



If you are experiencing an emergency, call 9-1-1.

Public Health Emergencies

Public Health Emergency Safety Tips

A public health emergency is defined as "an occurrence or imminent threat of an illness or health condition, caused by bioterrorism, epidemic or pandemic disease, or an infectious agent or biological toxin, that poses a substantial risk to humans by either causing a significant number of human fatalities or permanent or long-term disability." Public health emergencies also include influenza, or "the Flu".

By preparing for a public health emergency, you can lessen the threat of illness to yourself and others.

General Emergency Preparedness

How you should react to a public health emergency will depend on the emergency itself — every situation is different, and different factors will impact the decisions made by state officials. However, there are a few steps you can take to protect yourself and your family in any emergency:

- The Town of North Andover uses Smart911 to inform and alert residents of issues in the area. The alerts can be sent to all types of phones, including mobile, landline, VOIP, and cable. [Sign up for alerts](#) and update your profile every six months to a year to make sure you are receiving the most pertinent information. You can also download the Town of North Andover's app to your smart phone for [Android](#) or [iOS](#).
- [Be informed](#) by receiving alerts, warnings, and public safety information from the state government before, during, and after emergencies. Download the [Massachusetts Alerts](#) app.
- Create and review your [family emergency plan](#).
- [Assemble an emergency kit](#).
- Monitor the media for emergency information and follow instructions from public safety officials.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Tips

- Discuss potential vaccines (such as the flu vaccine) with your healthcare provider.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- If you are sick, avoid others and stay home from work.



- For more information about public health preparedness, the flu, and specific disease outbreaks, see the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health \(DPH\)](#) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) websites.

This text was adapted from “[Public Health Emergencies](#)” published on Mass.gov, the website for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Further Resources

[Are You Prepared? from the CDC](#)

This document was updated July 23rd, 2018.