



Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) **October 23, 2020**

New or updated information is in red and bold.

This update is available online at healthvermont.gov/covid19
Click the “See the Latest Update” button.

Please visit the Vermont Department of Health’s COVID-19 web and data pages
healthvermont.gov/covid19

Vermont lays out COVID-19 vaccine distribution framework

Governor Phil Scott and Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD, today detailed the State’s framework for distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine.

The State has submitted responses to a series of questions from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, laying out the framework for vaccine distribution and Vermont’s preparedness, once a vaccine is produced and distributed to the state. The federal government, which is responsible for nationwide distribution of vaccines, still needs to provide details on many logistics surrounding a potential vaccine, and this interim COVID-19 vaccination plan will evolve as new information comes forward.

A COVID-19 Vaccination Planning Team was convened in July to begin this process and is responsible for fully developing the vaccination plan. This team includes experts from the Department of Health, Vermont Emergency Management, the University of Vermont Medical Center (Vaccine Testing Center and Pediatrics) and the Agency of Digital Services.

“Having a safe and effective vaccine is an essential tool to stop the virus from spreading. We see every day what it means to have a highly infectious disease spread without a vaccine available to keep it in check. I encourage everyone to get vaccinated when it’s available to them,” Dr. Levine said. “We are all ready for this next step toward ending the pandemic. But let me be clear – safety comes first. Any vaccine must meet all FDA safety standards and be recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, free from politics.”

While the state will be prepared for any amount of vaccine, it is expected the initial supply of COVID-19 vaccine will likely be limited. Accordingly, vaccination efforts will need to prioritize groups that are most critical to the response, those who provide direct care and those who

are essential to maintaining a functioning society, as well as those at highest risk for developing severe illness from COVID-19.

[Read the press release.](#)

To view the full proposal submitted to the CDC, visit healthvermont.gov/covid19-vaccine.

Outbreak Update

At Friday's press conference, Dr. Levine provided an update on the outbreak in Central Vermont, tied to recreational ice sports, which is now at 43 cases.

He noted the "downstream impacts" of the outbreak, when initial exposures then spread, for example, to people at home, who then go – often when asymptomatic – to school, college, to work, and to visit friends, family and neighbors. The outbreak now involves two colleges, seven schools, seven workplaces, and 2 hospitals. In addition, contact tracers have identified an estimated 240 close contacts, he said.

We need to take steps to minimize these downstream impacts, Dr. Levine said. He also asked Vermonters to remember that each case we talk about is more than just a number.

"These are real people. And in a state of our size, many of us know who they are – our family members, workmates, classmates, friends, neighbors, or people we see only once in a while," he said. "So, as we discuss these outbreaks and the data, please keep this – the lives behind the numbers – in mind."

New on healthvermont.gov

The number of lab test reports for all reportable conditions received by the Health Department has increased 25 times from 2019 to 2020 due to COVID-19 testing. Learn more about how the Health Department receives lab results in the new [Weekly Data Summary](#).

Starting next week, the [School-Based COVID-19 Transmission](#) document will be updated on Tuesdays, instead of Mondays. This will allow us to include more up-to-date information as of the previous Sunday,

Dispose of your unused prescription drugs on Take Back Day – tomorrow!

Tomorrow (Saturday, October 24) is Prescription Drug Take Back Day – when you can dispose of leftover prescription and over-the-counter drugs safely at a collection site near you. Grab your unused medications, of course your mask, before heading to a drop-off location. Get more info at healthvermont.gov/doyourpart.

And remember, you don't have to wait for a Take Back Day either – many drug disposal sites in Vermont are permanent. Or you can request a free mail-back envelope through our website.

Get Your Flu Shot – Stay Healthy and Prevent a “Twindemic”

It’s especially important for everyone to get their flu shot this year – when flu viruses and the new coronavirus may be spreading at the same time. Help keep flu out of the picture!

We encourage everyone older than 6 months old (with rare exceptions), and especially people in a [high-risk group](#) or who have underlying health conditions to get their flu vaccine.

Go to healthvermont.gov/flu to learn more about the flu, the vaccine and find where to get a flu shot near you.

Case Information

Current COVID-19 Activity in Vermont

As of 12 p.m. on October 23, 2020

Description	Number
Total cases*	2,016 (28 new)
Currently hospitalized	1
Hospitalized under investigation	2
Total people recovered	1,723
Deaths+	58
People tested	182,943
Travelers monitored	565
Contacts monitored	78
People completed monitoring	9,888

* 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.

Find more at the data dashboard: healthvermont.gov/currentactivity.

Guidance for Long-Term Care Facilities and Adult Day Programs

Find guidance for [long-term care facilities](#) and [adult day programs](#), on the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living’s [Restart Vermont web page](#).

Guidance for Vermonters and Businesses

- Health information, guidance and data: healthvermont.gov/covid19
- By sector guidance: accd.vermont.gov/covid-19

- Travel map and modeling: dfr.vermont.gov/about-us/covid-19/modeling
- Governor's actions: governor.vermont.gov/covid19response

Get the information you need at our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

School Guidance

- **Strong and Healthy Start:** [Safety and Health Guidance for Vermont Schools](#)
 - [Strong and Healthy Start FAQ: Transitioning from Step II to Step III](#)
- **Mental Health:** [A Strong and Healthy Start: Social, Emotional and Mental Health Supports During COVID-19](#)
- **Sports:** [Fall Sports Programs for the 2020-2021 School Year](#)
- **Child care:** [Health Guidance for Child Care and Out of School Care](#)

More resources on our [Schools, Colleges and Child Care Programs web page](#).

Traveler Information

Visit our [Travel to Vermont](#) web page for information and guidance, including about quarantine requirements, testing and to [sign up with Sara Alert for symptom check reminders](#).

The [cross-state travel map](#) is updated each Tuesday.

Getting Tested for COVID-19

Anyone can get tested, but not everyone *needs* to get tested.

Talk with your health care provider if you think you should be tested for COVID-19.

- If you don't have a provider, dial 2-1-1, or contact the nearest [federally qualified health center](#) or one of Vermont's [free & referral clinics](#).

[Visit our testing web page](#) for more guidance and where to get tested if you do need it.

Take Care of Your Emotional and Mental Health

If you or someone you know is in crisis or 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.

Get self-help tips and connect to mental health services at [COVID Support VT](#).
See ways for [Coping with Stress](#).

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Information for the public can be found at <https://healthvermont.gov/covid19>.