

# HR CONNECT

## EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 04 YEAR 2024

Banner Photo: City of Newton Cemetery  
Location: 791 Walnut Street

### Newsletter Highlights

**EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT- GET TO KNOW LUDMILA**

**HR TEAM IN ACTION**

**EMPLOYEE COOKIE EXCHANGE- DECEMBER 20TH**

**YEAR END REMINDERS**

**IMPORTANT TIPS ON SAFETY PROCEDURES**

*Your feedback is important to us. For questions, comments and concerns, please share your thoughts anonymously [using this form](#).*

## CLOSING 2024 TOGETHER: A LOOK BACK & A LOOK AHEAD

As we wrap up the 2024 calendar year, we are excited to bring you the final edition of the HR Connect: Employee Newsletter! It has been a great year filled with hard work, collaboration, and positive growth across our workforce.

Looking ahead to 2025, we will keep you updated on employee initiatives, engagement opportunities, and more. We look forward to continuing to build on our achievements and embracing new opportunities, together.

Thank you for your dedication and teamwork throughout the year. Your efforts make a difference every day, and your feedback helps us continue to grow. Dive into the pages ahead to see how we are closing out this successful year and for a preview of what's on the horizon for 2025.

Warm regards,

Your HR Team

### STAY IN THE LOOP!

If you have a city email address, you will always have access to this newsletter and receive it regularly. Do you want to receive this newsletter to another email address as well? If so, please subscribe to our Constant Contact list and be the first to know about exciting updates, City news, and exclusive content. Scan the QR code or use [this link](#) to subscribe today.



Follow 'City of Newton, MA' on LinkedIn to stay updated on the latest news, events, and exciting happenings within our **#TeamNewtonMA** network. By joining our LinkedIn community, you'll gain access to the latest job openings, professional development opportunities, and other engaging content. Let's build a stronger network together – click 'Follow' on our LinkedIn page and be part of our online team.

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## SHINING A LIGHT ON TREASURY: MEET LUDMILA KRIVINSKY

We had the pleasure of sitting down with Ludmila (Luda) Krivinsky from our Treasury Department to learn more about her role and experiences as a valued Team Newton employee. In this Q&A, Luda shares insights into her daily responsibilities, changes she has seen over the years, and what makes her role so rewarding.

- **How long have you been working for the City?**

5 and a half years

- **What is role in the City of Newton?**

Teller Supervisor/Account Receivable Specialist

- **What is one thing you wish people knew about your position/the work you do?**

I find it challenging to highlight just one aspect of my role. This position involves multiple daily duties that require constant learning; educating the residents and the treasury team members about MA State laws on billing and collecting taxes; providing and improving the service to our customers/ Newton residents as well as other City departments; while also making sure that the City's revenues are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.



- **What is something that you've noticed has changed since your first day of employment versus now?**

One significant change I have observed since I started to work here is the transition from relying on paper trails for most processes to embracing electronic methods. Almost all aspects of our work are now managed electronically, which has greatly improved our workflow.

- **What is your favorite part of working in Treasury?**

I enjoy coming to work daily and feeling at home as I work with individuals who have become like family. We all work hard together but we also know how to celebrate each other's successes and provide support when needed.

- **What is the thing that has surprised you the most working the City of Newton?**

I was pleasantly surprised and impressed by the friendliness and care shown by the people at City Hall, from my department to the Mayor's office.

## BUILDING CONNECTIONS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Our HR team recently participated in the Veterans and Community Job Fair in partnership with MassHire, a fantastic event dedicated to connecting veterans with career opportunities. Michelle McGonagle and Mary O'Neil (pictured left to right) were on hand to engage with attendees, share information about job openings within the City, and highlight the benefits of working in local government.

Participating in events like these is an important part of our commitment to supporting those who are, or have served our Country, and connecting them with meaningful careers. We're proud to be part of the effort to ensure that community members have access to the resources and opportunities they deserve.

If you or someone you know is interested in exploring job opportunities with the City, be sure to check out our current openings. We look forward to continuing to engage with the community and welcome new talent to our team.

For more information on available positions, visit our career website at [www.newtonma.gov/jobs](http://www.newtonma.gov/jobs).





## LOTS TO CELEBRATE THIS QUARTER

### October

- Breast Cancer Awareness
- Diabetes Awareness
- Boss's Day (10/16)
- Customer Service Week (10/7-11)
- Halloween (10/31)

### November

- National Gratitude Month
- World Kindness Day (11/13)
- Thanksgiving Day (11/28)

### December

- Human Rights Week (3rd week)
- Inter'l Day of People w/Disabilities (12/3)
- Winter holidays (such as Hanukkah, Christmas & Kwanzaa)
- New Year's Eve (12/31)

Each quarter, we will feature an event for City employees to work on a project together with the goal of enjoying a fun and rewarding activity.

## COOKIE EXCHANGE – DECEMBER 20, 2024 AT 1:30 PM IN ROOM 211

Join us for a festive cookie exchange! In room 211 at City Hall. All are welcome to participate, we just ask that you sign up using the link below. Here are a few details to keep in mind:

- Bring a half dozen cookies per participant (more are welcome).
- Include a list of ingredients. Blank cards will be provided if needed.
- Feel free to share your recipe!
- Bring a container to take your cookie exchange home in.
- Holiday attire is encouraged (think ugly sweaters!).

RSVP using [THIS LINK](#) by December 12th with the type and estimated number of cookies you'll bring. We will follow up on December 13th with final details!

## RECIPE CORNER

### Michael's Chicken Soup



As we enter the chilly season, now is the perfect time for a quick, easy and comforting classic.

#### Ingredients

- 1 (3 pound) whole chicken
- 4 carrots, halved
- 4 stalks celery, halved
- 1 large onion, halved
- water to cover
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon chicken bouillon granules (Optional)

#### Instructions:

1. Make the stock by boiling the chicken and veggies until the meat is falling off the bone.
2. Remove the chicken and cut into pieces (discard skin and bones).
3. Strain the vegetables (reserving the stock) and cut into pieces. Rinse the pot.
4. Return everything to the pot. Heat the soup through and season to taste.

Have a favorite recipe? Share it with your colleagues and be featured in our next newsletter! Click below.

[SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE IDEAS!](#)

## YEAR-END REMINDER

Please take a moment to confirm that your address is up-to-date in our system to ensure you receive your year-end documents, including your W-2 form, without delay. If you need to update your address, you can do so through [Employee Self-Service \(ESS\)](#) or by contacting HR at 617-796-1260.

## WE ARE HIRING SCHOOL NURSES!

Are you interested in promoting and protecting the optimal health status of school age children with a model of prevention, early intervention, referral, and primary care? If so, we have a perfect opportunity for you! Please consider applying to our open School Nurse position within the Health and Human Services Department with the City of Newton. Please follow this link: <https://jobs.keldair.com/cityofnewton> to find out more about the position details and qualifications. We have many different great opportunities posted on our website and encourage you to apply! If you happen to know someone looking for work, please refer them to our website.

For a complete list of job opportunities, visit [Newtonma.gov/jobs](https://newtonma.gov/jobs) today!

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## DIABETES CARE REWARDS: GOOD HEALTH GATEWAY PROGRAM

Did you know that the Good Health Gateway Program is available to support your diabetes management? This valuable benefit offers resources such as personalized care plans, educational materials, and rewards for achieving your health goals. Take advantage of this program to enhance your diabetes care and earn rewards. For more details or to get started, please visit the Good Health Gateway portal or call **800-643-8028**.



**Enroll Today!**

800.643.8028 | Hablamos español.  
GoodHealthGateway.com

**If you or a family member has pre-diabetes or any type of diabetes, enroll in the Good Health Gateway Diabetes Care Rewards Program at no cost.**

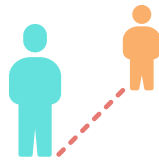
You will receive support in managing your diabetes care, and be able to earn \$0 copays on your covered diabetes medications and supplies.

## PROTECT YOURSELF DURING COLD/FLU SEASON:



### CLEAN YOUR HANDS

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.



### AVOID CLOSE CONTACT

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.



### AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE OR MOUTH.

Germs can be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.



### TAKE STEPS FOR CLEANER AIR

You can improve air quality by bringing in fresh outside air, purifying indoor air or gathering outdoors. Cleaner air can reduce the risk of exposure to viruses.

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

The City of Newton provides all City of Newton Staff with access to Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services through CMG Associates.

Services Include:

- ICONNECTYOU for Instant Support
- Monthly Webinars
- Assessment & Referral
- Work/Life Wellness Web-Based Services
- Crisis Intervention
- Domestic Abuse
- Violence Prevention
- Financial & Legal Consultation Services
- Substance Abuse Professional Services (DOT)
- And more!



City of Newton employees may reach CMG Associates to speak with a clinician 24/7 by calling **833-549-3277**.

To learn more please visit the CMG Associates official website: [Employee Assistance Program - CMG Associates](#)

EAP Password: **Newton**

## VACATION DAYS REMINDER: USE THEM BEFORE THEY EXPIRE!

As we approach year-end, remember that only **5 vacation days** can roll over into the new year. Any additional unused days will expire on **December 31st**, so plan your time off now!

This is a great time to recharge and enjoy some well-deserved time off, so be sure to plan ahead and take advantage of your remaining days. If you're unsure of how many vacation days you have left, please check with your department timekeeper or by logging in to [Employee Self-Service \(ESS\)](#).

# HR TEAM

## DON'T SIT STILL - DO THE DRILL!

Employee safety tips from Kelly Brown

Thank you to everyone who participated in our recent evacuation drill during National Fire Safety Week! We're pleased to report that the City Hall evacuation time was an impressive 2 minutes—great job getting out and staying out!

We are currently updating our Emergency Procedures Booklet, which includes fire safety and other emergency procedures. Once finalized, we'll distribute the booklet and schedule additional training.



In the meantime, please review our **Fire Safety Procedures:**

- Know your closest exits.
- If you see a fire, pull the nearest fire alarm if not already activated.
- Walk without delay, but do not run.
- Close doors behind you to help contain the fire.
- Leave all personal belongings behind.
- Do not use elevators.
- If your clothes catch fire, "stop, drop, and roll."
- Head to your assigned assembly meet-up spot.
- Participate in the headcount with your Safety Champion or Manager.
- If someone is missing, dial 911 from a safe location and provide the following information:
  - Fire location (floor and room number)
  - Name and last known location of the missing person
  - Report to incident command on the scene.
  - Do not re-enter the building until the Fire Department gives the all-clear.

Also, remember to test your smoke detectors at home and change the batteries as needed. Stay safe!

-Kelly Brown

## MPO'S MANAGEMENT MINUTE



### Cultivating Gratitude

As we approach the holiday season and reflect on a successful year in 2024, it's essential to take a moment to express our gratitude to the staff who have contributed to our achievements.

Gratitude can be a powerful tool in the workplace. It reduces turnover, enhances employee engagement, and creates a culture of respect, collaboration and teamwork.

When employees feel appreciated, they are more likely to go above and beyond in their roles, leading to a positive workplace experience and the continued success of our team and community.

### Here are Three Simple Ways to Show Your Appreciation:

1. Personalized Thank-You Notes: Take the time to acknowledge individual contributions and express your appreciation personally by sending or giving a handwritten note.
2. Celebrate Achievements: Host a year-end gathering or team lunch to celebrate the successes of the past year. Recognizing achievements collectively fosters camaraderie and reinforces team spirit.
3. Be Flexible: Whenever possible, be flexible at this time of year with balancing time off and heavy workloads as employees look to recharge after a long year and spend quality time with loved ones. The gesture of flexibility and ensuring the use of deserved and earned vacation time will go a long way.

As we close out 2024, let's make gratitude a priority in our leadership approach.

By taking the time to appreciate our staff, we not only enhance their experience but also strengthen our City as a whole. Let's celebrate our successes together and look forward to an even more prosperous year ahead!