Cambridge Public Health Department
Update to the Community – March 11, 2020

The Cambridge Public Health Department will be providing frequent updates to the community on coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). We continue to receive numerous queries from residents and employers expressing understandable concern about the disease, as well as potential disruptions to work, school, and our everyday lives. For the most current state and national information and guidance, please visit the CDC and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) COVID-19 websites.

Risk in Cambridge, as of March 11:
At this time, there is “rising risk” of COVID-19 infection in Massachusetts, according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. In addition, there is elevated risk for people who have, within the past 14 days:
- Recently traveled to any of the “high risk” countries identified by the CDC. These countries currently include China, Iran, Italy, Japan, and South Korea.
- Recently traveled to areas of the U.S. where there is ongoing community spread of the virus. For the most current information on U.S. cases, see https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html.
- Worked in a health care setting caring for COVID-19 patients.
- Had close contact with people with COVID-19.

Massachusetts Update, as of March 11
- On March 11, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic.
- On March 10, Governor Charlie Baker declared a State of Emergency in Massachusetts to support the Commonwealth’s response to the outbreak of COVID-19. The Governor also announced new guidance for the state’s 42,000 executive branch employees to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, including:
  - Discontinuing all out-of-state work-related travel.
  - Canceling or virtually holding conferences, seminars, and other discretionary gatherings.
  - Informing employees not to attend external work-related conferences, seminars, or events.
  - Reminding employees feeling sick with fever or flu symptoms to not come into work.
  - Encouraging high-risk employees to talk with their supervisors to review possible alternative work assignments.
- The state health department is providing daily updates on Massachusetts residents who test positive (presumptive and confirmed) for COVID-19. People who receive a positive test result from a Massachusetts laboratory are considered “presumptive positive” pending CDC confirmatory testing.
- 95 Massachusetts residents had tested positive (89 presumptive positive; 6 confirmed) for COVID-19, as of afternoon of March 11.
- Of the presumptive positive cases, 77 cases are associated with the Biogen management meeting held February 26-27 at a Boston hotel at which roughly 175 employees were
present. The cases include Biogen employees (various U.S. cities, international locations) and contacts.

**Cambridge Update, as of March 11 at 5 p.m.**

- There are currently **no** positive cases (presumptive or confirmed) among Cambridge residents.
- The Cambridge Public Health Department’s nursing team, in partnership with the state health department, is currently monitoring 17 Cambridge residents who are either (a) connected to the Biogen meeting in Boston or (b) have recently traveled from mainland China or Iran.
- **Please note:** The number of people being monitored by CPHD nurses fluctuates on a daily basis as (a) monitored individuals complete their 14-day self-quarantine period and (b) the state health department identifies new individuals for local health department monitoring.
- **School Closures:** No school closures have been announced in Cambridge at this time.
- **City Event Cancellations:** Staff are assessing “non-essential” and discretionary citywide events following the March 10 State of Emergency declaration by Governor Baker.

**For Cambridge Residents and Employers with Concerns**

- If you have any health-related concerns or questions, contact your doctor’s office.
- If you have questions about preparing for COVID-19, please email the Cambridge Public Health Department at covid19inquiries@challiance.org or leave a message on CPHD’s COVID-19 phone line: 617-665-3648.

This update and other information is available on the Cambridge Public Health Department’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) website.