



MASSACHUSETTS COVID-19  
**RESPONSE ALLIANCE**  
FOR A JUST RECOVERY AND BEYOND

# THE MASSACHUSETTS PEOPLE'S REPORT

# WHO WE ARE

The Massachusetts COVID-19 Response Alliance (MCRA) is an alliance of community, labor and faith organizations who know that our state's response to COVID-19 needs to center the lives and struggles of those most impacted by the pandemic. Throughout the pandemic, our fights and struggles have been pitted against each other in an austerity narrative that has told us that there are not enough resources to address all of our needs. We have come together and united our fights centering child care, housing, public transit, workers' rights and public education. We are parents, tenants, homeowners, teachers, students, public transit workers and riders, child care workers, gig workers, environmentalists and community leaders.

**WE ARE THE MULTI-RACIAL WORKING CLASS.**

**WE ARE MASSACHUSETTS.**



# GLOSSARY

<b>AFT:</b>	American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts	<b>MassCOSH:</b>	Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health
<b>BTU:</b>	Boston Teachers Union	<b>MassDOT:</b>	Massachusetts Department of Transportation
<b>CDC:</b>	United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	<b>Mass JwJ:</b>	Massachusetts Jobs with Justice
<b>CLU:</b>	Community Labor United	<b>Matahari:</b>	Matahari Women Workers' Center
<b>CLVU:</b>	City Life/Vida Urbana	<b>MBTA:</b>	Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
<b>CWA:</b>	Clean Water Action	<b>MCRA:</b>	Massachusetts COVID-19 Reponse Alliance
<b>DESE:</b>	Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	<b>MEJA:</b>	Mass Education Justice Alliance
<b>GBLC:</b>	Greater Boston Labor Council	<b>MNA:</b>	Mass Nurses Association
<b>HHS:</b>	MA Executive Office of Health and Human Services	<b>MTA:</b>	Massachusetts Teachers Association
<b>JPP:</b>	Jamaica Plain Progressives	<b>MVT:</b>	Massachusetts Voter Table
<b>Mass AFL-CIO:</b>	Massachusetts American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations	<b>NEJLC:</b>	New England Jewish Labor Committee
<b>MassBudget:</b>	Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center	<b>NEU4J:</b>	New England United for Justice
		<b>PUMA:</b>	Parents Union of Massachusetts
		<b>UU Mass Action:</b>	Unitarian Universalist Mass Action

# INTRODUCTION

**Looking back on the past year, it is difficult to fully comprehend the scale of loss we have collectively endured:** lost jobs, savings, friends, loved ones, learning, plans, and certainty. Massachusetts' first positive case of COVID-19 was confirmed on February 1, 2020, and just over a year later, more than [700,000 people have contracted the virus and nearly 18,000 have died](#) across the Commonwealth. The cascading economic shocks caused by the pandemic have been similarly catastrophic and swift.

When life-saving lockdown measures were first imposed last spring, vast swathes of the economy ground to a halt, leaving countless families without income or healthcare. And while these crises have impacted all of us – in every community – they have not done so equally. **The devastating effects of both the COVID-19 pandemic and corresponding economic collapse in Massachusetts have been disproportionately borne by our most vulnerable communities, widening already vast social, racial, and economic inequalities affecting low-income communities and communities of color.** With so many suffering and desperate for relief, the need to abandon business-as-usual thinking and deliver bold action has never been more apparent.

**Yet throughout this emergency, our state's leaders have systematically failed to equitably and adequately respond to the public health and economic crises at hand.** While lines grew at food banks, small businesses shuttered, and housing insecurity accelerated in towns and cities across the Commonwealth, Governor Baker appointed corporate interests with a [history of misconduct](#) to his Reopening Advisory Board, blatantly omitting the voices of labor unions, frontline workers, and leaders from hard-hit communities. The pro-corporate “Reopening Massachusetts” plan the Advisory Board developed [fails](#) to enforce protections for the essential workers who have risked their lives in the midst of the pandemic to keep us safe. Our legislature has missed the opportunity to respond to the needs of our communities despite strong support on critical measures like Emergency Paid Sick Time, the Housing Stability Bill, funding the Student Opportunity Act, or passing progressive revenue.

**The multi-racial working class has endured the brunt of the pandemic and suffered from the consequences of our State's inaction.** We have been forced to live with excruciating housing and food insecurity. We have been forced to make gut-wrenching decisions about going to work or keeping our loved ones safe. We have been forced to swallow the stress of not having the support we need in our homes, workplaces, schools, and communities. And let us be clear: none of this was inevitable or unavoidable.

**But left to fend for ourselves, we have fed, clothed, housed, fought, and cared for each other throughout this crisis.**

Community organizations, labor unions, faith-based organizations, and ordinary people throughout Massachusetts have stepped up in this time of unprecedented need to keep their neighbors safe, healthy, and secure. From mobilizing assistance to undocumented families through the MassUndocuFund, to forming parent groups like PUMA in Worcester, to redistributing resources through our mutual aid networks across the state—cut off from other avenues of support, we have come together to ensure no one is left behind. But with the pandemic still raging on, we know our government must act aggressively and decisively to deliver the scale of relief required by this moment. A recovery without us is not a recovery.

**As we enter the second year of the COVID-19 crisis, the People's Report offers a snapshot of the pain, grit, disruption, resilience, loss, remembrance, and hope we have felt this past year.** This account is by no means comprehensive—missing are the everyday ways the pandemic and economic crisis have impacted all of us. But in broadly reflecting on key highlights and moments from the previous year, the People's Report strives to both acknowledge the deep challenges we have faced and celebrate the collective power we have built. **Winning a just and equitable recovery for Massachusetts which centers the voices and needs of frontline communities is our foremost priority.** By pausing to reflect on how far we have come, we hope to strengthen our resolve for the fight ahead.

# MARCH 2020

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 3/12/20: **CLVU** holds in-person rally at Boston Housing Court to demand a moratorium on evictions during the COVID-19 crisis ([source](#))
- 3/19/20: **Mass JwJ and MassCOSH** co-host virtual COVID-19 workers town hall with the MA Attorneys General Office ([source](#))
- 3/26/20: **Mass JwJ and Matahari** launch "MassUndocuFund" to provide financial support to undocumented workers unable to access public benefits
- 3/28/20: **Mass JwJ** releases a list of emergency funds available for workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- *\*2/1/20: First official case of COVID-19 in MA confirmed by state health officials ([source](#))*
- *3/2/20: Second confirmed COVID-19 case in MA ([source](#))*
- 3/10/20: Gov. Baker declares state of emergency due to COVID pandemic ([source](#))
- 3/10/20: Mass. Legislature announces it will approve \$15M to respond to COVID ([source](#))
- *3/11/20: World Health Organization declares COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic ([source](#))*
- 3/13/20: Gov. Baker bans all gatherings of more than 250 people ([source](#))
- 3/15/20: Gov. Baker closes all MA schools for 3 weeks, bans eating at restaurants and gatherings of more than 25 people, enacts emergency unemployment provisions ([source](#))
- 3/16/20: MBTA announces temporary service cuts ([source](#))
- 3/16/20: Massachusetts Housing Court suspends eviction proceedings ([source](#))
- 3/18/20: Gov. Baker closes all non-emergency child care facilities ([source](#))
- *3/20/20: 87-year old Winthrop man is first MA COVID death ([source](#))*
- 3/21/20: MBTA implements rear-door boarding policy on busses and trolleys ([source](#))
- 3/23/20: Gov. Baker issues stay-at-home advisory, closes all non-essential businesses ([source](#))
- *3/30/20: MBTA announces that 18 transit workers test positive for COVID ([source](#))*

(COVID-19 developments are italicized above)

## WORKERS' RIGHTS STORY



*"During the pandemic, in the first weeks when everything closed, I was very afraid. My hours as a nanny were reduced and I was worried how it would impact me economically, emotionally, and mentally. I think mentally, what I felt most was fear: fear of the virus, fear of the economy we had, fear in all aspects. Although my work hours were reduced and my daughter stayed home, I was able to pay my expenses, but I really felt fear. Some of my husband's family members and friends died from COVID—this has affected us all. I also have many friends who work as nannies who have gotten COVID and who were not paid. This scared me a lot because we don't have medical coverage or paid sick days."*

**- JESSICA C.**

# APRIL 2020

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 4/1/20: **MCRA** convenes first meeting of community, labor, and faith organizations
- 4/5/20: **Chelsea Collaborative** launches "One Chelsea Fund" with United Way Mass Bay to provide direct financial relief to Chelsea individuals and families to meet their basic needs ([source](#))
- 4/7/20: **MCRA** issues people-centered COVID-19 response platform ([source](#))
- 4/16/20: **MassCOSH** publishes "Toolkit for Essential Workers During COVID-19" in english and spanish ([source](#))
- 4/18/20: **Matahari** hosts virtual training on immigrant workers' rights during COVID for domestic workers ([source](#))
- 4/27/20: **CLVU** hosts virtual teach-in on MA eviction and foreclosure moratorium with Rep. Mike Connolly ([source](#))
- 4/28/20: **MassCOSH, Mass JwJ, CLU, GBLC, and Mass AFL-CIO** co-host virtual Workers' Memorial Day commemoration to honor and remember workers who lost their lives, including to COVID-19 ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- *4/2/20: More than 500 healthcare workers test positive for COVID at major MA hospitals ([source](#))*
- 4/3/20: Gov. Baker announces first-in-the-nation contact tracing program ([source](#))
- *4/7/20: Chelsea emerges as a COVID hotspot, with the highest incidence rate of COVID-19 cases in the state ([source](#))*
- 4/10/20: DESE cancels 2020 MCAS exam ([source](#))
- *4/12/20: MA hits 25,000 positive COVID cases, third highest in nation ([source](#))*
- *4/13/20: Harvard School of Public Health announces preliminary research findings linking COVID-19 mortality with air pollution ([source](#))*
- 4/20/20: Gov. Baker signs the nation's strongest residential and small business eviction moratorium bill ([source](#))
- 4/21/20: Gov. Baker orders MA schools to remain closed for duration of school year, extends closure of non-emergency child care programs ([source](#))
- *4/24/20: MA COVID death toll tops 2,500 and total cases surpass 50,000 ([source](#))*
- 4/28/20: Gov. Baker extends stay-at-home advisory and closure of non-essential businesses, appoints corporate-dominated Reopening Advisory Board to develop phased reopening plan ([source](#))

(COVID-19 developments are italicized above)

## TRANSIT STORY



"I live on one of the two hills in Chelsea and my only way off the hill or back on the hill is the 112 bus, which has long been a nightmare with the MBTA. Among other things, we fought for years and finally they gave us a few crumbs off the table and gave us one additional bus, which reduced the scheduled wait time from 45 minutes to 30 minutes. So now, of course, they're cutting that back, punishing us again. It is an insult that they are taking away services from the most vulnerable population in the epicenter of the COVID epidemic."

- MAUREEN C.

# MAY 2020

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 5/1/20: **MCRA** sends letter to Gov. Baker, Senate President Spilka, and House Speaker DeLeo demanding just and equitable COVID-19 relief efforts ([source](#))
- 5/1/20: **MCRA** hosts "From Social Distancing to Social Safety" virtual May Day rally ([source](#))
- 5/1/20: **GBLC and Mass AFL-CIO** host May Day car rally in support of essential workers ([source](#))
- 5/5/20: **CWA, CLU, and GJC** co-host "Asthma Justice Town Hall" to spotlight connection between air pollution, asthma, and COVID-19 ([source](#))
- 5/18/20: **GBLC** releases "Rewriting the Massachusetts Economy: A Three-part Worker Agenda to Protect Human Life" in response to Gov. Baker's reopening plan ([source](#))
- 5/20/20: **JPP** hosts "Covid 19: Past, Present, and the Path to a Just Recovery" virtual town hall ([source](#))
- 5/21/20: **UU Mass Action** hosts virtual community conversation on wealth inequality and COVID-19 ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- 5/1/20: Gov. Baker issues mask mandate ([source](#))
- 5/11/20: Gov. Baker announces four-phase reopening plan, issues mandatory workplace safety standards for social distancing, hygiene, staffing policies, and cleaning ([source](#))
- 5/18/20: Gov. Baker releases official reopening plan, provides timeline and sector-by-sector guidelines ([source](#))
- 5/26/20: Gov. Baker declares MA COVID surge over, begins phasing down field hospitals around the state ([source](#))

## HOUSING/WORKERS' RIGHTS STORY



*"Before the pandemic, I was employed and worked with Uber Eats. I previously had cancer and had to make a quick decision to protect my health when the pandemic started. Given my health and the fact that I had my family's health to protect, I chose to stop working and left the workforce. The unemployment assistance I receive weekly is not enough to pay rent, utilities, car, and put food on the table. My partner is undocumented and because of his status, he does not receive any unemployment benefits or stimulus. We are living paycheck to paycheck and I worry about providing for my family and keeping a roof over our heads."*

**- BARBARA T.**

# JUNE 2020

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 6/6/20: **Matahari** hosts virtual "Know Your Rights Training for Au Pairs During COVID" ([source](#))
- 6/22/20: The **Task Force on Coronavirus & Equity** gives Gov. Baker's reopening plan all D's and F's on their "Report Card for an Equitable Reopening" ([source](#))
- 6/26: **Care That Works Coalition** issues "Six Proposals for Child Care Equity and a Just Recovery" report ([source](#))
- 6/27/20: **CLVU** organizes 2-day car caravan to protest evictions and push for strong anti-eviction protections for renters ([source](#))
- 6/29/20: **Western MA Area Labor Federation** hosts virtual "Reopening & your Rights: Safety & Justice for Restaurant Workers" training ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- *6/1/20: MA hits 100,000 positive cases, 7,000 deaths ([source](#))*
- 6/8/20: Gov. Baker moves MA into phase 2 of reopening, allowing child care facilities, hotels, outdoor restaurant dining ([source](#))
- *6/20/20: Data released by the MA Department of Public Health's COVID-19 Health Equity Advisory Group shows Black and Hispanic communities suffering disproportionately from COVID-19 ([source](#))*
- 6/22/20: MA enters phase 2 step 2 of reopening, allowing indoor dining to resume ([source](#))
- 6/23/20: Gov. Baker announces series of reforms after independent investigation into Holyoke Soldiers' Home outbreak reveals systemic failures leading to 76 deaths ([source](#))
- 6/25/20: DESE issues fall reopening guidance, requiring school district to submit reopening plans for in-person, hybrid, and remote scenarios ([source](#))

(COVID-19 developments are italicized above)

## EDUCATION/WORKERS' RIGHTS STORY



*"Having my income cut in half [while furloughed] was simply unworkable. Who can live on half their income? I took a temporary job shopping and delivering groceries for Instacart, hoping that I would eventually be recalled. The people who were furloughed were the lowest-paid people, the people who could least afford it. It's bad for anyone to lose their income, but for a minimum-wage worker who lives paycheck to paycheck, it's a catastrophe to be furloughed. The University chose to balance the books on the backs of the poorest among us and did tremendous human damage."*

**- MELINDA N.**



# JULY 2020

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 7/22/20: **Homes for All Mass** hosts in-person rally at Statehouse to protest mass evictions ([source](#))
- 7/22/20: **Mass Budget & Policy Center** hosts virtual panel discussion with the Boston Foundation on a guaranteed income in the post-COVID era ([source](#))
- 7/22/20: **AFT, BTU, and MTA** co-host MA educators virtual town hall with Sen. Warren on safely reopening schools ([source](#))
- 7/28/20: **NEJLC** hosts virtual "Tisha B'Av Memorial to Frontline Workers Lost to COVID-19" ([source](#))
- 7/29/20: **MNA** school nurses host sit-in at Boston City Hall to call for safe reopening of BPS ([source](#))
- 7/31/20: **BTU** survey reveals 2/3 of BPS educators are at high risk for COVID-19 or live with someone who is, and overwhelmingly prefer remote teaching ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- 7/2/20: Gov. Baker moves MA into phase 3 of reopening, permitting gyms, casinos, movie theaters, and museums to open with safety precautions ([source](#))
- 7/8/20: Gov. Baker announces new COVID testing facilities in working-class POC and immigrant communities ([source](#))
- 7/17/20: Labor statistics reveal MA had an unemployment rate of 17.4% in June, the worst in the country ([source](#))
- 7/20/20: MBTA resumes front-door boarding on buses and trolleys ([source](#))
- 7/21/20: Gov. Baker extends eviction and foreclosure moratorium through 10/17 ([source](#))

## HOUSING STORY



*"COVID-19 has affected my life and my family a lot. I have not been able to work, and we are only living with the little bit that my son makes. Our electricity was shut off because we were unable to pay during the pandemic, and we had to look for another apartment because we could not afford the high rent. I don't have small children, but it still impacted me a lot."*

**- MAYRA E.M.**

# AUGUST 2020

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 8/6/20: **MCRA** hosts virtual panel discussion calling on State authorities to ensure a safe and equitable reopening of MA public schools ([source](#))
- 8/17/20: **Mass JwJ, PUMA, and MEJA** co-host virtual community conversation on safe school reopening ([source](#))
- 8/19/20: **AFT, BTU, CLVU, MNA, and MTA** co-host day of action in support of safe & healthy schools ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- 8/7/20: Gov. Baker announces indefinite pause on reopening plan, new restrictions, and stricter enforcement of regulation violations due to uptick in COVID cases ([source](#))
- **8/11/20: MA begins publishing weekly data on town-by-town infections rates, Chelsea, Everett, Lawrence, Lynn, and Revere are highest-risk cities in state ([source](#))**
- 8/21/20: BPS announces 2020-21 school year will start remotely ([source](#))

(COVID-19 developments are italicized above)

## CHILD CARE/HOUSING STORY



*"I am engaged and we postponed our wedding once already due to the pandemic, but we may need to again since we are behind on bills. This summer I purchased a car and a week before being told I was going to be put on indefinite furlough, I signed a lease for a new place that has higher rent than before. I have a 12-year old daughter whose father is not in her life and I do not receive any support for her. I am her primary caregiver. My fiancé has taken on the sole responsibility of our household bill, but is unable to help me with my daughter since he has a son that he also needs to financially care for. His paycheck does not even come close to meeting what our monthly expenses are."*

**- KAYLA P.**

# SEPTEMBER 2020

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 9/7/20: **GBLC** and others host "Workers Rally for a Just Recovery" Labor Day celebration ([source](#))
- 9/22/20: **MassBudget** kicks off "Envisioning Equity" virtual community conversation series with "Equitable Education through the Crisis" ([source](#))
- 9/29/20: **MCRA, MassCOSH, JPP**, and others issue open letter calling on Gov. Baker to do more to curb the spread of COVID and reinstate certain COVID-19 restrictions to protect the health of communities and the economy ([source](#))
- 9/30/20: **Care That Works Coalition** launches pilot program offering child care during nonstandard work hours for essential workers ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- 9/3/20: Gov. Baker announces new public messaging campaign targeting Chelsea, Everett, Lawrence, Lynn, and Revere where COVID transmission rates are highest ([source](#))
- 9/18/20: DESE Commissioner Riley issues memo pushing for school districts to resume in-person instruction ([source](#))
- 9/22/20: Gov. Baker relaxes indoor dining restrictions, allowing larger table sizes and bar seating ([source](#))

## CHILD CARE STORY



"My partner and I are both teachers. Our daughter was supposed to start kindergarten this year and our 18 year old began his freshman year in college. We had to manage 4 different learning schedules, rearrange parts of our homes, and my partner and I juggled supporting the 6 year old, with our 18 year old jumping in to lend a hand at times. We also have a 2 year old and due to daycares being closed, and us following safety guidelines, the fall was extremely difficult. By the winter, we formed a bubble with a family member that helped us take care of Luna and that alleviated some of the stress. Working from home, having our kids home, and having to juggle everything in our household was strenuous and required so much more labor than our pre-COVID lives and no one was prepared for those changes and we've had to constantly adapt and let some things go."

- JINEYDA T.

# OCTOBER 2020

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 10/8/20: **Matahari** hosts "MA Service Workers Virtual Town Hall" with Rep. Ayanna Pressley ([source](#))
- 10/11/20: **CLVU** hosts in-person rally at Boston Common to stop evictions and foreclosures ([source](#))
- 10/11/20: **Homes for All Mass** launches week of action to protest mass evictions and foreclosure and push for the Housing Stability Act ([source](#))
- 10/14/20: **MCRA** coalition members lead march to Gov. Baker's house to demand an end to mass evictions and foreclosures and passage of the Housing Stability Act ([source](#))
- 10/15/20: **Matahari** hosts "MA Service Workers Virtual Town Hall" with Sen. Elizabeth Warren ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- 10/5/20: Low-risk communities are permitted to move into phase 3 step 2 of reopening, permitting indoor performance venues and recreational activities to reopen ([source](#))
- 10/17/20: Gov. Baker announces COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Group to advise on vaccine prioritization, communication, distribution and equity ([source](#))
- 10/22/20: Gov. Baker launches \$774M economic recovery package, including funding for eviction diversion initiatives and small business grants ([source](#))
- *10/22/20: Positive cases in MA reach 5-month high, with 20% of the state's cities and towns designated high-risk for COVID transmission ([source](#))*
- *10/29/20: COVID cases in MA surpass 150,000 ([source](#))*

(COVID-19 developments are italicized above)

## WORKERS' RIGHTS STORY



*"The office where I worked, the Student Legal Support Office (SLSO), has been understaffed since I was hired over two years ago, and we have been extremely busy helping students with housing and immigration matters since the pandemic hit us. We expected that our numbers would go down, but that was not the case. Our number of inquiries has gone up. I know my furlough is negatively affecting the office since there is not one administrative staff member there now. Students are not receiving the services that they have paid for—their needs are being neglected."*

**- KAYLA P.**

# NOVEMBER 2020

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 11/18/20: **MTA** hosts "Bring Staff Back" rally to reinstate furloughed UMass Amherst employees ([source](#))
- 11/19/20: **CLU** holds in-person rally at MassDOT to oppose MBTA service cuts ([source](#))
- 11/19/20: **Home for All Mass** co-hosts "Justice Can't Wait!" rally at statehouse ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- 11/2/20: Gov. Baker announces new COVID restrictions, including a curfew on certain businesses, tighter gathering limits, stronger mask mandate, and an extended stay-at-home advisory ([source](#))
- ***11/2/20: COVID deaths in MA surpass 10,000, nearly as many MA residents killed in World War II*** ([source](#))
- 11/6/20: DESE Commissioner Riley issues updated reopening guidance for public schools, pressuring districts to move to in-person learning even in high-risk communities ([source](#))

(COVID-19 developments are italicized above)

\*Some images on this page were captured before the pandemic.



*"I worked for a few months as a regional organizing director for the re-election campaign of U.S. Senator Edward Markey from November 2019 until June 2020. By March 2020, the campaign went remote and at the same time so did the public schools. By the time June came around, I knew I would need child care for the summer in order to continue working because school would be over soon. I had to be honest about the situation and contemplate if I could keep my job or not, and ended up quitting by the month's end. I am a single mother with a mortgage and this caused me a lot of stress. I knew unemployment benefits would not go far enough. I was unemployed for 4 months which set me back with all the bills too. By September 2020, I had to apply for a forbearance because there was no way I was going to be able to catch up with the bills and mortgage and not become homeless again."*

**- JACQUELINE V.**

# DECEMBER 2020

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 12/2/20: **MCRA** hosts “What Now? Understanding the Moment, & Building a Movement” virtual fireside chat ([source](#))
- 12/2/20: **AFT** launches COVID-19 Bill of Rights Campaign outlining ten principles for safe and effective schools ([source](#))
- 12/10/20: **MassCOSH, MTA, and AFT** kick off virtual community conversation series on COVID-19 and schools ([source](#))
- 12/14/20: **CLU** holds in-person press conference at MassDOT with Sen. Ed Markey and Rep. Ayanna Pressley to oppose MBTA service cuts ([source](#))
- 12/28/20: **JPP and CLVU** co-host virtual town hall on COVID-19 vaccines with infectious disease specialist ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- *12/2/20: MA sees 4,613 new coronavirus cases, the highest single-day total reported in the state since the start of the pandemic ([source](#))*
- 12/3/20: The White House Coronavirus Task Force urges MA officials to roll back reopening plan to earlier phase ([source](#))
- 12/8/20: Gov. Baker announces statewide rollback of MA reopening plan to phase 3 step 1 due to post-Thanksgiving surge ([source](#))
- *12/9/20: Gov. Baker releases first COVID vaccine distribution plan, prioritizing frontline healthcare workers ([source](#))*

(COVID-19 developments are italicized above)

\*Some images on this page were captured before the pandemic.



“The delay [in funding the Student Opportunity Act] has impacted families that need these funds—the same families that have been further disenfranchised by the pandemic. We have serious issues of food insecurity, folks losing their homes, many living paycheck to paycheck, and these funds could be critical to help offset the financial damage to many families that have now become a crisis due to the pandemic. It is outrageous that our state has not prioritized these funds being given to the communities like Lawrence that need it the most when we know Black and brown folks have been impacted by COVID the worst.”

- JINEYDA T.

# JANUARY 2021

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

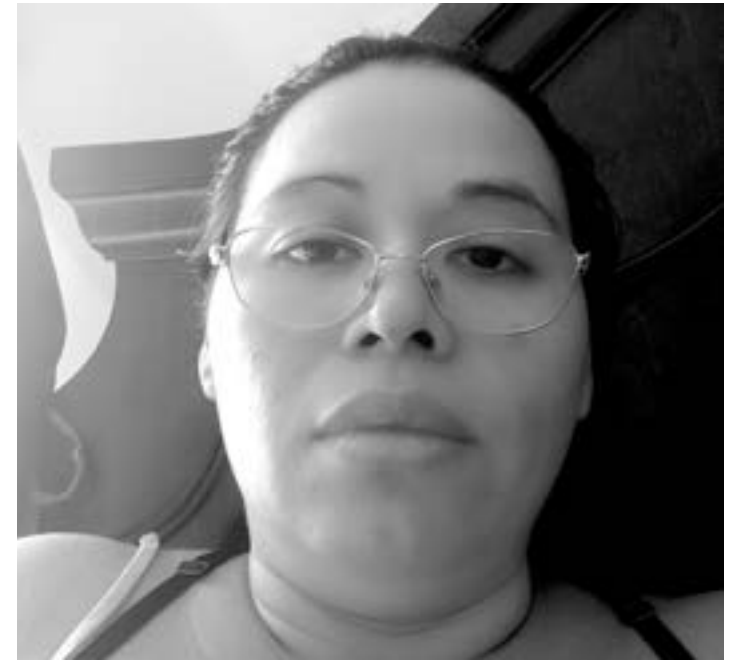
- 1/13/21: **CLVU** holds “National Day of Action to Stop Evictions” rally at Boston Housing Court ([source](#))
- 1/19/21: **MassCOSH, CLU, and Matahari** co-host “Childcare Providers & COVID-19” virtual town hall ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- *1/7/21: MA sets new single-day record, with 7,136 reported cases ([source](#))*
- *1/11/21: COVID-19 vaccine clinics open for first responders in MA ([source](#))*
- 1/11/21: Job report shows that women accounted for 100% of jobs lost in December ([source](#))
- *1/18/21: Gillette Stadium opens as state’s first mass COVID vaccination site ([source](#))*
- *1/21/21: UK COVID-19 variant found in MA for the first time ([source](#))*
- *1/25/21: Gov. Baker announces updated vaccine rollout plan ([source](#))*
- 1/25/21: Curfews on some non-essential businesses and stay-at-home advisories for residents are relaxed ([source](#))

(COVID-19 developments are italicized above)

## HOUSING STORY



“As a mother, the pandemic has been and continues to be a great challenge since we were not prepared for this. My husband lost his job at the beginning of January as the company he worked at closed down and the hardest thing has been that we are not able to receive help from the government or unemployment benefits. I can’t work because I have a health condition that impedes me and unfortunately, I can’t receive any kind of assistance. What my husband makes right now is not enough to meet our bills and rent.”

- SARA S.

# FEBRUARY 2021

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 2/5/21: **Matahari** hosts virtual training on workplace safety and the COVID-19 vaccine for essential workers ([source](#))
- 2/10/21: **AFT, BTU, MNA, MTA**, and other labor organizations release letter to HHS proposing a rapid vaccination plan for school employees ([source](#))
- 2/17/21: **MassCOSH** hosts virtual “COVID-19 Vaccines & Worker Safety” town hall ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- *2/1/21: Phase 2 of vaccine rollout begins, seniors 75 and older become eligible ([source](#))*
- *2/1/21: MA surpasses 500,000 total cases since the start of the pandemic ([source](#))*
- 2/8/21: Capacity limits on some non-essential businesses like restaurants and gyms are loosened ([source](#))
- *2/18/21: COVID vaccine sign-up portal crashes ([source](#))*
- *2/17/21: MA Department of Public Health study reveals the disparate impacts of the pandemic for people of color, low-income residents, and other marginalized groups ([source](#))*

(COVID-19 developments are italicized above)

## EDUCATION/WORKERS' RIGHTS STORY



Image [Source](#)

*“I was furloughed on Oct. 18 of last year. I am grateful to be able to say I was recalled in January. I have the pay I have, I have the benefits I have, and I have my job back because of the union. I’m pretty sure that without the union, I would not have been furloughed—I would have been terminated. I believe my job is important, based on my experience of what happens when I am taken away. And based on my experience, I believe the jobs of all the other furloughed people are important too. State-supported educational institutions have been underfunded for years now, so if they had anyone on the payroll before, I’m pretty sure that person was actually needed. Oh, yeah, you can always pinch off part of the staff and pile their work onto the remaining workers, but that is not a real solution. People are not machines. They can only do so much.”*

- MELINDA N.



# MARCH 2021

## PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

- 3/4/21: **Matahari** releases open letter calling on Gov. Baker to include all domestic workers in Phase 2 of the state's vaccine rollout ([source](#))
- 3/8/21: **MNA** nurses at St. Vincent Hospital pushing for safe staffing ratios begin strike against for-profit Tenet Healthcare ([source](#))
- 3/19/21: **CLU** and other members of the Public Transit Public Good Coalition hold an online rally to oppose ongoing MBTA cuts ([source](#))
- 3/25/21: **MTA** holds sit-in at DESE office calling on Gov. Baker to cancel the MCAS, prioritize vaccines for school staff, and push back reopening ([source](#))
- 3/26/21: **Matahari and Mass JwJ** host "MA Women Worker's Rise: One Year of the Pandemic" featuring essential workers, elected officials, community organizers, and business leaders in honor of Women's History Month ([source](#))

## STATE & LOCAL RESPONSE

- 3/1/21: MA moves into phase 3 step 2 of reopening plan ([source](#))
- **3/3/21: Gov. Baker announces that educators and daycare providers will be eligible to receive the vaccine beginning 3/11** ([source](#))
- 3/29/21: CDC extends eviction moratorium through 6/30 ([source](#))
- **\*4/1: MA surpasses 600,000 total COVID cases** ([source](#))

(COVID-19 developments are italicized above)

## WORKERS' RIGHTS STORY



"In March 2020, I was laid off from the Battery Wharf Hotel as a Housekeeper Supervisor due to COVID-19. Since then, I haven't had the opportunity to work again. My life has changed tremendously, it has been a very difficult situation to support my family and the bills I have to face every month. But by the blessing I am still alive hoping tomorrow will be better."

- **PIERRE V.**



*\*Some images on this page were captured before the pandemic.*