

Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

April 23, 2020

New information is in red

Find this update on healthvermont.gov/covid19 by clicking the “See the Latest Update” button.

Please visit the Vermont Department of Health’s updated COVID-19 web pages — including the new data dashboard: healthvermont.gov/covid19.

Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19 by Wearing a Cloth Face Mask

As the state begins taking measured steps toward re-opening, it is more important than ever to make wearing cloth face coverings a habit whenever we leave home – and to be sure to wear them the right way.

In a [press release](#) Thursday, the Health Department said recent data has revealed more about how the virus can spread, even before a person shows any symptoms. Since you may be infected and not know it, wearing a face covering helps protect people around you from exposure to the virus.

We all still need to stay at least 6 feet away from people, even when wearing a mask, practice good hand hygiene and follow the state’s [Stay Home, Stay Safe](#) guidance.

The face covering must be worn properly to be effective and avoid the spread of germs:

- Wash your hands before putting it on.
- Be sure your mouth and nose are covered.
- Hook loops around your ears or tie it snugly.
- Do not touch the mask or pull it down while in public.
- Keep it on until you get home.
- Remove the mask without touching your eyes, nose or mouth, then wash your hands immediately.
- Wash the mask and make sure it’s completely dry before using again. Have a few on hand so you can rotate for washing.

Businesses must follow [new guidelines from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development](#) that requires employees to wear non-medical cloth face coverings (bandana, scarf, or non-medical mask, etc.) over their nose and mouth when in the presence of others.

2020 Census

If you haven’t already, please take five minutes today to complete the 2020 Census online at 2020census.gov or by calling 844-330-2020.

At Wednesday’s press conference, Gov. Phil Scott emphasized the importance of getting a complete count of everyone in Vermont. Federal funds distributed based on census data go

toward disaster relief, infrastructure projects, school food programs more. Getting a complete count is critical to our efforts to help support the needs of all Vermonters.

Use Cleaning Products Safely

The Centers for Disease Control [has reported](#) that calls to U.S. poison centers about cleaner and disinfectant exposures have increased by 20%. Please make sure you are using cleaning products and disinfectants safely:

- Follow the directions on the label
- Don't mix chemicals
- Wear protective gear (such as gloves)
- Use them in a well-ventilated area
- Store them out of reach of children

See the CDC's [Cleaning and Disinfection for Households](#) guidance. You can also chat with the [Northern New England Poison Control Center](#) on their website, call 1-800-222-1222 or text POISON to 85511.

The path to restart Vermont

Our efforts to flatten the curve are starting to make a difference — but this is far from over yet.

As the state takes measured steps toward restarting the economy, Vermonters' cooperation and support in preventing the spread of the virus is critical. That means staying home, keeping a distance of 6 feet away from others, wearing a cloth face covering and practicing hand hygiene. If you're sick, stay home and call your health care provider. All these actions continue to help save lives.

For information on the reopening of certain businesses in strict accordance with mandatory health and safety requirements visit: accd.vermont.gov/covid-19. Outdoor businesses, construction operations, retail operations, and low or no contact professional services now have new guidance for reopening.

New on healthvermont.gov

Dashboard provides expanded race, ethnicity and mortality data

Data about COVID-19 deaths are now included in the dashboard at healthvermont.gov/covid19 (*click on the map of Vermont*). Data about race and ethnicity of COVID-19 cases are also included in the dashboard. We can use this data to help to prevent the spread of illness, improve care for patients, and present a more complete picture of how COVID-19 may be affecting everyone in Vermont.

Meal Distribution to Vermonters

The Vermont Foodbank and Vermont National Guard is distributing food to those in need at five different areas of Vermont. These points of distribution will meet the increased demand on food shelves around the state. [Read the press release.](#)

Dates and locations (9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. each day):

- Monday, April 27 - Hartness State Airport (Weathersfield/Springfield)
- Tuesday, April 28 - William H Morse State Airport (Bennington)
- Wednesday, April 29 - Northeast Kingdom International Airport (Coventry/Newport)

Expedited Temporary Licenses for Health Professionals

[Health professionals can quickly become temporarily licensed](#) to provide care during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Volunteering

We still need your help! Please sign up to support the state's COVID-19 response: <https://vermont.gov/volunteer>. Have medical supplies to donate? Visit the [COVID-19 Donations site](#).

Case Information

Current COVID-19 Activity in Vermont

As of 11:00 a.m. on April 23, 2020

Total cases*	825
Currently hospitalized	15
Hospitalized under investigation	29
Deaths+	43
Total tests	13,852
People being monitored	21
People completed monitoring	821

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

Find more information on new data dashboard at healthvermont.gov/covid19 by clicking on the map of Vermont.

Guidance for Vermonters

Who to contact:

- **If you are sick:**
 - If you are having a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 or go to the hospital.

- If you are having symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath), call your health care provider.
- **Most information is online:** Visit our [Frequently Asked Questions webpage](#). You can also use our [Ask A Question tool](#). Type in your question and the webbot searches our information for you!

Here are the new FAQs added today:

- How do I practice safer drug use?
 - Are syringe service programs (needle exchanges) still open?
 - I don't have a house or a home, how can I stay safe?
- **If you still have health-related COVID-19 questions: Call the Health Department at 802-863-7240.**
 - Calls are answered 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. seven days a week. Outside those hours, leave a message and your call will be returned.
 - **For non-health related questions, dial 2-1-1.** If you have trouble reaching 2-1-1, dial 1-866-652-4636.

Testing

The Department of Health continues to test Vermonters with COVID-19 symptoms to help increase contact tracing efforts and prevent the virus from spreading. Vermonters can be tested at hospital locations statewide and health centers in Island Pond, South Hero and Wells River. 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 so the provider can 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 for more information.

Enjoy the Outdoors Safely

Going outdoors for air and exercise is encouraged when you take the proper precautions. Please stay close to home, practice social distancing, choose low-risk activities, and respect all signs for closed areas. For more info visit: <https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/outdoor-recreation-and-covid-19>

Ticks are Terrible at Social Distancing

As you go safely outdoors, remember that the ticks are starting to come back and are hungry for their spring meal. It's up to us to stay away from them. Use insect repellent, avoid wooded and brushy areas, and always do a tick check when you get home. Get more tick tips at healthvermont.gov/BeTickSmart.

If you are or someone you know is in crisis

Feeling anxious, confused, overwhelmed or powerless is common during an infectious disease outbreak. If you or someone you know needs emotional support, help is available 24/7:

- Call your [local mental health crisis line](#)
- Call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-8255
- Text VT to 741741 to talk with someone at the [Crisis Text Line](#).
- For more information visit healthvermont.gov/suicide.