



Commissioner's Bulletin  
Inspectional Services Department  
Boston, MA

**Number:** 2020 - 03  
**Date:** October 27, 2020

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**Subject:** Investigation & Enforcement Team (I&E Team) Complaint Investigation and Inspection Protocols Relative to COVID-19

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**Purpose:** This Bulletin outlines the process through which the Investigation & Enforcement Team ("I&E Team") intakes, investigates and responds to complaints regarding noncompliance with COVID19-specific guidance, restrictions and/or regulations.

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**Determination:**

In furtherance of Mayor Martin J. Walsh's directive to increase enforcement of house parties and large gatherings that violate local and state public health mandates that are intended to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus during the public health emergency, ISD is temporarily dedicating the Investigations & Enforcement Team to coordinate our enforcement.

**I&E Team:**

Housed within the Constituent Services Division of the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) and under the direction of the Assistant Commissioner – Constituent Services, the Investigation & Enforcement Team (I&E Team) is charged with addressing public safety, public health, and quality of life issues through coordination and collaboration with the City of Boston's public health and public safety agencies including, the Boston Police Department, the Boston Fire Department, and the Boston Public Health Commission. Following receipt of a complaint, whether from the public, a City or State agency or department, and/or a government or elected official, the I&E Team shall work with partner agencies to investigate and address reported COVID-19-related issues pursuant to the protocol detailed in this Bulletin.

**COVID19 Complaint Intake:**

The I&E Team may receive COVID19-specific complaints through any of the following:

- Report from a constituent/member of the public via phone, email, ISD call center, 311 hotline;
- Report from other agency or department including, but not limited to the Mayor's Office, the Boston Police Department, the Boston Fire Department, the Office of Neighborhood Services, the Boston Licensing Board and the Boston Public Health Commission;
- Report from an external organization including, but not limited to a college, university or other academic institution, a nongovernmental organization such as a neighborhood or civic organization;
- Report from any other public or elected official and their staff.

Following receipt of a complaint or request for investigation, the Assistant Commissioner of Constituent Services or their designee shall note the complaint, its source, the date & time received, the associated location, and any other relevant information in a central repository and assign said complaint out to the I&E Team leader for investigation. For complaints received from the Boston Police Department, if possible, I&E should obtain a copy of the Boston Police Department Incident Report. Copies of all reports should be forwarded to the Assistant Commissioner of Constituents Services or her designee.

**COVID19 Complaint Investigation:**

Following the assignment of a complaint, the I&E Team shall coordinate and conduct an investigation, using all available information, historic and current, specific and contextual, with relevant City departments and agencies. Investigations may include a site visit to the property.

In investigating and responding to complaints, the I&E Team shall follow Department policy and procedure relative to entry into occupied residential buildings, as outlined in Commissioner’s Bulletin 2005-02, *Policies and Procedures for Making Entry to an Occupied Residential Dwelling for Purposes of an Administrative Inspection*, including without limitation, obtaining proper written consent before making entry into any dwelling unit.

**COVID19 Warnings, Violations, Fines:**

Upon finding of a violation, at the discretion of the Assistant Commissioner of Constituent Services, the I&E Team shall determine whether a formal warning or notice of violation is appropriate, based on the context of said violation. For an initial violation for which the Assistant Commissioner makes the determination that a warning is appropriate, the I&E Team shall prepare a written warning on the appropriate form and serve it in a manner consistent with the requirements for Service of Process in the State Sanitary or Building Codes. For egregious or second or subsequent findings of violations, the I&E Team shall prepare a written notice of violation on the appropriate form and serve it in a manner consistent with the requirements for Service of Process in the State Sanitary or Building Codes. All violations must include a properly executed Return of Service on the form provided. A copy shall also be retained by the Department. For written warnings, the I&E Team should mail a copy of said warning to the property owner, in cases where the unit is non-owner-occupied. In instances where notices of violation are left at the premises, the I&E Team should also mail a copy to the owner, USPS Priority Mail, Signature Required.

**COVID19 Complaint Investigation Follow Up & Reporting:**

Following all investigations, the I&E Team shall record notes, outcomes and any other relevant information in the centralized complaint repository. Information contained within the complaint repository may be reported in a publicly accessible format, at the direction of the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

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**Signed:**



Dion Irish  
Commissioner

10/27/2020  
Date



Aisha Miller  
Assistant Commissioner,  
Constituent Services Division

10/28/2020  
Date