

**November 18, 2020**

**TOWN OF TISBURY**

**OFFICE OF THE SELECT BOARD**

**COVID 19 UPDATE (For Immediate Release)**

The Island Boards of Health and Select Boards continue to respond daily to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Boards of Health have the authority under state law to take the actions necessary to protect the public health and safety during a health crisis. We need to support the Board of Health and follow their recommendations in response to the pandemic. The Select Board continues to work very closely with our Health Agent and Board of Health.

Although the current cases appear to be predominantly in Tisbury, the number of cases continues to rise Island-wide. It is extremely important that the Island community be unified and continue to work together in our collective response to the present health crisis.

The Island Health Agents have been working with the Martha's Vineyard Regional Hospital and School District on messaging and risk reduction. They have reached out to the Martha's Vineyard Builder's Association and they're holding Zoom meetings with contractors to address any problems that arise. The Martha's Vineyard Builder's Association is onboard with increasing enforcement of mask orders and related requirements on jobsites and discussion of rolling back what is allowed under our Island-wide construction guidelines. Other business associations are likewise working with our Island Health Agents. This outreach is taking place in the classroom, workplace, places of worship and the home. Where language can be a barrier and when English is not the primary language spoken, then translator services and written translations are provided to inform individuals and families.

In the area of enforcement efforts, the Building Department and Health Agent are working together with trades people letting them know that we will begin fining for non-compliance. We are considering issuing print flyers and letters to contractors concerning the wearing of masks requirement for multi-occupant vehicles for contractor crews. If we find a lack of compliance, then fines will be issued to the contractor and/or vehicle owner. The Police Department is able to notify the Health Agent of any calls for parties or social gatherings that violate the state guidance, which can result in a fine of \$500 to the property owner.

Continued meetings between the Island Health Agents and Town Administrators are occurring to discuss ongoing enforcement and whether there is a need to look at additional emergency orders to stem the spread of the virus. We want to make it clear to you that we're not sitting back with a wait and see posture, but working aggressively to reduce the surge.