

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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### **Equity Task Force to Release Criteria for an Equitable Reopening Thursday 6/4**

*As outrage over police brutality grows, public health leaders call on Governor Baker not to allow a reopening at the expense of Black and Latinx communities*

#### **WHEN and WHERE:**

Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am

Zoom registration: <https://tinyurl.com/EquitableReopening>

**WHO:** The Task Force on Coronavirus & Equity, a coalition of 90 organizations with the purpose of combatting the way that COVID-19 is exacerbating health and economic inequities driven by racism, poverty, and xenophobia.

**WHAT:** The Task Force will release a detailed list of criteria that must be met before moving to Phase Two of reopening to ensure that low wage workers, Black and Latinx communities, and other disproportionately impacted populations are adequately protected.

**WHY:** Governor Baker is slated to make an announcement in 6 days about whether to proceed with Phase Two of reopening. Yet, essential workers don't consistently have access to adequate testing, protective equipment, or workplace protections. We continue to lack meaningful data to track how infection and death rates are trending among Black and Latinx residents. And communities of color and occupational health experts are notably absent from the groups advising Governor Baker on the reopening.

As the nation erupts in outrage to the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and the countless other Black people who have been the targets of police violence and murder, it is clear that the structural racism that allows police brutality against Black residents to continue is the same structural racism that gives rise to racial health inequities and leads to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color. Reopening without adequate protections is a policy decision about the value of Black and Latinx lives.

We reject the false choice between economic health and public health because they are two sides of the same coin. We know that employment – with good jobs that come with benefits and a living wage – is a critical determinant of health. We want a strong economy, and we want workers to return and small businesses to open as soon possible in a safe and equitable manner.

*The Massachusetts Public Health Association (MPHA) is a nonprofit statewide organization focused on eliminating health inequities and creating healthy communities through advocacy, community organizing, and coalition-building.*

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