



North Quabbin Health Collaborative



Public Health Newsletter
COVERING: September 7th – September 13th, 2026
PUBLISHED September 18, 2026

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Upcoming Events:

Next Collaborative Meeting

Monday September 28th at 6pm

Location: OIC, 131 West Main St, Orange

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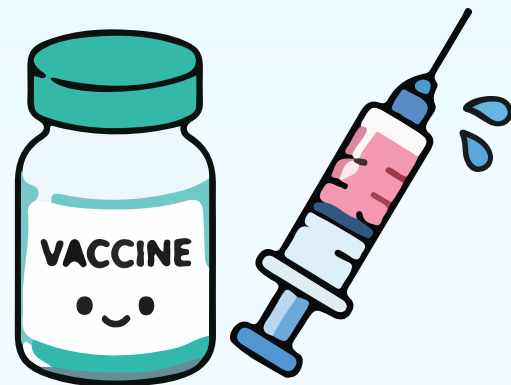
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UPDATES: VACCINES

We're going to offer a small amount of flu vaccines to home bound individuals, postpartum families, and high risk individuals in a home visit setting. If you are interested in this please contact as at: **413-500-6414 or spiragis@townoforange.org**

We are also working on setting up a Vaccine Clinic for this fall. We will share more information as it becomes available.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions!



Visit the North Quabbin Health Collaborative website to download materials and see additional information at: <https://www.northquabbinhc.org/>



Don't forget to send your area news and activities to cpage@townoforange.org to be included in the next newsletter.

Calendar of Events

Saturday, September 19 Hazardous waste collection day

Franklin County Solid Waste District will hold the 2026 household hazardous waste collection on Saturday, September 19, at Greenfield Community College and the Orange Transfer Station. Residents and businesses must register by September 9. Online registration and mail-in registration forms at the transfer station will be available in mid-August and in local newspapers. An appointment time and instructions will be provided by mail after registration is processed. Businesses may participate but must pay for disposal costs. This event provides households with a free opportunity to dispose of hazardous items that should not be put in the trash, such as leftover oil-based paints, stains, thinners, pesticides, pool chemicals, motor oil, antifreeze, household cleaners, and other household chemicals. Batteries and mercury-containing items such as fluorescent light bulbs, thermometers, and thermostats are not accepted at this collection. However, these items, which may contain mercury or heavy metals, should not be put in trash or recycling. Bring them to the transfer station and hand them to the attendant. In addition, fluorescent light bulbs are accepted free of charge at Lowe's stores. For more information, including a complete list of what items are accepted, visit franklincountywastedistrict.org or contact the district at info@franklincountywastedistrict.org, (413) 772-2438.

WARWICK HIKE September 20 at 1 p.m. Where to meet: At the beach parking area at Moores Pond (the intersection of Wendell Road and South Holden Road). The Hike: This out-and-back hike (approximately 3.4 miles with a change in elevation of about 360 feet) follows the original Holden Road. We will start at Moores Pond, travel east for a short distance on South Holden Road, enter the woods, and hike north to the Warwick Cemetery. Then, we will retrace our steps back to the pond. Please bring hiking poles if you have them, proper footwear, bug spray, and a water bottle. You may also want to bring your bathing suit for a dip in the pond after the hike. We will have maps and a trail description available.

WARWICK LIBRARY Monthly Short Story Hour - Sarah Oren Jewett, Sept. 24th @ 7:30 pm: We'll read selections from Jewett's Selected Stories and Sketches. Jewett (1849-1909), a novelist, short story writer and poet, was born and died in South Berwick, Maine. She devoted her career to capturing, in nuanced and sharply edged fiction, the inner drama in the outwardly quiet life of New England coastal towns. Her stories have a very modern resonance. Come to read or just to listen.

WARWICK LIBRARY Tick Talk with a Nurse - Tuesday, September 29th @ 7pm: Public health nurse Samantha Piragis returns for another free presentation about ticks, tick-borne illnesses and tick bite prevention. NOTE: Samantha will again offer free Permethrin spraying to hiking/ outdoor boots and shoes at these events (Please bring a spare pair to wear).

State Health Officials Announce Season's Seventh Human Case of West Nile Virus in Massachusetts

WNV risk levels now elevated to moderate in most of the state

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) today is releasing updated West Nile virus (WNV) surveillance and case numbers for the week, including the state's seventh human case of WNV this year in a man in his 60s exposed in Worcester County.

As a result of this case and increased WNV activity this season, risk levels for WNV were elevated to moderate in most of the state. Only Dukes and Nantucket counties, as well as Provincetown and Truro in Barnstable County remain at low risk. Risk levels remain high in Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Newton, Revere, Somerville, Watertown, and Winthrop.

“Mosquitoes remain active, and West Nile virus continues to spread,” said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein, MD, PhD. “Because some risk will continue until the first hard frost, I want to encourage everyone to keep using mosquito repellent and take other protective measures, such as wearing long sleeves and pants to reduce exposed skin when spending time outdoors.”

The first WNV-positive mosquitoes in the state this year were announced on June 16. Since then, 307 mosquito samples have tested positive for WNV so far this season from Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Dukes, Essex, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester counties. There have been no animal cases of WNV reported this year.

Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) has also been detected in mosquitoes in Massachusetts this year. There have been 14 EEE-positive mosquito samples and no human or animal cases so far this year.

DPH will update the public on WNV cases in Massachusetts via weekly press releases each Friday. Surveillance information, including case updates, will continue to be updated daily and posted online at the [Massachusetts Arbovirus Update](#) web page. DPH encourages everyone to use this online resource regularly to stay informed on risk levels in their community and around the state.

People have an important role to play in protecting themselves and their loved ones from illnesses caused by mosquitoes.

Community Food Access Resource List

Resource Name	Location	Days/Times	Contact
CommunityAction Center for Self Reliance Food Pantry	156 Main Street, Greenfield	Monday, Thursday, Friday: 11am-4pm (closed between 1-1:30pm each of these days), Tuesday: 11am-6pm (closed between 1-1:30pm), Closed on Wednesdays	413-773-5029
Good Neighbor Food Pantry	Old Town HallWendell, 6 Center St, Wendell	Sundays 11am-noon, Last Name A-K 1st and 3rd Sunday, Last Name L-Z 2nd and 4th Sunday	978-544-3775
The Salvation Army	107 Ridge Ave, Athol	Tuesday9am-noon, Everyother Tuesday delivery	978-249-8111
The Salvation Army	72 Chapman St, Greenfield	Monday9am-11am, Closed on Holidays	413-773-3154
Our LadyImmaculate Church	192 SchoolSt, Athol	Tuesdays 10am-1:30pm	978-249-6790
Greenfield Pop Pantry	2nd Congregation Church, 16 Court Sq, Greenfield	Tuesdays 4:30pm-5:30pm	413-774-4355
CommunityFood Pantryat AtholHigh School	2363 Main St, Athol(Located in the back of AHS)	Wednesdays, Summer hours 11am-1pm, Schoolyear hours 3pm-5pm	978-249-2435 ext 314
AtholSenior Center	82 Freedom St, Athol	Wednesdays 11am-11:45am	978-249-8986
Orange Councilon Aging	St Mary's, 20 West Myrtle St, Orange	Wednesdays 10am-11am	978-544-3481
Turners Falls Mobile Food Bank	62 5th St, Turners Falls	3rd Wednesdayof Month 1:30pm-2:30pm	413-419-0079
Orange Food Pantry	81 East River St, Orange	Thursdays 10am-3pm (If it's a holidaythen it will be open on Wednesday. Deliveries on Fridayfor Athol/Orange)	978-544-2149 (call for deliveries)
St Vincent De Paul/St Mary's Food Pantry	19 Congress St, Orange	Open by appointment only	978-544-6814
Marion's Food Pantry	On the Royalston Common	Open by appointment only	978-895-7887
The Salvation Army	72 Chapman St, Greenfield	Monday-Friday8:30am-9:30am (Breakfast) 11am-12:30pm (Lunch)	413-773-3154
Our Ladyof Peace Church	90 7th St, Turners Falls	Mondays 4pm-5:30pm (Distributing hot meals and gorcerybags to go from the sidewalk in front of the church)	413-863-2585
The Salvation Army	107 Ridge Ave, Athol	Tuesdays 4:30pm-5:30pm (Dine in/Delivery)	978-249-8111
Second Congregational Church	16 Court Square, Greenfield	Tuesdays and Wednesdays 4:45pm-5:45pm, hot meals to go Tuesdays and Wednesdays on the side driveway	413-774-4355
AtholSenior Center	82 Freedom St, Athol	Tuesdays and Wednesdays at noon (Must RSVP the daybefore). For individuals 60 and over and/or disabled. Senior Dining at Lynn's Luncheonette. Enjoylunch with others. A \$3.50 donation is welcome	978-249-8986 Reserve your mealby9am the daybefore you dine
St Frances Church Hall	101 Main St, Athol	Wednesdays (September-May) doors open at 5pm	978-249-7304
Orange United Methodist Church	104 S Main St, Orange	Thursdays 4:30pm-5:15pm (Distributing ready-made meals to heat up at home. We offer deliveries for meals and pantrybags by applications)	413-772-1033 https://www.fc cmp.org/comm unity-meals/orange/
Trinitarian Congregational Church	147 Main St, Northfield	Fourth Thursday4:30pm (Take out meals only. You must RSVP)	413-498-5839
AtholCongregational Church	1225 Chestnut St, Athol	First Fridayof the Month, doors open at 5pm, dinner at 5:30pm (Must RSVP byTuesdayfor a mealon Friday)	978-249-6202
Meals on Wheels	AtholSenior Center & Orange Councilon Aging	LifePath Inc of Greenfield provides home delivered (noontime) meals to homebound seniors, age 60 and older and/or disabled, who are not able to prepare nutritious and balanced meals for themselves.	1-800-732-4636 (call to see if eligible)

Senior Dining Community Resource List

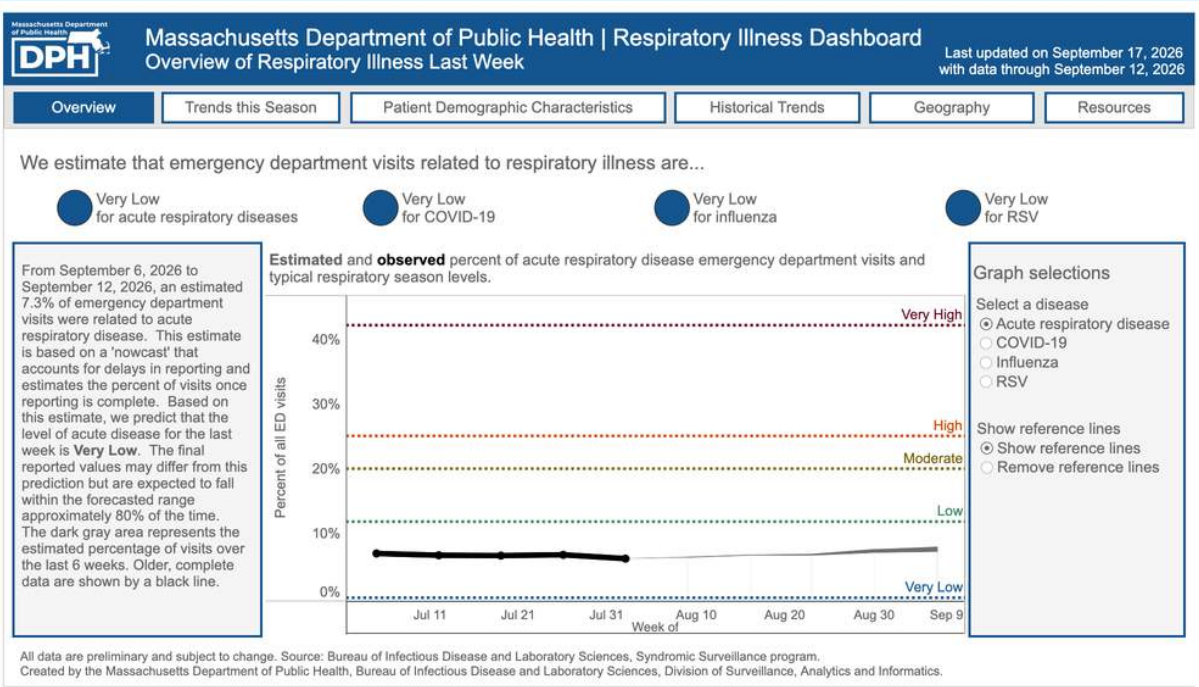
Location	Schedule	Contact
Athol Senior Center 82 Freedom St Athol, MA 01331	Tuesday and Wednesday Congregate	(978) 249-9001
New Salem Luncheon Club Central Congregational Church 22 South Main St New Salem, MA 01355	2 nd & 4 th Friday of the month Congregate Dine-in	(413) 687-8089
Petersham Luncheon Club Town Hall Petersham, MA 01366	Wednesday Congregate <i>and</i> Grab and Go	(978) 821-5549
Phillipston Luncheon Club 1 st Congregational Church The Common Phillipston, MA 01331	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday of the month Congregate Dine-in Closed December to March	(978) 407-9504
Royalston Luncheon Club Town Hall Royalston, MA 01368	Wednesday Congregate Dine-in	(978) 249-8957

NQHC COVID-19 and Other Reportable Diseases

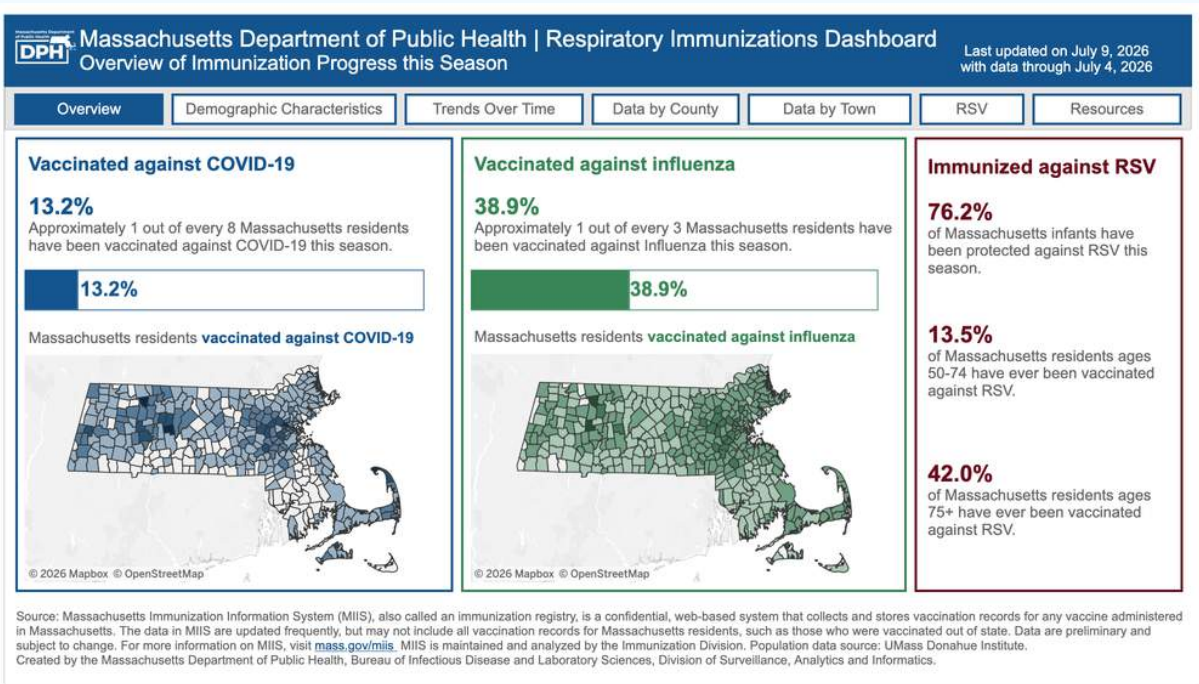
In the the one-week period of September 7th through September 13th, 2026:

- 0 official cases of COVID-19 within the district
- 0 cases of influenza

Respiratory Illness Reporting

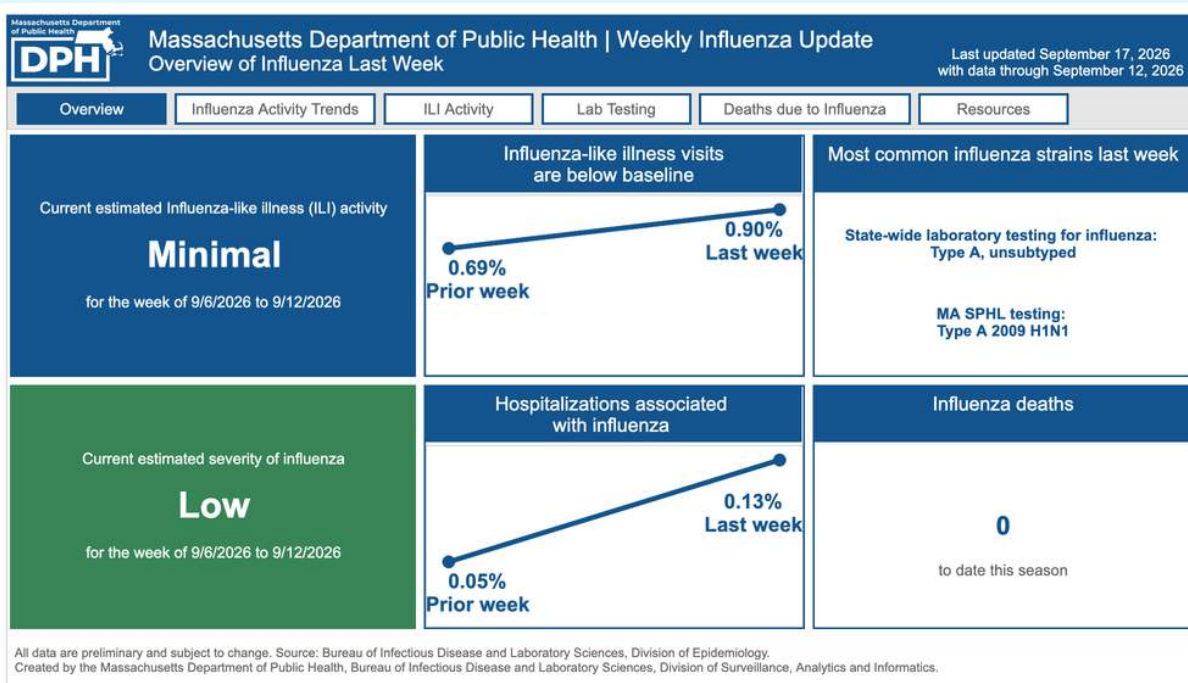


Here is the overall percentages if individuals in Massachusetts immunized against Covid-19 and Influenza

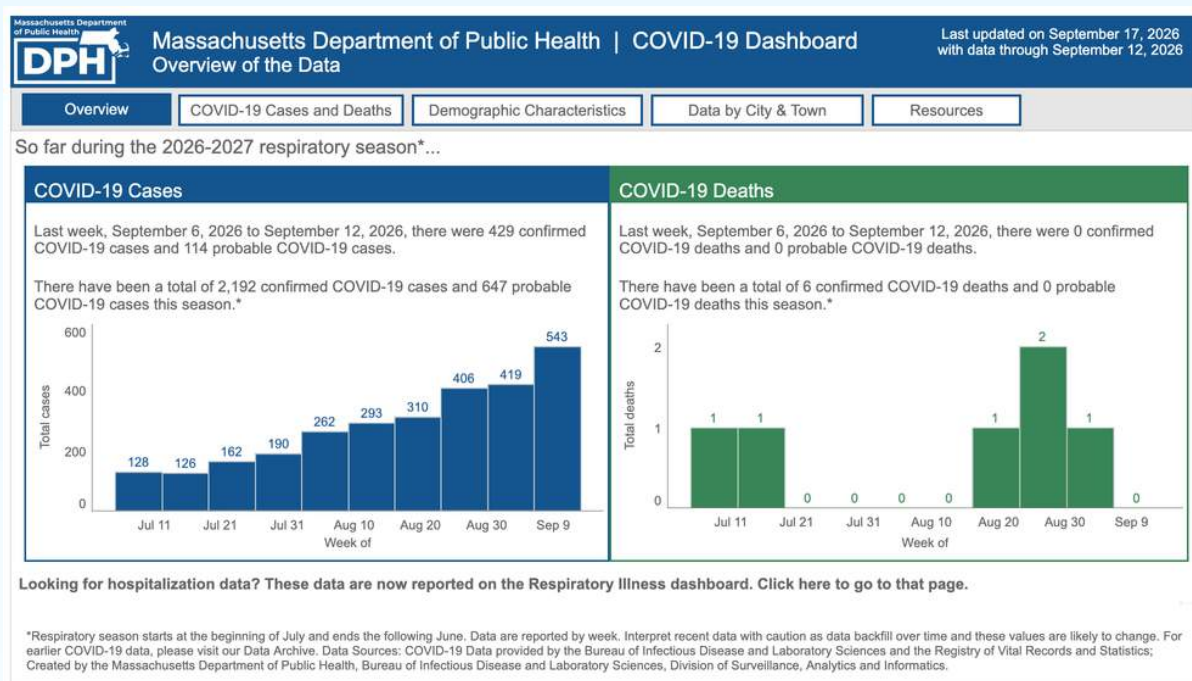


The Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Influenza Reporting – Influenza rate is at Minimal and Severity is at Low



COVID-19 Reporting – Number of cases is very low



At this point in time there have been no additional updates to the Massachusetts Covid guidelines. The latest version can be seen at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/staying-home-to-prevent-the-spread-of-respiratory-viruses>

Report created by Christy Page: cpage@townoforange.org
Next newsletter will be Friday September 25, 2026



NQHC Nurse Update



Post Partum Support

Our **FREE** Postpartum Visiting Program provides personalized care, whether you are adjusting to a new baby, coping with infant loss, or in recovery from substance use. **We connect you with local resources for ongoing support.**

What We Provide

- Prenatal and postpartum support and visits
- Education on health, safety, and wellness for you and your baby.
- Demonstrations and guidance from professionals.
- A free gift bag with essentials, educational resources, and helpful freebies.

Harm Reduction

Services/Program Includes:

- Naloxone and Overdose Response Trainings
- Free Naloxone and Fentanyl Test strip kits
- Syringe Exchange
- Connection to resources for treatment options and recovery

Public Health Nurse DropIn:

September 23rd 2:30-4:30
October 7th 2:30-4:30
October 21 2:30-4:30
November 4 2:30-4:30
November 18 2:30-4:30
Dec 2 2:30-4:30
Dec 16th 2:30-4:30

Coming Soon:

We are going to be offering the following AHA CPR trainings. Dates will be scheduled with interest.

BLS \$80 cost

BLS Renewal \$70 cost

Heartcode: combines online eLearning with a required in-person, hands-on skills session (so we do the skills review and practice in person for certification)

Heartsaver with Narcan Training \$90 cost

CALL US: 413-500-6414

EMAIL: SPIRAGIS@TOWNOFORANGE.ORG

VISIT US AT: [HTTPS://WWW.NORTHQUABBINHC.ORG/NQHCPVP](https://www.northquabbinhc.org/nqhcpvp)



North Quabbin Health Collaborative



Public Health
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Services:

- Preventative health screenings and blood pressure checks
- Individualized help managing chronic health conditions & tools for medication self-management
- Sharps disposal and container exchange
- Social worker can answer questions and connect you to available community resources including but not limited to: food security, housing/home repair, transportation, employment, healthcare/mental healthcare, substance use/harm reduction, support for families caring for children or elders, & more

Public Health Nurse & Social Worker Drop In Hours

Warwick Town Hall Dates:

September 15th 11:30 am - 1pm
October 13th 11:30 am - 1pm
November 10th 11:30 am - 1pm
December 8th 11:30am - 1pm

Petersham Town Hall Dates:

September 14th 3 pm - 5pm
October 26th 3pm - 5pm
November 23rd 3pm- 5pm
December 21st 3pm - 5pm

Orange Food Pantry Dates:

September 24th 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
October 22nd 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
November 19th 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Public Health Nurse Only Drop In Hours

New Salem Public Library Dates:

September 18th 1pm - 2pm
October 16th 1pm - 2pm
November 20th 1pm - 2pm
December 18th 1pm - 2pm

Wendell Town Hall Dates:

September 1st 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm
October 13th 2:00pm - 3:00 pm
November 10th 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm
December 8th 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Contacts:

Samantha Piragis, RN

Call or Text : 978-985-9709
spiragis@townoforange.org

Rachel Purinton, MSW

978-804-3345
rpurinton@townoforange.org





Motherhood & More

Supporting women through pregnancy, postpartum, and the first two years of motherhood. Find comfort. Find community. Light snacks provided. Children under 2 welcome to attend.

5:30 - 6:30 pm
Sept. 15th
Oct. 13th
Nov. 10th
Dec. 8th

All groups held at the
Orange Innovation
Center in suite 211
Except Nov. 10th at
Swift River School

Call or text to register:

978-985-9709



SENIOR DINING CLUB

Good Food • Good Friends • Good Conversation

**Join us for lunch and fellowship at
Mahar Regional School Cafeteria!**

Whether you're looking to enjoy a delicious meal, reconnect with friends,
or meet someone new, the Senior Dining Club offers a warm
and welcoming place to gather.



When

**Tuesdays,
Wednesdays & Thursdays
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.**



Where

**Mahar Regional School Cafeteria
507 South Main Street
Orange, MA**

WHAT TO EXPECT



Fresh, nutritious main meals
prepared just for you with care
and great taste!

Good food to enjoy and nourish.



Prefer something different?
Alternative meals are available
for purchase. *You have options!*



Friendly conversation
in a welcoming
environment



**A comfortable space to relax,
socialize, and enjoy lunch together**

Starting

SEPTEMBER 15, 2026!

We can't wait to see you there!



QUESTIONS?

Please contact:

**Orange Council on Aging
☎ 978-544-3481**



*Everyone is Welcome!
Come for the meal... Stay for the friendships!*



**MAHAR
REGIONAL SCHOOL**



LifePath
options for independence

Proudly partnering to support our senior community!

Let's Talk
TICKS

Join our local Public Health Nurse for a free presentation about ticks, tickborne illnesses and tick bite prevention.



September 29, 2026

7:00 pm

**Warwick Free Public Library
4 Hotel Rd. Warwick, MA**



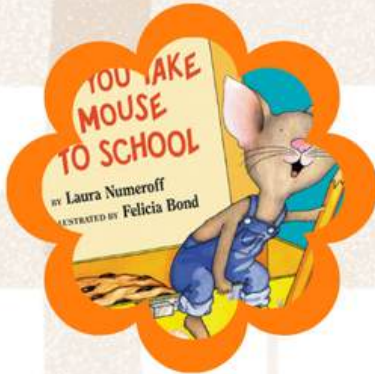
**We will be offering free Permethrin spraying to hiking/outdoor boots and shoes at these events
(Please bring a spare pair to wear)**



WHY STORYTIME IS IMPORTANT!

Visit us for **Little Bookworms Storytime**
every Monday, 10:30am-11:15am &
Baby and Toddler Storytime & Playgroup
every Tuesday, 10:30am-11:15am!

@Wheeler Memorial Library: 49 E Main St, Orange MA



EARLY LITERACY BOOSTS

Hearing stories develops listening skills, vocabulary, and narrative understanding! Crafts tied to the story reinforce comprehension by helping children retell or remember the story through hands-on activities.



SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Storytime followed by a craft encourages sharing, waiting turns, and cooperative play in a group setting. Children also learn to follow simple directions in a fun and relaxed way! Library programs are a great way to encourage your children to build and be a part of a community, make new friends, and explore!



JOY IN LIFELONG LEARNING

Kids associate reading with fun and creativity, making them more excited to return for books and Storytime! Attending library programs and visiting the library regularly is generational - you will bring your children, your children will one day bring their children, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends... the library is a space for everyone!



Let's Talk
TICKS

Join our local Public Health Nurse for a free presentation about ticks, tickborne illnesses and tick bite prevention.



**September 19, 2026
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
New Salem Public Library
23 S. Main St. New Salem, MA**



**We will be offering free Permethrin spraying to hiking/outdoor boots and shoes at these events
(Please bring a spare pair to wear)**





Union 28 Community Network for Children program
and New Salem Public Library are hosting



CNC Playgroup at the New Salem Public Library

- Join Emily for a playtime in the library children's space, and a circle time with books and songs!
- Intended for children 0-5 years of age.



TUESDAYS at 10:00-11:30am

**at the New Salem Library
23 South Main St.**

**October 6, 13, 20, 27
November 3, 10, 17***

***Please note change of schedule during school breaks**



New!

**REGISTRATION is optional but those registered will receive
notice of cancellations and changes:**
<https://form.jotform.com/212215759871158>



QR Code to register

Contact CNC at 978-935-4909 call/Text or cnccoord@erving.com with any questions!

The Union #28 Community Network for Children program is funded by the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant awarded to the Union #28 Schools by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, the local school budgets, and donations from the community.





New Salem Public Library



Fall StoryWalks at the Quabbin Overlook

September 1 - September 15

If You Find a Leaf (Aimee Sicuro)



September 15 - September 29

Possum's Harvest Moon (Anne Hunter)

September 29 - October 13

Letting Swift River Go (Jane Yolen)



October 13 - October 27

Biggest Pumpkin Ever (Steven Kroll)



October 27 - November 10

Such a Little Mouse (Alice Schertle)

**The access road to the Quabbin Overlook is off S. Main St.
past the library and just beyond the fire station.**





North Quabbin Health Collaborative and



Public Health
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the New Salem Public Library

Public Health Nurse

Drop-In Hours

Services:

- Preventative health screenings and blood pressure checks
- Individualized help managing chronic health conditions
- Tools for medication self-management
- Sharps disposal and container exchange (collaboration with Franklin County Solid Waste Management District)
- Home visits available to residents in need

Dates:

September 18th 1pm - 2pm

October 16th 1pm - 2pm

November 20th 1pm - 2pm

December 18th 1pm - 2pm

Location:

New Salem Public Library

23 S Main St.

New Salem, MA

Contacts:

Samantha Piragis, RN

Call or Text : 978-985-9709

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MEDICAL SERVICES

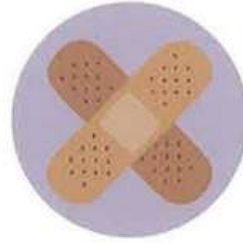
CHD Primary Care can be your first call/point of contact when you have urgent health needs.

Services are available for individuals age 13 and up.



MINOR ILLNESS

Coughs, Cold, Flu, Ear and Eye pain, Sore throat, Rash, UTI, etc.



MINOR INJURY

Burns, Sprains, Cuts, Bumps and Bruises



DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

On-site rapid testing, Orders for off-site Lab and Radiology available



REFERRALS, LETTERS, AND RX

Work or Day Program Notes, Referral to Specialists, Bridge Treatments and Medication Refills



CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Asthma, Diabetes, COPD and High Blood Pressure



We accept most insurances.

Please call to verify that your plan is accepted.

**65 Union Street, Easthampton
(413) 529-1764**

**30 East Main Street, Orange
(978) 544-2148**

**246 Park Street, West Springfield
(413) 737-4718**



CHD
CARE FINDS A WAY.