

Everyone age 12+ should get a COVID-19 booster. Anyone age 50+ may get a second booster. See the latest updates as of *Apr. 11, 2022, 11:24 am* >

Reopening Massachusetts

The Baker-Polito Administration's comprehensive plan to safely reopen the Massachusetts economy, get people back to work, and ease social restrictions while minimizing the health impacts of COVID-19.



CURRENT STATE: Fully reopened effective May 29

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Phased reopening plan

Reopening Massachusetts was the four-phase approach to responsibly reopen the Massachusetts economy amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the phased reopening, based on public health guidance, was progressively to allow businesses, services, and activities to resume, while protecting public health and limiting a resurgence of new COVID-19 cases. The plan centered around Mandatory Workplace Safety Standards that applied across all sectors and enterprises as well as sector-specific protocols tailored to individual sectors and activities. Each phase of the

reopening was guided by public health data and key indicators that were continually monitored for progress and were used to determine advancement to future phases. Industries, sectors, and activities that presented lower risk were allowed to reopen in earlier phases. Those that presented greater risk opened in later phases. In order to reopen, businesses were required to develop a written COVID-19 Control Plan outlining plans to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among workers and patrons.

The plan was developed by a 17-member Reopening Advisory Board, co-chaired by Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito and Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy, that included public health experts, municipal leaders and members of the business community representing many facets of the Massachusetts economy. The Board met with a total of 75 stakeholder groups ranging from industry associations, regional chambers of commerce, community coalitions, and labor organizations, representing over 112,000 different businesses and more than two million workers across the Commonwealth. The Reopening Advisory Board also considered written comments from over 4,500 employers, organizations, and individuals in the development of its plan.

Phase I (“Start”) of the plan began on May 18, 2020, and allowed manufacturing facilities, construction sites, and places of worship to re-open. Hospitals and community health centers were able to begin to provide high priority preventative care, pediatric care and treatment for high risk patients. Under a staggered approach, additional Phase 1 sectors of the economy were permitted to open effective May 25 including lab space, office space, limited personal services (including hair salons, pet grooming, car washes, and retailers could offer remote fulfillment and curbside pick-up for all retailers).

Massachusetts moved to **Phase 2 (“Cautious”)** in June, allowing additional lower risk businesses to reopen, including retail, childcare facilities, restaurants (with outdoor table service only), hotels and other lodgings, personal services without close physical contact, youth and adult amateur sports, and driving and flight schools. In Step 2 of Phase II, restaurants were permitted to open for indoor table service, close-contact personal services, including nail care, skin care, massage therapy, and personal training. Health care providers also incrementally resumed in-person elective, non-urgent procedures and services, including routine office visits, dental visits and vision care subject to compliance with public health and safety standards.

On July 6, the Commonwealth proceeded to **Phase III (“Vigilant”)** based on a sustained decline in key public health data, such as new cases and hospitalizations. A broad range of sectors were permitted to open, again subject to compliance with industry-specific rules concerning capacity and operations. The Phase III, Step 1 sectors included movie theaters and outdoor performance venues; museums, cultural and historical sites; fitness centers and health clubs; certain indoor recreational activities with low potential for contact; and professional sports teams (without spectators) became eligible to reopen. In October, indoor performance venues were permitted to open, and certain industries saw their capacity limits increase.

An increase in new COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations following the Thanksgiving holiday that coincided with a global surge in the virus precipitated new statewide restrictions for capacity, mask compliance and distancing. These temporary reductions in indoor capacities across a broad

range of sectors of the economy, as well as a tightening of several other workplace restrictions, were designed to prevent infection and viral spread.

With public health metrics continuing to trend in a positive direction, including drops in average daily COVID cases and hospitalizations, and vaccination rates continuing to increase, Massachusetts moved into **Phase IV (“New Normal”)** on March 22, 2021 with indoor and outdoor stadiums, arenas, and ballparks permitted to open at 12 percent capacity, and exhibition and convention halls also beginning to operate. Additional industries such as amusement parks, theme parks, and outdoor water parks opened on May 10, along with road races and other large, outdoor organized amateur or professional group athletic events.

The reopening plan called for ending restrictions when vaccines became widely available, and effective May 29, 2021 all industries were permitted to open. With the exception of remaining face-covering requirements for public and private transportation systems and facilities housing vulnerable populations, all industry restrictions were also lifted, and capacity increased to 100% for all industries. All industries are encouraged to follow **CDC guidance** for cleaning and hygiene protocols.

Additional reopening guidance

[Reopening health and human services](#)

[Childcare Resources, Updates, and Information](#)

[Reopening higher education](#)

[Reopening K-12 schools](#)

[Reopening gaming establishments \(via MGC\)](#)

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YON - Jan C. Hardenbergh, Sudbury Town Historian, 2022-04-21