



## Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) December 22, 2020

New or updated information is in red and bold.

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

### **Officials announce temporary change to gathering restrictions for the holidays**

As COVID-19 [case growth in Vermont](#) has stabilized, Governor Phil Scott today announced a small, temporary modification to [restrictions on multi-household gatherings](#) during the holidays, a phased restart of youth sports and restoration of earlier guidance allowing outdoor activities.

Between December 23 and January 2, households may gather with one other trusted household. State officials stress that, while gathering with one other household is allowed, anyone over the age of 65, those with pre-existing conditions and those who work with vulnerable populations should avoid gatherings.

“While we’re providing a narrow path to very small holiday gatherings, we’d rather you not do it at all,” said Governor Scott. “But we’ve improved our numbers in Vermont, all other prevention measures will remain in place, and we understand that mental health has to be considered alongside physical health.”

- If you do gather, the Health Department strongly encourages getting tested 7 days afterwards.
- If you gather with anyone from out of state, everyone in both households must quarantine for 14 days, or 7 days with a negative test.
- The travel policy has not changed. If you [travel outside of Vermont, you must follow quarantine requirements](#).

At Tuesday’s press conference, Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD, said if Vermonters do choose to gather with that single, trusted household, to stay safe by: keeping it small,

wearing masks (and avoiding eating and drinking when you can), staying 6-feet apart, and taking it outside when possible.

“And always stay away from others if you’re sick, no matter how minor your symptoms,” Dr. Levine said. “We can do this, and still protect our communities from further spread. We just need to be constantly vigilant and thoughtful, and always adapt our activities in ways that keep us all safe and protect the most susceptible among us.”

[Read the Governor’s press release.](#)

## **COVID-19 Response Holiday Schedule**

Many Health Department teams will be working through the upcoming holidays, including the laboratory staff, contact tracing and other critical response teams. We are appreciative for their dedication.

However, there will be some changes to the schedule of updates:

There will be no update to the [Vermont Dashboard](#) on Dec. 25 or Jan. 1. Updates will resume the following day.

The [map of cases by town](#) will be published on Dec. 24 (instead of Dec. 25) and Dec. 31 (instead of Jan. 1).

On Dec. 25 and Jan. 1, the following reports will not be published:

- [Weekly Data Summary](#)
- [COVID-19 Cases in Vermont K-12 Learning Communities While Infectious](#)
- [Active Outbreaks in Long-term Care Facilities](#)

They will next be published on Jan. 8.

There will be no [Daily Update](#) on Dec. 24, 25 or Jan. 1.

## **Questions about the COVID-19 vaccine?**

COVID-19 vaccination has begun in Vermont. If you’re looking for the latest information about who can get the vaccine now, where and when people will be able to get vaccinated, visit [healthvermont.gov/covid19-vaccines](https://healthvermont.gov/covid19-vaccines). Check back often, as we update this web page with new information.

While we wait for vaccine to become more widely available to Vermonters, we must keep up our prevention practices, including physical distancing, mask-wearing and handwashing. This is still the best protection from getting and spreading COVID-19.

## **COVID-19 Testing**

Testing is an important tool to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Learn more about who should get tested and find a site near you at [healthvermont.gov/covid-19/testing](https://healthvermont.gov/covid-19/testing).

## Case Information

Current COVID-19 Activity in Vermont

As of 12 p.m. on December 22, 2020

Description	Number
New cases*	63 (6,608 total)
Currently hospitalized	36
Hospitalized in ICU	9
Hospitalized under investigation	7
Percent Positive (7-day average)	2.1%
People tested	255,097
Total tests	660,302
Total people recovered	4,310
Deaths+	112
Travelers monitored	179
Contacts monitored	181
People completed monitoring	11,580

\* 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 data at: [healthvermont.gov/currentactivity](https://healthvermont.gov/currentactivity).

## Guidance for Vermonters and Businesses

- Health information, guidance and data: [healthvermont.gov/covid19](https://healthvermont.gov/covid19)
- Sector guidance: [accd.vermont.gov/covid-19](https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19)
- Modeling: [dfr.vermont.gov/about-us/covid-19/modeling](https://dfr.vermont.gov/about-us/covid-19/modeling)
- Governor's actions: [governor.vermont.gov/covid19response](https://governor.vermont.gov/covid19response)

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

## School & Child Care Guidance

- Strong and Healthy Start: [Safety and Health Guidance for Vermont Schools](#)

- **Mental Health:** [A Strong and Healthy Start: Social, Emotional and Mental Health Supports During COVID-19](#)
- **Child care:** [Health Guidance for Child Care and Out of School Care](#)

More resources on the [Your Community web page](#).

### **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](#).
- Text VT to 741741 to talk with someone at the [Crisis Text Line](#).
- Call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-8255.
- For more information visit [healthvermont.gov/suicide](http://healthvermont.gov/suicide).
- Visit our [Coping With Stress](#) web page.
- Get connected to Alcohol and Drug Support Services at [VT Helplink](#).
- Get self-help tips and connect to mental health services at [COVID Support VT](#).

### **Food resources**

If your financial situation has recently changed, you may now qualify for Vermont nutrition and food programs, including WIC program (Women, Infants and Children) and 3SquaresVT/SNAP. Contact the [Health Department](#), [Hunger Free Vermont](#), or call 2-1-1 for more information.

### **Find Opportunities to Support the COVID-19 Response**

Vermonters can now step up and help with the COVID-19 response in long-term care facilities and other areas. Visit [www.vermont.gov/covid-staffing](http://www.vermont.gov/covid-staffing) for more information.

### **Stay Informed with VT-ALERT**

Stay up to date on the latest COVID guidance and information by visiting [www.vtalert.gov](http://www.vtalert.gov) and registering or updating your account. Select the alerts you would like to receive (COVID information is listed under “Health Alerts”). Notifications are available via email, text, phone and the Everbridge mobile app.

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**Media Contact:** [CV19media@vermont.gov](mailto:CV19media@vermont.gov)

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