

# Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## March 18, 2020

New information is in red

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

Gov. Phil Scott has called on Vermonters to help protect our most vulnerable – the elderly and the very ill – and announced several strategies to help slow the spread of the new coronavirus. Gov. Scott declared a state of emergency to help ensure Vermont has all the necessary resources to respond to this evolving threat. [Read the executive order](#)

The strategies include:

- Restricting visitor access at long-term care facilities.
- Prohibiting non-essential gatherings of more than 50 people. [Read the executive order addendum.](#)
- Ordering the closure of all bars and restaurants statewide, effective 2 p.m. Tuesday, March 17 until April 6. Establishments can continue to offer takeout and delivery service. [Read the executive order addendum.](#)
- Making a Continuity of Education Plan for the orderly dismissal of all schools, and cancellation of all school related activities, no later than Wednesday, March 18 and lasting through April 6. It may be extended for a longer period.
- **Directing childcare centers across the state to close normal operations but encouraging continued operation exclusively where needed to provide childcare services for workers who are essential to Vermont's ongoing effort in community mitigation of COVID-19. [Read the March 17 press release](#) and see March 18 guidance on [Supporting the Child Care Needs of Essential Persons During a Novel Coronavirus Outbreak.](#)**

### Case Investigations and Response

The Health Department is prioritizing contact tracing and response efforts to cases of those who are hospitalized, residents of long-term care facilities, people who are incarcerated, and those who are immunocompromised.

This means the Health Department will work to identify people who are at high risk because they were in close contact with the individual, their household and other close contacts, health care workers and first responders who may have been exposed. They will be assessed for their exposure risk and provided with guidance for their health and recommendations for self-isolation or other measures.

### Who can be tested?

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

The Health Department continues to accept all specimens submitted by health care providers for testing. However, testing resources in Vermont and in the U.S. are currently limited. For the immediate term, Vermont testing will prioritize samples from health care workers who are symptomatic and from

patients who are hospitalized. All other specimens submitted to the department will be tested as quickly as resources allow.

State and health officials continue to work on messages about social distancing for various audiences. Social distancing means remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet) from others when possible.

## Case Information

### Current COVID-19 Activity in Vermont

As of 2:00 p.m. on March 18, 2020:

Positive test results	19
Total tests conducted	611
People being monitored	246
People who have completed monitoring	262

#### Cases reported Wednesday, March 18:

- Male in his 70s. Not hospitalized.
- Male in his 60s. Not hospitalized.

#### Cases reported Tuesday, March 17:

- Male long-term care resident over the age of 80. Hospitalized at University of Vermont Medical Center.
- Female in her 70s. Hospitalized at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Hanover, New Hampshire.
- Male in his 50s. Not hospitalized.
- Male in his 40s. Not hospitalized.
- Female in her 30s. Not hospitalized

*Note about this listing: County-based test information is precluded today due to database programming need.*

Public health epidemiologists are working to investigate possible travel or exposure history and to identify anyone who had close contact with the patients. Those individuals will be assessed for their exposure risk and provided with guidance for their health. Where appropriate, they will receive recommendations for self-isolation or other restrictions.

We are in close contact with hospitals involved with any patients' care to ensure patients and staff are properly cared for and protected.

We expect, and are prepared for, more cases in Vermont, and are taking every action to limit the spread of illness.

In addition to protecting a patient's personal health information, state health and public safety officials are committed to ensuring that Vermonters are aware of any risk to themselves and their community. This is the essential work of public health. We will contact anyone identified as at-risk as part of any case investigation, and recommend they stay home for 14 days or follow other restrictions as needed.

Anyone who feels ill or has concerns about their health should call their health care provider.

For the most up-to-date information and guidance about COVID-19, including from the CDC, visit [healthvermont.gov/covid19](https://healthvermont.gov/covid19).

## Guidance for Vermonters

When to call?

- If you have questions about COVID-19: Dial 2-1-1. If you have trouble reaching 2-1-1, dial 1-866-652-4636.
- If you are returning from Europe, United Kingdom, Ireland, China, Iran or South Korea: Call Health Department Epidemiology at 802-863-7240
- If you are sick or concerned about your health: Call your health care provider **by phone**. Please avoid going to the hospital, except in a life-threatening situation.

Guidance for Specific Groups

- Schools: Vermont schools are closed effective Wednesday, March 18 per Governor Scott's order, including PreK associated with school districts.
- Child care programs including privately owned PreK: **New guidance was issued March 18 on [Supporting the Child Care Needs of Essential Persons During a Novel Coronavirus Outbreak](#)**.
- Long-term care facilities: Gov. Scott's order restricts visitation to these facilities. [Get more information](#) from the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living.

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