

# Vermont Department of Health

## Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

### April 3, 2020

New information is in red

This update is also available at [healthvermont.gov/covid19](https://healthvermont.gov/covid19) under UPDATES

Vermonters are asked to stay home as much as possible to keep everyone safe during this pandemic. Please leave for essentials only, such as food, and keep a safe distance of 6 feet between yourself and others. This is critical to limiting the impact of the virus and protecting people who are more vulnerable to serious illness, including death.

Though we may all feel isolated at this time, we can, and should, connect with each other through technology, reading books, playing games and finding hobbies we enjoy. We're all in this together.

Visit [healthvermont.gov/covid19](https://healthvermont.gov/covid19) for the up-to-date information and guidance.

#### **New Guidance on Face Masks**

On Friday, April 3, Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD, recommended that Vermonters wear cloth facial masks, or coverings, if they need to leave their homes for essential purposes. This advice is based on new data about how COVID-19 can spread *before* a person has any symptoms.

Because people may have COVID-19 but no symptoms, wearing a face mask may help keep people from spreading the virus. Face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing and other prevention measures.

It is important that medical-grade masks be reserved for our health care workers and first responders. This information and more is available at our continually updated [FAQ](#).

#### **Continued Social Distancing and Hand Washing are Essential**

Dr. Levine stressed that the most effective way to slow the virus's spread is to continue to follow the Governor's *Stay Home, Stay Safe* Order, respect social distancing, and be vigilant in regularly washing hands and not touching your face. The sacrifices Vermonters are making is beginning to show promising results in slowing the spread, but we must keep up the good work for quite a bit longer to keep us all healthy and safe in the future.

#### **How to Enjoy the Outdoors Safely**

The Agency of Natural Resources provided new guidance Friday, April 3, for how Vermonters can get outside and enjoy the fresh air safely:

- **Stay close to home.** Find areas close you can walk or bike to. If you must drive, please limit the distance from home to 10 miles, and only drive with members of your household.
- **Practice social distancing while outside.** You lower your risk when you stay at least 6 ft. apart from others. This includes having your dog on a leash and close to you.
- **Be cautious and choosing low-risk activities to avoid injury.** This will help lower the burden on our hospitals and health care system.
- **Respect signs for closed areas, trails and land.** Check [www.Trailfinder.info](http://www.Trailfinder.info) to see if your trail is currently open before you visit.

For more information, visit the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation at <https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/outdoor-recreation-and-covid-19>

## **Vermont's Response**

### **Medical surge preparations**

On April 2, Gov. Phil Scott announced additional medical surge locations to prepare for a surge of COVID-19 patients and the need for additional hospital and medical capacity. In partnership with the Vermont National Guard, the State is creating two additional high capacity care sites for surge: one in Essex Junction at the Champlain Valley Exposition, which will provide 400 beds staffed primarily by Vermont National Guard personnel; and another in Rutland County, supported by the Rutland Regional Medical Center, which will provide 150 beds. [Read more details in the press release.](#)

### **Forecasting of COVID-19 cases**

State officials provided an overview to the media of projections of COVID-19 cases and hospitalization needs. The current models project the “peak” of cases between mid-to-late April and early May. Officials emphasized that the sacrifices Vermonters are making by staying at home are working, and the following weeks will be critical to saving lives.

### **Volunteering**

Gov. Scott is calling all Vermonters into service with the launch of a new website allowing people to sign up for volunteer assistance to support the state's response to COVID-19: <https://vermont.gov/volunteer>. The website directs those with medical and healthcare skills to the Medical Reserve Corp (MRC), and those with other needed skills to a quick registration process to sign up to help. [Read the press release.](#)

### **Travel Restrictions**

On Monday, March 30, Gov. Scott announced new restrictions on travelers arriving in Vermont. Residents and non-residents coming to Vermont from outside the state – for anything other than an essential purpose – should home-quarantine for 14 days. Travel to Vermont by anyone from a COVID-19 “hot spot” is strongly discouraged at this time. [Read the order](#) and the [press release](#).

Travelers should follow the [CDC's Domestic Travel Advisory for New York, New Jersey and Connecticut](#), which advised residents of those states to refrain from non-essential domestic travel for 14 days.

## Lodging Operations

The Governor's order also clarifies that all lodging operations are to be suspended. Lodging facilities – which includes hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, inns, short term rentals (e.g. VRBO, HomeAway, Airbnb, etc.), and all public and private camping facilities and RV parks – are to be closed except for stated exemptions when supporting the state's COVID-19 response.

Online lodging reservations are also suspended. The Vermont State Police and local law enforcement will monitor lodging providers for compliance and work with the Attorney General's Office on additional compliance measures if needed.

## Testing

The Department of Health continues to work to expand COVID-19 testing to a broader group of Vermonters – including those who have mild to moderate symptoms – to help increase contact tracing efforts and prevent the virus from spreading.

In addition to testing sites at hospitals, we have coordinated the opening of new sites at the Island Pond Health Center in Island Pond, and the Champlain Islands Health Center in South Hero. Another new site will open in Orange County on Tue., April 7 at the Wells River Health Center in Wells River. As previously planned, the National Guard testing site in Putney will close at 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 4. Additional sites will be opened as the needs are determined.

*IMPORTANT: Everyone must have a referral from their provider in order to be tested.*

- CALL your health care provider to be evaluated and for the provider to determine if you need a test.
- DO NOT go to a testing site without an order from your provider.
- Patients who are NOT experiencing symptoms will not be tested.

Health care providers are encouraged to order a test for patients with symptoms, and can visit [healthvermont.gov/covid19-providers](https://healthvermont.gov/covid19-providers) for more information.

## Additional Actions

On March 26, Gov. Scott [directed schools to remain dismissed](#) through the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

On March 24, Gov. Scott issued a “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order and directed the closure of in-person operations for all non-essential businesses, effective 5 p.m. March 25, 2020. [Read more about what the order means to Vermonters.](#) [Read more about what this means for businesses.](#)

The order follows Gov. Scott's declaration of a state of emergency in March, and a series of community mitigation actions throughout the month.

The Vermont Department of Health has launched [VTHelplink](#), a new, single source clearinghouse for Vermonters to receive free, confidential and personalized information and referrals to substance use prevention, treatment and recovery services throughout the state. [Read the press release.](#)

## Case Information

**New:** Limited hospitalization data is now being provided below and at [healthvermont.gov/covid19](http://healthvermont.gov/covid19).

### Current COVID-19 Activity in Vermont

*As of 1:00 p.m. on April 3, 2020*

Positive test results*	389
Total tests conducted	5,228
Deaths+	17
People being monitored	102
People who have completed monitoring	705

**Data Note:** The number of cases reported on April 1 has been updated to reflect 22 cases that were not reported until April 2. This was due to a delay in reporting. The total new cases on April 1 was 39 cases, and the total new cases on April 2 was 29 cases.

\*Includes testing conducted at the Health Department Laboratory, commercial labs and other public health labs.

+Death occurring in persons known to have COVID-19. Death certificate may be pending.

### Hospitalization Rates

Hospitalized patients with COVID-19	29
Hospitalized patients under investigation for COVID-19	44

Hospitalization data is provided by the Vermont Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Coalition and is based on hospitals updating this information as they are able.

These tables, a map of case numbers by county, and a chart of case number totals are available on our [COVID-19 web page](#) under *COVID-19 Activity in Vermont*.

## Guidance for Vermonters

When to call:

- **If you have questions:** Dial 2-1-1. If you have trouble reaching 2-1-1, dial 1-866-652-4636. You can also use the [Ask a Question](#) tool on [healthvermont.gov](http://healthvermont.gov).

- **If you are sick or concerned about your health:** Call your health care provider by phone. Do not go to the hospital, except in a life-threatening situation.

If you are ill, call your health care provider. Testing is not treatment and not everyone needs to be tested. *Do not call 2-1-1 or the Health Department about testing.*

### **Translated Materials**

The Health Department has fact sheets translated into nine languages on its website [What You Need to Know About Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

You can also find links to translated videos created by the Spectrum Multicultural Youth Program, Howard Center and other Burlington community members.

Find these at [healthvermont.gov/covid19](http://healthvermont.gov/covid19) under “Translated Materials.”

**Stay up to date at** [healthvermont.gov/covid19](http://healthvermont.gov/covid19)

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