Mass. sees 3,840 new coronavirus cases, 189 new deaths as officials begin reporting 'probable' cases

By Jaclyn Reiss Globe Staff, Updated June 1, 2020, 7:40 p.m.



Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker. SAM DORAN/POOL

The state reported Monday that the death toll from the coronavirus outbreak in Massachusetts had risen by 189 and that the number of cases had climbed by 3,840.

The large numbers came as state officials announced they had begun including probable as well as confirmed cases in their tallies, noting that not all of the newly-reported cases are recent. The probable cases came from a review of data dating back to March 1.

The new inclusion of probable data pushed the state's death tally past 7,000 and the total number of cases past 100,000.

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In terms of confirmed numbers, the state reported 48 new fatalities and 326 new cases.

The state said that, in using the new figures, it was following guidance from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and trying to be transparent.

“Probable cases are individuals who have not been tested by the standard viral (molecular) test,” a statement from the Department of Public Health said. “They have either 1) had a positive antibody test and either had COVID symptoms or were likely to be exposed to a positive case or 2) did not have an antibody test but had COVID symptoms and were known to be exposed to a positive case.”

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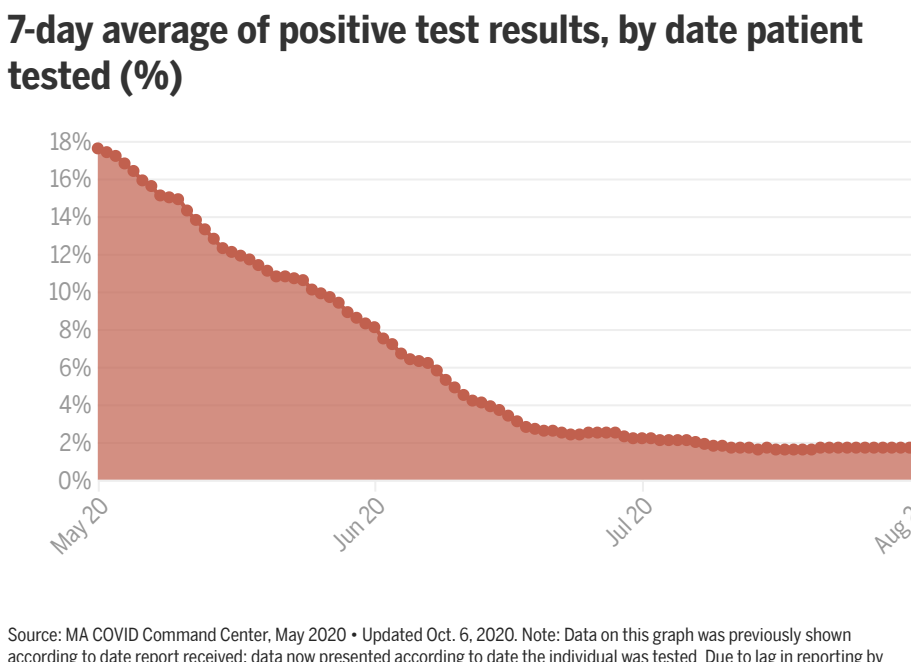
“Probable cases also include individuals whose death certificate listed COVID-19 as a cause of death but who were not tested,” the statement added.

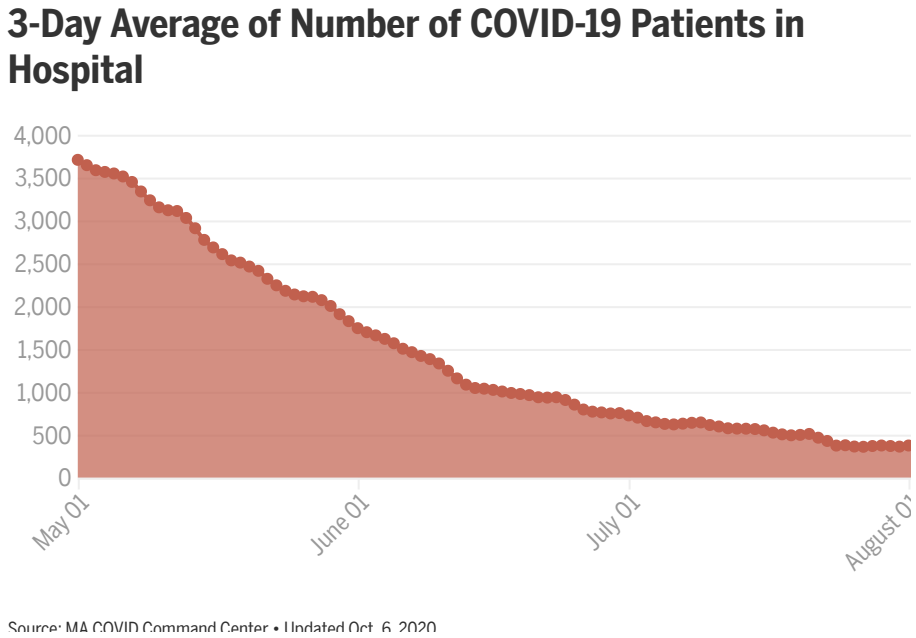
Meanwhile, key metrics that the state is monitoring for reopening either decreased or stayed stable, according to Monday’s report.

The seven-day weighted average of positive test rates stayed the same Sunday as a day earlier at 6.8 percent, down from early May highs of more than 16 percent. It has

dropped 76 percent since April 15, according to state data.



Meanwhile, the three-day average of the number of coronavirus patients in the hospital dipped to 1,825 on Sunday, down from 1,906 a day earlier. It has dropped 49 percent since April 15.



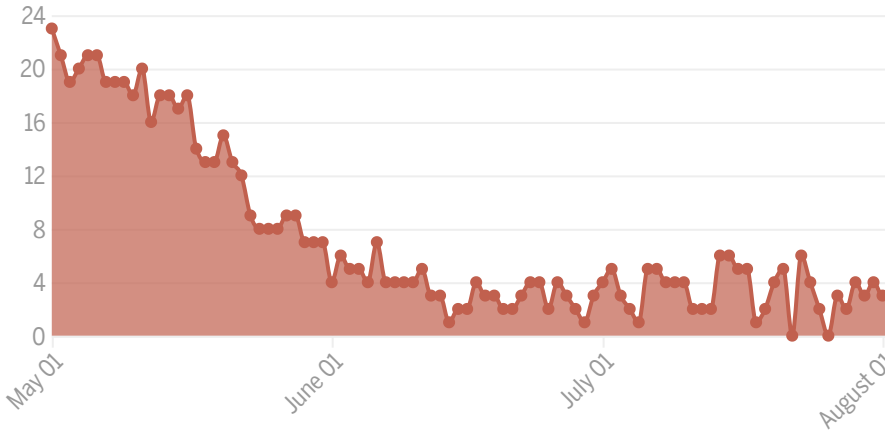
The number of hospitals using surge capacity also stayed stable at seven Sunday for the third day in a row, a marked drop from early- and mid-May highs of 20, and was down 67

percent since April 15. The three-day average of COVID-19 deaths also dropped from 57 on Thursday to 50 on Friday, down 67 percent since April 15, according to state data.

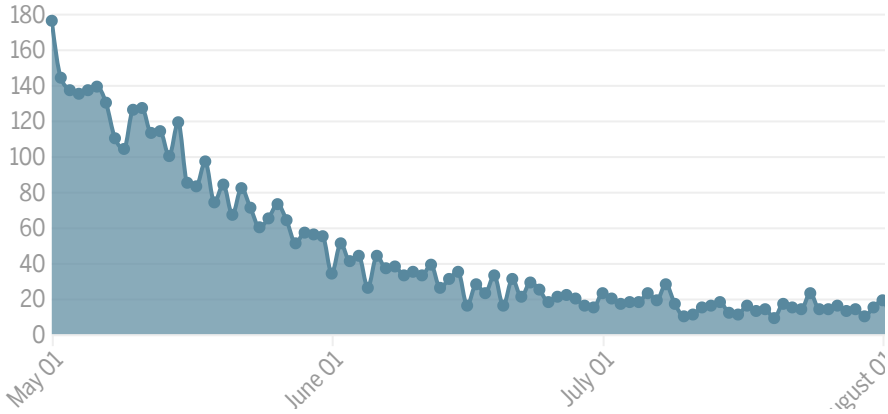
Massachusetts' reopening will be driven by public health data, the state says

Six key public health metrics will determine if and when it is appropriate to proceed through four main reopening phases, including the number of hospitals using ICU surge capacity and the three-day average of deaths. Public health data trends indicating significant increases in viral transmission could result in returning to prior phases or closing sectors of the economy.

Number of hospitals using ICU surge capacity



3-day average of deaths by date



A Flourish chart

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