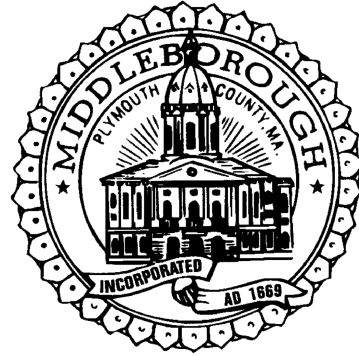


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Middleborough Officials Announce Participation in Community Tracing Collaborative

MIDDLEBOROUGH -- Town Manager Robert Nunes and Health Officer Robert Buker are pleased to announce that the Town of Middleborough has joined the Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

On Friday, April 3, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the creation of the COVID-19 [Community Tracing Collaborative](#) (CTC) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The collaboration consists of the [Massachusetts Department of Health](#), [Partners in Health](#), The Commonwealth Health Insurance Connector Authority, the MA COVID-19 Command Center, Public Health Academia, volunteer health professionals and students, local boards of health, and technological support and solutions by Accenture and Buoy.

"We are honored to be one of the first towns to participate in such a key effort to help slow down the spread of COVID-19," said Town Manager Nunes. "We look forward to the work we will do and the difference we will make within our communities."

As a member of the Community Tracing Collaborative (CTC), the Town of Middleborough will work directly with Partners in Health to conduct contact tracing to help accelerate the state's efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19. Partners in Health will work with the Middleborough Board of Health to ensure that they are properly trained and staffed to conduct contact tracing.

"As the state continues to see additional cases, it's expected that the need for contact tracing will grow exponentially and we are excited to join the Community Tracing Collaborative and work with Partners in Health to help fulfill this need," said Health Officer Buker.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, local boards of health, such as the Middleborough Board of Health, have been the primary sources conducting contact tracing of COVID-19 cases. To conduct contact tracing, local boards of health have identified infected individuals and then conducted the process of [contact identification, contact listing and contact follow-up](#).

Throughout the process, local Boards of Health have been using the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiology Network (MAVEN), an existing system that collects and holds data

on reportable disease incidences, to conduct their contact tracing steps.

All confirmed cases of COVID-19 are entered into MAVEN and once the cases are entered, local boards of health using MAVEN can request tracking assistance.

Beginning Thursday, April 30, if a town does not take any action to contact trace an entered case by 11:59 p.m. that same day, the CTC will take over the case and conduct contact tracing and other necessary measures. While they do so, the CTC will enter the information into a "sister system" of MAVEN in order to protect the sensitive information already in MAVEN. All the information in the sister system will eventually be entered into MAVEN for long-term storage.

"Partners In Health is honored to work side-by-side with the local boards of health, under the visionary leadership of Governor Baker, to support contact tracing efforts throughout Massachusetts," said Director of Partnerships & Operations for MA COVID Response John Welch. "Ending COVID-19 in Massachusetts and around the world will require partnerships like this one, and the early adoption by Middleborough shows a dedication to keeping its citizens safe."

The CTC will deploy nearly 1,000 contact tracers throughout the state to connect with COVID-19 patients and their contacts to support Massachusetts' efforts to track and contain the virus. The goal of the CTC is to be 100% effective in tracking in order to create a sustained downward trend in COVID-19 cases.

All municipal Boards of Health will join the CTC by Friday, May 1, but Middleborough elected to partake in early participation.

About Partners in Health (PIH)

PIH is a nonprofit global health organization that fights injustice by bringing the benefits of modern medical science first and foremost to the most vulnerable communities around the world. PIH focuses on those who would not otherwise have access to quality health care and partners with the world's leading academic institutions to create rigorous evidence that shapes more sound and inclusive global health policies. PIH also supports local governments' efforts to build capacity and strengthen national health systems. As of today, PIH runs programs in 11 countries, where it provides direct care to millions of patients through public facilities and community engagement.

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A message from the Town of Middleborough

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