



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

BOARD OF HEALTH

PATRICIA L. ANDRADE, M.D.  
CRAIG LONGO, M.D.  
SARAH MORRIS, M.D.

DIRECTOR OF HEALTH  
DAMON O. CHAPLIN

***APPROVED MINUTES***

**Emergency Board of Health Meeting**

**Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Board to Convene Via Remote Participation**

**Alternative Means of Public Access Provided: Zoom Meeting/ Telephone Conference Call**

**To Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/3966365159>**

**Dial-In: 1 646 558 8656 US Meeting ID: 396 636 5159**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. meeting remotely per zoom communications which has been allowed per the Governor due to the pandemic this meeting is being recorded.

**2. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

**Present were Patricia Andrade, M.D.  
Craig Longo, M.D. (EXCUSED)  
Sarah Morris, M.D.  
Damon Chaplin, Director**

**ACTION**

**3. Discuss draft amendment to lift the visitation restrictions on SLF and Nursing Homes in New Bedford as a result of the vaccination clinics provided to Nursing Homes and Senior Living Facilities over the last month.**

**Invitees: Damon Chaplin, Health Director  
Elizabeth Treadup Pio, Associate City Solicitor**

Mr. Chaplin, the Mayor, Dr. Andrade and Dr. Morris came to a decision that it is time to relieve the visitation restrictions on SLF and nursing homes in New Bedford. The Mayor requested that he put together a recommendation which was shared with Dr. Andrade used that recommendation to put together a draft order to recent the visitation restrictions that was placed back in December.

Mr. Chaplin added some other information to the documents to summarize where the city is with COVID we have seen a significant decrease in both our percent positivity. It has dropped in half at 15% back in December now we are at 7%. Our average incident rate has also reduced, at the highest it was at 200 cases per day over 14-day average and now about 60 per day more recently 20 cases per day. Also, the Federal government has provided all city and towns with and states with access to the Federal Pharmacy Partnership Program which allows nursing homes to register with a pharmacy provider and that pharmacy will work with nursing homes and Senior Living Facilities to provide them with a COVID vaccination clinic. All of the 10 nursing homes and living facilities have partnered with a pharmacy and have received their 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> shots. The majority of the nursing homes 8 out of our 10 have vaccination rate of 80%. The staffing vaccination rate is not as high they are around 50 or 60 % at most of the nursing homes. The senior living facilities that did not qualify for pharmacy program city of New Bedford reconstructed a mobile vaccination clinic we used EMS who went out to low income housing where the seniors live and provided vaccine. In addition to the mobile clinic, the city has set up the Andrey McCoy Center which is a vaccination location and because of the limited vaccines we receive from the state which is 400 doses per week dedicate 300 to our senior low income housing 100 to seniors over the age of 75 + New Bedford residents only. No doses are being wasted they are all being used.

Elizabeth Treadup Pio went over the additional changes to the draft emergency order to the board.

The Board discussed the amendment to lift the visitation restrictions. The board mentioned that there is still a risk and were discussing how much of the visitation restrictions should be lifted.

Mr. Chaplin stated we need to give more thought to this issue and do more research on this matter.

Dr. Morris stated we need more research and more data before deciding on this order.

Dr. Andrade stated then we are not prepared to rescind the order and plan to meet in another week or less to look at the final draft.

#### **4. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

**Patricia Andrade, M.D.**


**Sarah Morris, M.D.**

**Craig Longo, M.D. (EXCUSED)**

#### **5. MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Dr. Andrade **adjourned** the meeting at **8:08 p.m.**

A true record attest:

  
Health Department Chairperson

**BOH Meeting Minutes Approved 3 / 4 / 21**