



**INFECTIOUS DISEASE & PANDEMIC POLICY
CORONAVIRUS 2020
May 27, 2020**

Updated: June 22, 2020

Purpose: It is the intention of Barnstable Land Trust to proactively protect its staff and volunteers in the event of an infectious disease outbreak or pandemic. During any time of quarantine or infectious disease outbreak, it is our goal to ensure safety while operating effectively and continuously providing all essential services.

What is Barnstable Land Trust doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19? BLT will stay apprised of the WHO, CDC, MA Department of Health, Barnstable County Health Department, and Town of Barnstable Board of Health evolving recommendations for avoidance and containment of COVID-19. At this time, we can keep ourselves and our community safe by following all prevention recommendations for maintaining a clean & healthy environment.

Barnstable Land Trust's Headquarters was closed to the public on March 13, 2020 and will remain closed until further notice. Indoor programming is suspended until further notice.

OFFICE OPERATIONS

- COVID-19 Exposure, Symptoms or Test
 - Staff are assumed to and are encouraged to self-certify that they:
 - Have no signs of a fever or a measured temperature above 100.3 degrees or greater, a cough or trouble breathing within the past 24 hours.
 - Have not had "close contact" with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19. "Close contact" means living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, caring for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, being within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 for about 15 minutes, or coming in direct contact with secretions (e.g., sharing utensils, being coughed on) from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, while that person was symptomatic.
 - Have not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official.
 - If a staff member has been exposed to an individual that has tested positive for or expresses symptoms of COVID-19, they must immediately notify the BLT Executive Director and begin a 14-day quarantine. Staff member will alert other BLT staff and volunteers he or she was exposed to. Staff will not return to work unless he or she tests negative for COVID-19 or is symptom-free for 14 days.
- Office and Communications
 - Staff will spend only essential time in the office needed for communications, information gathering for field operations, and any other essential operations

- Staff will coordinate with each other to limit office occupancy indoors to 2-3 persons at any given time
- Staff will have masks covering mouth and nose when anyone else is within 6 feet and have a mask on their person
- Staff will communicate through regular Zoom meetings (two times weekly, or more frequently if needed), email, phone call, and text
- Office Hygiene
 - Staff will regularly clean any shared surfaces used and will do a final cleaning when he/she/they depart the office
 - Sanitizing wipes and hand sanitizer will be kept in the central dining area to have readily available to clean objects and common surfaces after touching
 - Frequent handwashing with soap for 20 seconds is required and is available at any of the bathrooms and kitchen sink
 - Staff will coordinate with other staff members to minimize overlapping presence in the office
- Outdoor meetings and programs
 - Meetings in groups of 5 or fewer may take place outdoors on the office grounds with spacing of 6 feet between participants and facemasks worn by all;
 - Outdoor programs may take place under these circumstances:
 - 5 or fewer participants plus leader
 - Minimum of 6 foot distance between participants who are not in a household together
 - Facemasks worn at all times, except when further than 15 feet for short communications.

Cleaning & Disinfecting

If an active employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, cleaning and disinfecting will be performed

LAND STEWARDSHIP OPERATIONS

Land Stewardship operations can continue as normal as deemed "essential" per Massachusetts Governor Bakers COVID-19 Order No. 13

- Under 'Public Works' – *“Workers who support the operation, maintenance and public safety of parks, forests, reservations, conservation restrictions, wildlife management areas, water supply protection lands, and other critical natural resources and open space for passive recreation.”*

The following parameters and procedures are laid out to protect staff, volunteers, and the public during land stewardship operations.

Land Stewardship Staff

Safety Protocol for Land Stewardship Staff

- COVID-19 Exposure, Symptoms or Test
 - Staff are assumed to and are encouraged to self-certify that they:
 - Have no signs of a fever or a measured temperature above 100.3 degrees or greater, a cough or trouble breathing within the past 24 hours.
 - Have not had "close contact" with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19. "Close contact" means living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for

COVID-19, caring for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, being within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 for about 15 minutes, or coming in direct contact with secretions (e.g., sharing utensils, being coughed on) from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, while that person was symptomatic.

- Have not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official.
- If a staff member has been exposed to an individual that has tested positive for or expresses symptoms of COVID-19, they must immediately notify the BLT Executive Director and begin a 14-day quarantine. Staff member will alert other BLT staff and volunteers he or she was exposed to. Staff will not return to work unless he or she tests negative for COVID-19 or is symptom-free for 14 days.
- Office and Communications
 - Staff will communicate through regular Zoom meetings (two times weekly, or more frequently if needed), email, phone call, and text
 - Staff will spend only essential time in the office needed for communications, information gathering for field operations, and any other essential operations
 - Staff will regularly clean any shared surfaces used and will do a final cleaning when he/she/they depart the office
 - Sanitizing wipes will be kept in the central dining area to have readily available to clean objects and common surfaces after touching
 - Staff will coordinate with other staff members to minimize overlapping presence in the office
- Truck and Tools
 - BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator will be the only staff member allowed to operate the truck and access equipment inside the truck
 - Cleaning supplies will be stocked inside the truck to be available as needed
 - Tools will not be shared unless necessary
 - Staff will divide tools at start of work and make sure tools are cleaned prior to use
 - If there is only one of a type of tool, one individual will commit to being the only user of that tool for the project
 - If a tool needs to change hands, the tool must be cleaned onsite prior to exchange
- Field work
 - Staff will have a facemask on their person at all times in the event a member of the public approaches
 - If a member of the public is observed to be approaching, staff member will immediately put on the face covering, secured snugly and covering the nose and mouth
 - Staff will keep activities requiring public interaction or in areas frequented by the public, to a minimum. When interacting with the public, staff must:
 - Wear a face covering at all times, secured snugly and covering the nose and mouth
 - Keep a minimum of 6ft distance from members of the public wherever possible (e.g. step as far off of trail as needed to let public pass)
 - Do not contact member of the public with hands, other parts of the body, or exchange of materials unless cleaned onsite
 - Keep interactions as brief as possible
 - If operating in a space frequented by the public, staff will wear a face covering
 - When working with other staff, the following procedures must be followed:
 - Arrive on location in separate vehicles
 - Keep a minimum of 6ft distance between staff members

- If working within 25ft of other staff member(s), a face covering must be worn at all times, secured snugly and covering the nose and mouth
- If working over 25ft apart, a face covering must be on the person but does not have to be worn
- Tools will not be shared unless necessary
 - Staff will divide tools at start of project and make sure tools are cleaned prior to use
 - If there is only one of a type of tool, one individual will commit to being the only user of that tool for the project
 - If a tool needs to change hands, the tool must be cleaned onsite prior to exchange
- Site work will be carefully planned to prevent or reduce exposure to public.
 - For regular work locations, such as areas needing regular roadside mowing or trail weed-whacking, work must be planned and executed to maximize efficiency and minimize time on site to prevent or reduce potential interaction with public
 - Trail improvement or invasive plant management project locations will be selected based on the following:
 - Trail can be closed to prevent public access during work
 - Invasive Plant Management work can be spread out with easy sight of any public approach
 - For locations where staff presence may be longer than an hour, a sign will be displayed to encourage the public to stay back and respect social distancing practices

Land Stewardship Volunteers

Land Stewardship Volunteer Operations may proceed as approved by the BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator and as deemed "essential" per Massachusetts Governor Bakers COVID-19 Order No. 13

- Under 'Public Works' – *“Workers who support the operation, maintenance and public safety of parks, forests, reservations, conservation restrictions, wildlife management areas, water supply protection lands, and other critical natural resources and open space for passive recreation.”*

BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator may restrict service whenever he or she, BLT Executive Director, or BLT Board of Directors deem necessary based on changing trends in community infection rates and recommendations by local, state, or federal government. BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator will alert volunteers if service is restricted. Volunteers must continue to proceed with caution and contact BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator with questions and concerns. BLT continues to encourage volunteers to stay home and prioritize their own health over BLT stewardship tasks.

Safety Protocol for Land Stewardship Volunteers

- COVID-19 Exposure, Symptoms or Test
 - Participating staff and volunteers are assumed to and are encouraged to self-certify that they:
 - Have no signs of a fever or a measured temperature above 100.3 degrees or greater, a cough or trouble breathing within the past 24 hours.
 - Have not had "close contact" with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19. “Close contact” means living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, caring for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, being within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 for about 15 minutes, or

- coming in direct contact with secretions (e.g., sharing utensils, being coughed on) from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, while that person was symptomatic.
 - Have not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official.
- If a staff member has been exposed to an individual that has tested positive for or expresses symptoms of COVID-19, they must immediately notify the BLT Executive Director and begin a 14-day quarantine. Staff member will alert other BLT staff and volunteers he or she was exposed to. Staff will not return to work unless he or she tests negative for COVID-19 or is symptom-free for 14 days.
- If an active volunteer has been exposed to an individual that has tested positive for or expresses symptoms of COVID-19, they must immediately notify the BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator. The volunteer and/or BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator will arrange to contact any staff or volunteers the individual was exposed to. Volunteer will not return to work unless he or she tests negative for COVID-19, is symptom-free for 14 days, and/or coordinates with MA contact tracing team. Volunteer must communicate this with BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator prior to resuming work.
- Group Projects
 - Staff presence is required for all group projects to oversee project safety, compliance with safety protocol, and to intercept members of the public if they approach. Exceptions to this clause are at the determination of the BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator, BLT Executive Director, and/or BLT Board of Directors.
 - At least one sign will be displayed that encourages the public to keep their distance and respect social distancing safety procedures during stewardship project.
 - Volunteers must arrive in individual personal vehicle unless arriving with members of their immediate household.
 - Group sizes will be limited to up to five (5) volunteers per group project. With staff and intern presence, the group size may be up to seven (7) individuals.
 - In project announcements, projects will be listed by date and general description of work; project location details will not be shared in list-serve to prevent volunteer walk-ins
 - Volunteers will be required to register for projects (capped at five individuals per project); project details will only be shared with registered individuals
 - Group size limit may be restricted further as required by available project space
 - Project locations will be carefully selected to prevent exposure to public and provide space for volunteers to spread. Project locations will be selected if:
 - For trail maintenance or improvement - trail can be closed to prevent public access during work
 - For invasive plant management – volunteers can work away from trails AND can spread out with easy sight of any public approach
 - Work is limited to requiring only basic tools (loppers, hand saws, and/or hand snips), unless additional tools are offered by volunteers.
 - Volunteers must keep a minimum of 6ft distance between staff and other volunteers
 - Volunteers must arrive prepared with a face covering.
 - If working within 25ft of others, a face covering must be worn at all times, secured snugly and covering the nose and mouth

- If working over 25ft apart, a face covering is desired to be worn if feasible. If breathing is too challenging (anticipated with warmer weather), the face covering can be removed but must remain on the person.
 - Volunteers must either temporarily borrow or bring their own tools. Unless otherwise communicated by BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator, BLT will not provide tools at project locations.
 - Volunteers are encouraged to bring their own tools.
 - For regular volunteers, BLT can clean and provide a limited number of loppers, handsaws, and hand snips for the duration this COVID-19 safety protocol is active. These must be secured by the volunteer prior to the intended project; staff will not bring spare tools to project locations. Volunteer is expected to maintain tool(s) in good condition and use appropriately through duration of possession. Volunteer will be expected to replace tool if it is broken as a result of misuse.
 - Sharing of tools on location will not be allowed unless cleaned onsite. Cleaning supplies are very limited; sharing tools is highly discouraged.
 - Unless otherwise communicated by the BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator, tools from the BLT truck are for BLT staff use only. Volunteers must assume that BLT tools are not provided.
 - Volunteers must provide their own gloves, ear protection, and eye protection and other relevant personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - Volunteers are expected to bring their own water. A volunteer will not be permitted to work if he or she does not have water or another form of hydration for the project period. Sharing of water will not be allowed unless unopened and cleaned onsite.
 - Volunteers are encouraged to bring their own snacks as needed. Sharing of snacks will not be allowed unless unopened and cleaned onsite.
 - Volunteers are expected to bring their own sunscreen, poison ivy, and/or biting insect protection measures as needed. These typically provided items will not be available from BLT.
 - If BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator feels the project poses a threat to the safety of volunteers and/or staff, the project will be terminated for the day. Volunteers are encouraged to share any safety concerns with BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator.
- Individual Operations
 - Individual Operations must be approved by the BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator prior to work
 - Types of work considered includes but is not limited to:¹
 - Property monitoring and minor roadside maintenance – so long as volunteer is monitoring a property that is not frequented by the public (exceptions can be made and must be approved by BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator)
 - Litter pickup – so long as volunteer wears latex or nitrile gloves when picking up litter to prevent exposure to COVID-19. The use of trash grabbers is highly encouraged to further reduce exposure.
 - Volunteers are expected to have a face covering on his or her person at all times.
 - If working within 25ft of others, a face covering must be worn at all times, secured snugly and covering the nose and mouth

¹ Invasive Plant Management and Trail Maintenance are not approved as Independent Operations at this time. There have been instances where members of the public have approached workers without respecting social distancing. For the safety of volunteers, these types of projects are reserved for Group Projects to require staff presence and additional safety measures to protect volunteers.

- If working over 25ft apart, a face covering is desired to be worn if feasible. If breathing is too challenging (anticipated with warmer weather), the face covering can be removed but must remain on the person.
- Volunteers are expected to keep visits brief and do service at times when risk of public exposure is minimal
- If a volunteer is approached by a member of the public:
 - Volunteers are expected to immediately put on their face covering, secured snugly and covering the nose and mouth
 - Volunteers are expected to keep a minimum of 6ft distance from members of the public wherever possible (e.g. step off the path to give proper distance)
 - Keep interactions as brief as possible to prevent prolonged exposure
 - Volunteers are expected to avoid physical contact with members of the public (e.g. no handshakes or hugs) and not exchange physical materials
- Volunteers will prioritize their safety above BLT stewardship tasks and will vacate locations if they deem their safety is potentially at risk. Any safety concerns that occurred during attempted stewardship should be communicated with BLT Land Stewardship Coordinator when the volunteer is ready to do so.

Policy is subject to change as deemed necessary by BLT staff, BLT Executive Director, and BLT Board of Directors based on changing trends in community infection rates and recommendations by local, state, or federal government. This policy will be updated and shared as needed.

COVID-19 Resources

[CDC - COVID-19](#)

[CDC – How to Make Face Coverings](#)

[Mass.gov - COVID-19 Updates and Information](#)

[Barnstable County - COVID-19 Updates](#)

[Town of Barnstable - COVID-19 Updates](#)