

Coronavirus deaths surpass 10,000 in hard-hit Massachusetts

November 13 2020, by Alanna Durkin Richer and Steve Leblanc



Priscilla Flint-Banks holds a photograph of her 87-year-old mother, Ruby Mae Kinney, who died during April of COVID-19, Friday, Oct. 30, 2020, in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston. Once a coronavirus hot spot, Massachusetts was seen as a model for infection control this summer as coronavirus cases and deaths dwindled. Now, experts are warning the state could be headed for a bleak winter as its cases climb once again and confirmed deaths surpass 10,000. Massachusetts hit 10,015 confirmed coronavirus deaths on Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020 nearly nine months after the state's initial case was detected. (AP Photo/Charles Krupa)

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Amid growing calls for action, Republican Gov. Charlie Baker recently tightened restrictions but has resisted taking more drastic measures such as halting indoor dining. The governor insists Massachusetts is better prepared than it was in the spring, but says if the trends continue it will only be a matter of time before the state's hospitals are once again stressed under a flood of patients.

"We know how close we got to a completely overwhelmed [health care system](#) in the spring and we are not willing to go there again," said Shira Doron, an infectious disease physician and hospital epidemiologist at Tufts Medical Center.

Massachusetts hit 10,015 confirmed [coronavirus](#) deaths on Thursday, nearly nine months after the state's initial case was detected. Confirmed cases have topped 174,000 and the number of cities and towns designated as "high risk" nearly doubled over a two-week period last month.

Nationwide, the pandemic has killed more than 240,000, but the real toll is thought to be much higher, in part because many COVID-19 deaths were probably ascribed to other causes, especially early on, before widespread testing. Massachusetts has the sixth-highest [death](#) toll in the U.S. behind New York, Texas, California, New Jersey and Florida.



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Experts are particularly concerned about outbreak at a home for aging veterans, and two of its former administrators have been criminally charged for their handling of the outbreak.

The surge in cases has prompted the city of Boston to shift to fully remote learning, prompting outrage among some that schools are being shuttered while things like restaurants and casinos remain open. The

governor has urged more schools to return to full in-person instruction, saying there's growing evidence that schools are not a significant source of spread and that keeping students at home hurts their learning and [mental health](#).

An advocacy group led by doctors has been calling on Baker to roll back the state's reopening plan by closing bars, imposing prior limits on seating inside restaurants and closing or limiting capacity inside entertainment venues, saying the state could be heading for another shutdown if it doesn't act soon.



Eunice Lopez, of Lawrence, Mass., looks at the COVID-19 Empty Chair Memorial on display at Campagnone Common, Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020, in Lawrence, Mass. Once a coronavirus hot spot, Massachusetts was seen as a model for infection control this summer as coronavirus cases and deaths

dwindled. Now, experts are warning the state could be headed for a bleak winter as its cases climb once again and confirmed deaths surpass 10,000.

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Photo/Elise Amendola)



In this May 1, 2020, file photo the Rev. Eric Bennett, left, says a funeral Mass for a man who died of COVID-19 in Boston. His family lives in Italy and could not travel for the funeral, so the only other person attending was funeral director Joe Ruggiero, right. Once a coronavirus hot spot, Massachusetts was seen as a model for infection control this summer as coronavirus cases and deaths dwindled. Now, experts are warning the state could be headed for a bleak winter as its cases climb once again and confirmed deaths surpass 10,000.

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Rinaldi/The Boston Globe via AP)



Pedestrians pass by the COVID-19 Empty Chair Memorial on display at Campagnone Common, Nov. 11, 2020, in Lawrence, Mass. Each chair represents a person from Lawrence who has died from coronavirus. Massachusetts hit 10,015 confirmed coronavirus deaths on Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020 nearly nine months after the state's initial case was detected. (AP Photo/Elise Amendola)



The COVID-19 Empty Chair Memorial is seen on display at Campagnone Common, Nov. 11, 2020, in Lawrence, Mass. Each chair represents a person from Lawrence who has died from coronavirus. Once a coronavirus hot spot, Massachusetts was seen as a model for infection control this summer as coronavirus cases and deaths dwindled. Now, experts are warning the state could be headed for a bleak winter as its cases climb once again and confirmed deaths surpass 10,000. Massachusetts hit 10,015 confirmed coronavirus deaths on Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020 nearly nine months after the state's initial case was detected. (AP Photo/Elise Amendola)

Baker recently announced that casinos, gyms and theatres will have to close by 9:30 p.m. and restaurants must stop providing table service at the same time. Indoor gatherings at private residences are now limited to 10 people and outdoor gatherings at private residences are limited to 25

people.

"We can and will stop the spread," Baker said. "How do I know that? Because we've done it before and we can do it again because we know what works."

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