



## **Letter to Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Patient**

Dear Patient:

You are receiving this letter because you have been diagnosed with, or are suspected to have, Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), which is a new and highly contagious viral disease. Beginning immediately, you are expected to voluntarily cooperate with instructions to isolate yourself to avoid infecting others. If you do not follow these instructions, public health officials may order you to stay in a hospital or other isolation site.

COVID-19 is spread from person to person when someone sick with the disease sneezes or coughs droplets into the air and another person breathes in the droplets. People are most infectious when they are sick. It is possible that COVID-19 can also be spread by touching objects that have become contaminated with the virus, or by other ways that are not known.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has declared that COVID-19 is a disease dangerous to the public health. As a result, strong measures must be taken to stop its spread. Therefore, it is important that you comply with voluntary isolation instructions and follow the guidelines below from now until you have been cleared by the Boston Public Health Commission or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Again, if you do not follow these instructions, the Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission or the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health may issue an emergency isolation order and, if that order is not obeyed, may seek a Court order to put you in a hospital or other appropriate isolation site.

### **Guidelines**

#### **Stay in place**

- You are expected to follow instructions about where to go and remain in voluntary isolation site and have no face-to-face contact with anyone other than medical or social services staff.
- You may not leave the voluntary isolation site during the isolation period for any reason, except a medical emergency.
- If you need something from outside, ask someone at the isolation site to assist you.
- Although you may be feeling well, others who are in close contact with you could get the infection from you. If you do not follow these instructions, you will place other people's health at risk.

#### **Use safe practices so community members do not get COVID-19.**

- You may be given a mask and asked that when other people are around you, you should wear a mask to cover your nose and mouth.
- When you are not wearing a mask, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you

- sneeze, cough, or blow your nose. Put the used tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water or use an alcohol rub or gel, as directed.
- In the isolation site, stay away as much as possible from people who share the space with you and avoid close contact.
- Throw out your used tissues and face masks with your trash.
- Do not share eating utensils, glasses, towels, drinks, or toothbrushes.
- If any of your body fluids (such as saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, or vomit) get on surfaces in the isolation site (doorknobs, draw pulls, etc.), someone wearing gloves should wash the surface with a household cleaner.

**Ask for help if your symptoms get worse.**

- If your symptoms get worse, speak to a medical professional at the isolation site or call your health care provider immediately. Providers can call the Boston Public Health Commission at the 617-534-5611.
- If you need additional medical help, please arrange for transportation with staff from your isolation site. Please do not take public transportation. Wear a mask on the way to see your health care provider and avoid sitting near other people.
- If you are very sick and need to call an ambulance to take you to the hospital, ask staff to call 911. They will tell the ambulance crew about your diagnosis and needs when they arrive.

The Boston Public Health Commission’s infectious disease staff will coordinate with staff at the isolation site regarding your condition and to determine if anyone else in your surroundings has become sick. If someone you have come into contact with gets sick with fever or respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing), it is important that they call their health care provider right away.

If you have any questions about the public health guidance in this letter, please call the Boston Public Health Commission at 617-534-5611. For more information, call the Boston Public Health Commission or visit BPHC’s website at [www.bphc.org](http://www.bphc.org). Thank you.

Sincerely,  
 Dr. Jennifer Lo  
 Medical Director  
 Boston Public Health Commission

Delivered in Hand By:

Received by Patient:

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Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_