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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Launches COVID-19 Response Command Center

New Cross-Agency Structure To Focus On Responding To Disease, Supporting Communities & Residents

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

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BOSTON — The Baker-Polito Administration today announced the creation of a new COVID-19 Response Command Center. Governor Charlie Baker has asked Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders to lead this cross-secretariat response to the outbreak of COVID-19 to complement the work that has been underway for weeks across state government to keep residents safe and healthy.

The Command Center, under the leadership of Secretary Sudders and reporting to Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, will be the Commonwealth's single point of strategic decision making and coordination for the Administration's comprehensive COVID-19 response.

"Our administration has been working for weeks to address the outbreak of COVID-19, and the new Response Command Center we are launching today is an important step in our planning and preparedness efforts," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "Led by Secretary Marylou Sudders, this team of experts will focus solely on pushing back against this disease and moving quickly to respond to the needs of our communities and residents."

"State government has been committed to supporting communities and residents as the Commonwealth works together to respond to the Coronavirus, and this new Command Structure will help us further advance that mission," **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito.** "This dedicated team will serve as a single point of decision-making for our ongoing response as we continue to collaborate with partners to address this rapidly changing situation."

The Command Center will have complete authority and discretion to tap whatever state funds are necessary. This includes the $15 million recently appropriated by the Legislature for Coronavirus.

The Command Center will enable expert teams to advance key initiatives including:

- Working to expand lab capacity for testing
- Planning quarantine operations
- Coordinating communication and guidance across government
- Responding to the needs of our local boards of health
- Monitoring supply chains
- Identifying surge capacity in the Commonwealth's health network.

"By convening decision-makers from key facets of state government, state government is able to continue to ramp up our dedicated response to COVID-19," **said Secretary Marylou**

Sudders. “This structure will build on the dedicated and continuing public health response.”

The Command Center will hold daily briefings with the Governor, key secretariats and agencies and will communicate regularly with other stakeholders such as municipalities and local boards of public health. The Command Center will work closely with and support the Department of Public Health’s ongoing response in conjunction with federal and local partners, and will include decision -makers from across state government:

- Executive Office of Health and Human Services
- Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
- Massachusetts Department of Transportation
- MBTA
- Executive Office of Education
- Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
- Executive Office of Technology and Security Services
- Human Resources Division

The Command Center will also facilitate coordination and communication with key stakeholder groups like the CDC, FDA, cities and towns, the Legislature, local boards of public health, and others.

Today’s announcement follows the Administration’s announcements yesterday that Governor Baker issued an **emergency order prohibiting the gathering of over 250 people** (/news/governor-baker-issues-order-limiting-large-gatherings-in-the-commonwealth) and that **211 has been activated** (/news/state-health-officials-announce-launch-of-2-1-1-to-provide-covid-19-information-and-referrals) to provide real-time COVID-19 information, resources, and referrals in multiple languages.

The Administration will continue to update the public on further developments and individuals are encouraged to consult both the **Department of Public Health** (/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19) and the **Centers for**

Disease Control (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) and Prevention websites for the most up to date information.

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