

# Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## April 24, 2020

New information is in red

Find this update on [healthvermont.gov/covid19](https://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](https://healthvermont.gov/covid19).

### **The path to restart Vermont**

Governor Phil Scott today outlined additional openings as part of the phased restart of Vermont’s economy [introduced last week](#).

[Modeling](#) indicates Vermonters’ actions in maintaining social distancing are clearly connected to significantly slowing the spread of the virus. But as the nation reached a grim benchmark of 50,000 deaths associated with COVID-19, Governor Phil Scott emphasized the need for continued – and even expanded – vigilance. The [Stay Home, Stay Safe order](#) is still critical, and each of us must remain committed to doing our part to help prevent the spread of the virus and protect the vulnerable by following all social distancing and public health guidance.

### **The Spigot Opens Another Turn**

The Governor’s [most recent order](#), signed Friday, expands health and safety requirements for businesses, including mandatory training. Certain businesses will be allowed to operate with five total workers per location.

Farmers markets can open May 1 with strict alterations that focus on food distribution and preventing congregating. They must meet the same health and safety requirements of all other operations and are directed to use a pre-order/pick-up model whenever possible. Local municipalities must approve reopening. Additional guidance will be provided by the Agency of Agriculture.

For a full list of health and safety requirements for all businesses and specifications for each newly opened operation, [click here to view Addendum 11](#). [Read the press release](#).

### **Accessing Emergency Care**

Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD, is urging Vermonters in need of emergency care to not hesitate to seek that care, including going to a hospital.

If you are having symptoms of a serious medical condition, such as heart attack or stroke, it is important to get medical care right away. Call 9-1-1, go to the emergency room, or call your doctor if your symptoms are not life threatening.

Vermont hospitals are safe. They have measures in place to protect patients and staff from contracting COVID-19. This includes separating patients with COVID-19 from other patients.

There is a greater risk to your health and life by staying home when experiencing symptoms of a serious medical condition than by going to the hospital.

### **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.

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. [Read the press release](#)

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.

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](https://2020census.gov) or by calling 844-330-2020. Getting a complete count of 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.

The EPA issued [guidance about disinfectant product use](#) yesterday, reminding people to always follow the product's directions. Do not ingest disinfectant products, and never apply them to yourself or others.

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.

### **New on [healthvermont.gov](https://healthvermont.gov)**

#### **COVID-19 Dashboard provides expanded race, ethnicity and mortality data**

Data about COVID-19 deaths are now included in the dashboard at [healthvermont.gov/covid19](https://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.

New pages have been added and updated:

- [About Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\)](#) - highlighting prevention, symptoms and testing
- [Communities and Workplaces](#) - resources for food, volunteers, food & lodging businesses and more

### **Meal Distribution to Vermonters**

The Vermont Foodbank and Vermont National Guard is distributing food to those in need at five different areas of Vermont to meet the increased demand on food shelves. [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 24, 2020*

Total cases*	827
Currently hospitalized	12
Hospitalized under investigation	20
Deaths+	44
Total tests	14,310
People being monitored	19
People completed monitoring	823

\*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](https://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 web bot searches our information for you!

### New questions that were added today:

- Is it safe to go to the hospital?
  - How is the Health Department enforcing COVID-19 regulations and guidelines at restaurants that are serving to-go food?
- **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](https://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](https://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](https://healthvermont.gov/suicide).