

The campaign's advertising will run on hundreds of displays, message boards, signs, billboards and other channels in these top 5 communities through paid partnerships and via state-owned resources, such as at MBTA stations, on MassDOT signs and much more. During Labor Day weekend, the field teams will be active at approximately 15 locations in these top 5 communities. All aspects of this campaign will expand throughout the fall.

In early August, the Administration established CEIT through the COVID-19 Command Center. CEIT is a cross-agency response unit, which includes representatives from the Community Tracing Collaborative, Department of Public Health, Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission, Massachusetts State Police, Department of Labor Standards and other agencies.

Since it was launched, this team has worked closely with all higher-risk communities to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in areas that are persistently above the state average. CEIT partnered with local elected and community officials, including municipal leadership, police chiefs and local health departments, to assess trends and most effectively utilize resources. Collectively, these teams have enforced gathering size restrictions and shared with municipalities additional state support, such as testing and contact tracing information.

Over the last two weeks the statewide average daily incidence rate is 4.2 cases per 100,000 people, while Chelsea is 29.4, Revere is 20.9, Lynn is 12.1, Everett is 15.9 and Lawrence is 14.9. As new community data is reported, CEIT will adjust as cities and towns move into or out of higher-risk categories. Throughout September, the campaign will expand beyond the top 5 communities.

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Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito
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