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# Press Release

## The Town of Billerica enters “High Risk Category” (Red) for COVID 19 Cases

**Billerica, MA October 29, 2020:** Statement of Town Manager John C. Curran:

The Town and the School Department continue to monitor the day to day status of COVID 19 cases in the Town of Billerica and how it correlates to Middlesex County and the Commonwealth as a whole. It is important to compare our status with the County and the Commonwealth to ensure that our case activity is not trending at a higher rate. Currently the Town is tracking in line with both the County and the Commonwealth (Figure 1).

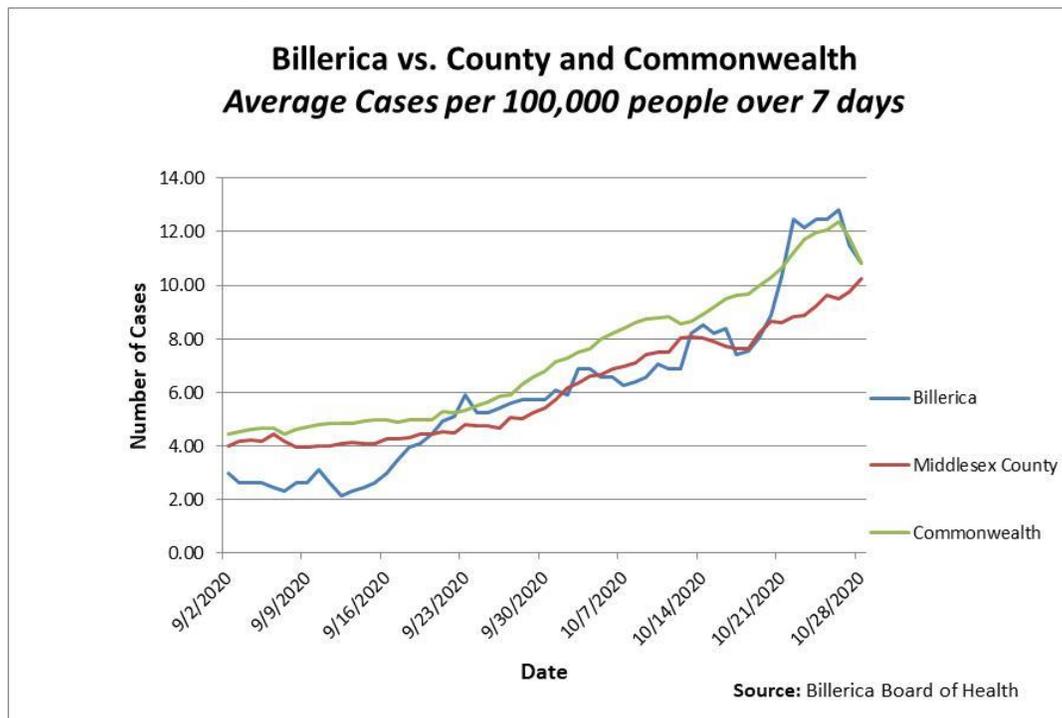


Figure 1

**For Release 5:15 p.m. EDT, October 29, 2020**

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The Town also tracks influences of specific populations on the number of cases. Like many Communities, Billerica has several Long-Term Care Facilities. Unlike most communities, Billerica has the Middlesex House of Correction in Town. These two closed communities can have significant impact on the degree of Community Spread in the Town. At the present time there is no influence from these populations on active cases in Town. However, back in April and May these populations were influencing the number of cases – sometimes significantly as seen in (Figure 2).

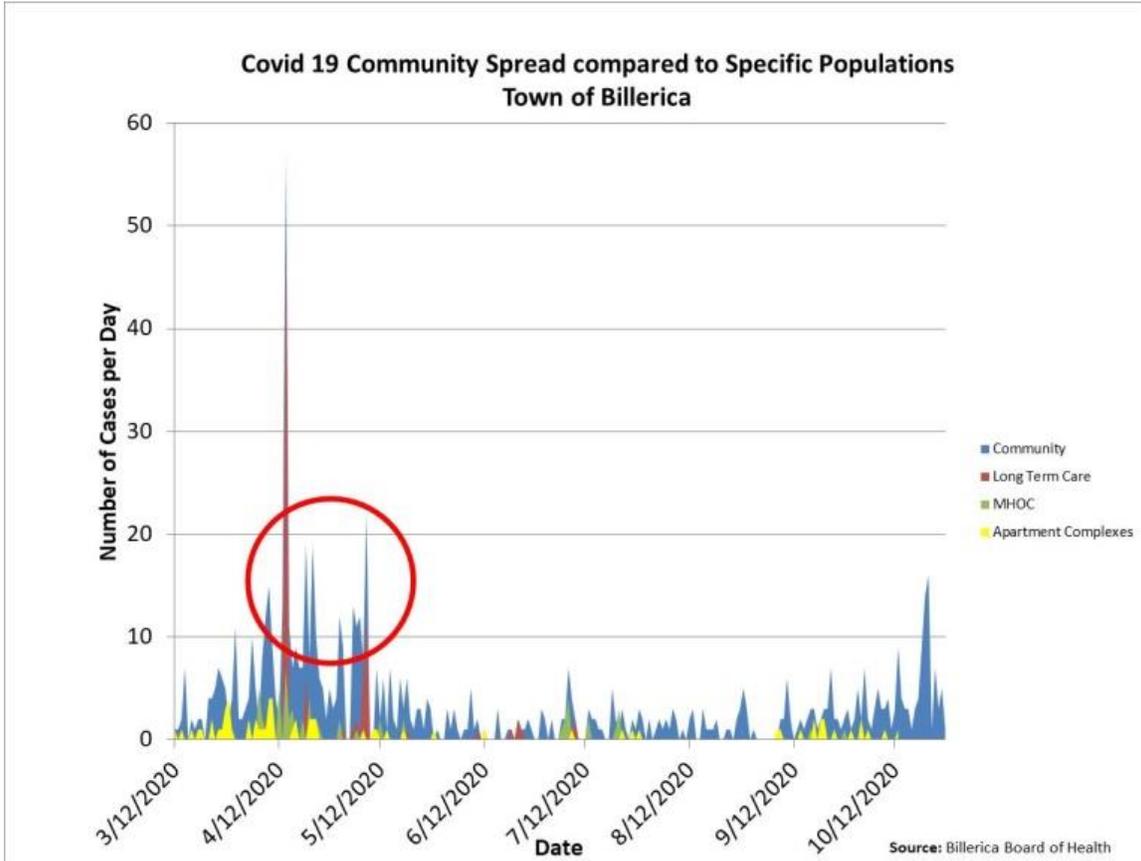


Figure 2

**For Release 8:15 p.m. EDT, October 29, 2020**

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Unfortunately, Billerica is not immune to the recent spike in COVID 19 across the Commonwealth. A thoughtful examination of all recent cases reveals that the primary cause of spread within the community is small family gatherings. The Town has officially moved into a “High Risk Status” (Red) as seen below (Figure 3). The number of active cases is also on the incline (Figure 4).

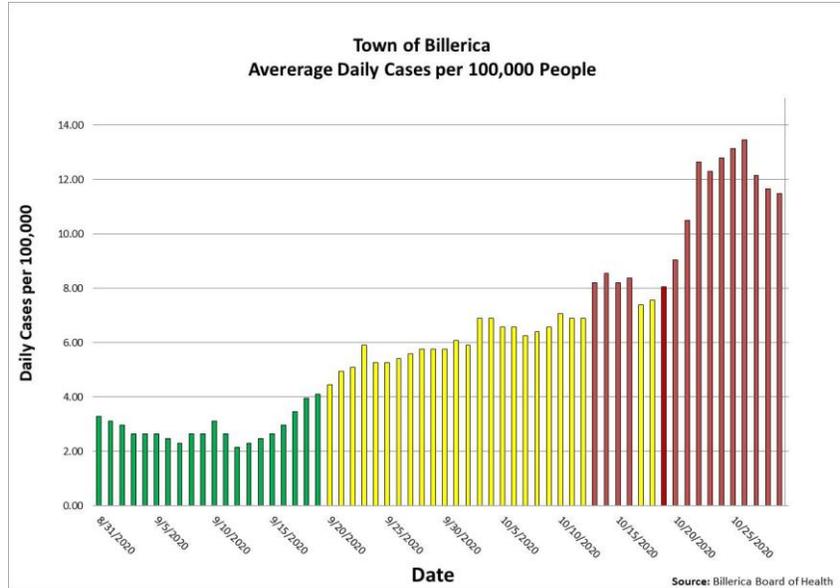


Figure 3

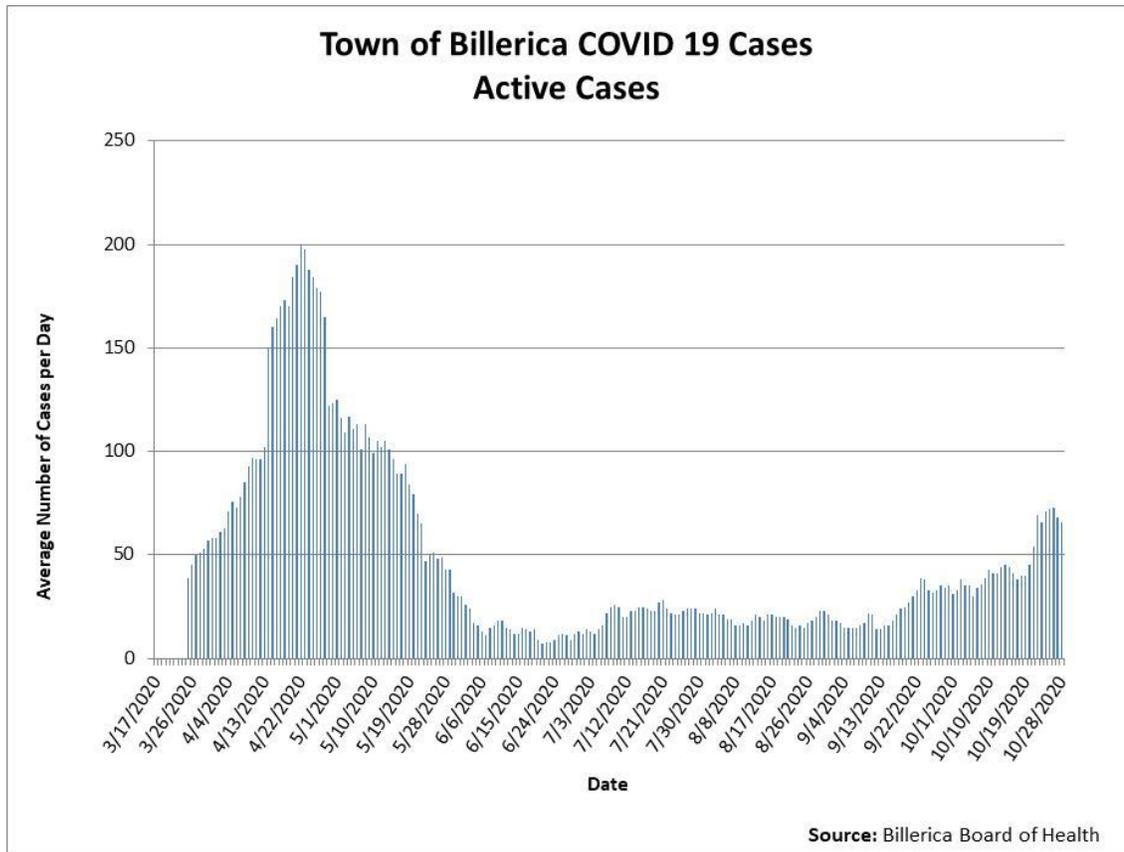


Figure 4

For Release 8:15 p.m. EDT, October 29, 2020

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Residents must remain vigilant in social distancing practices. This means continue to wear masks, maintain 6 feet separation from friends and colleagues, avoid large, even small, gatherings inside for large periods of time. This will require many of us to make tough decisions about Holiday gatherings this year. Please remember the CDC has redefined a “close contact” as 15 minutes of cumulative time within six feet of a positively diagnosed COVID 19 individual over 24 hours.

As we enter the winter months it will become more difficult to avoid contact with the virus. The Town will continue to monitor the situation in conjunction with the Board of Health and the School Department. Our goal is to keep Billerica as safe and open as possible. The attached link from the CDC will provide you guidance in making your Holiday Decisions <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>.

Finally, based on the current status and all of the factors considered above the Town is not prohibiting Halloween Trick or Treat activities and leaving that decision up to individual families.

Please see the link to the COVID-19 Halloween Safety tips from the Massachusetts Department of Public (MDPH): <https://www.mass.gov/news/halloween-during-covid-19>. Trick or treating is allowed with the following safety tips:

1. Place candy on a platter instead of a bowl (to reduce hands and hands inside bowls)
2. Try for one-way trick-or-treating, with treat placed outside of the home for trick-or-treaters as a “grab and go” while keeping distance form others
3. Consider leaving hand sanitizer by any treats left out for trick or treater to use
4. Wear a face mask or face covering
5. Observe good hand hygiene including hand washing and use of alcohol-based sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol. Carry hand sanitizer and use it often, especially after coming into contact with frequently touched surfaces and before eating candy.
6. Refrain from touching your face

	Long Term Care Facilites	95
	Middlesex House of Corrections	59
	Health Care Workers	85
	Apartment Complexes	74
	Deaths	31
	Active Cases	63
	Recovered Cases	695
	Total Cases to Date	789
	Cases per 100,000	11.49
	Seven Day Case Averde	2.86
	Number of Cases last 14 days	63
	Billerica Status	<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">██████████</span>

Thursday, October 29, 2020 Source: Billerica Board of Health