

# Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## March 19, 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, which began March 18. It will last through April 6, but 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

Current COVID-19 Activity in Vermont  
As of 2:00 p.m. on March 19, 2020:

Positive test results	22
Total tests conducted	667
People being monitored	282
People who have completed monitoring	274

Cases reported Thursday, March 19:

- A female resident of Orange County in her 60s. Not hospitalized.

- A female resident of Bennington County in her 80s. Not hospitalized.
- A Vermont resident tested at another state's lab.\*

*\*Note: Results of tests reported from another state have limited demographic and status information.*

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, patients who are hospitalized, **long-term care facility residents, people who are incarcerated, who are immunocompromised, and other high-priority groups**. 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**

The Health Department is 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.

In addition to protecting a patient's personal health information, the state is 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.

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, South Korea, **Malaysia**, or [from a cruise](#): 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.

**New fact sheet, translated into nine languages, added to Health Department website:** [What You Need to Know About Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

**You can find these at [healthvermont.gov/covid19](https://healthvermont.gov/covid19) under "Translated Materials."**

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