

# CDC report highlights spread of COVID-19 in homeless shelters

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a new report that illustrates the impact of COVID-19 at homeless shelters in the United States.

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By: [Drew Karedes](#)

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**BOSTON** — The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a new report that illustrates the impact of COVID-19 at homeless shelters in the United States.

The [report](#) encourages more testing at shelters and increased social distancing guidelines, including making sure residents' heads are at least six feet apart while sleeping.

Boston 25 News has been reporting on the impact to homeless shelters in Boston, including the Pine Street Inn – where [146 people tested positive for coronavirus](#) earlier this month

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The findings at Pine Street Inn factor into the CDC's [study](#), which looked at a total of 19 shelters located in Boston, Seattle, San Francisco and Atlanta.

In total 1,192 shelter residents were tested; 293 tested positive for COVID-19, or about 25%. And of 313 shelter staff employees tested, 33 tested positive for COVID-19, or about 11%

“Boston has taught us, you have to keep the homeless population in your overall plan,” said Dr. Jim O’Connell, president of [Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program](#). “I think it’s a major issue for cities and something we are going to have to tackle.”

[ [CDC reviewing ‘stunning’ universal testing results from Boston homeless shelter](#) ]

O’Connell said rapid testing now being used at other Boston shelters is proving to be a slow process. “The problem is you can only do one person at a time. So in an hour, you can only do four people. When you try to do 400 people, it takes many, many hours.”

Universal testing recently conducted at a Worcester adult emergency homeless shelter revealed 49 out of 114 shelter guests tested positive, about 43% of those tested.

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