



## Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) April 29, 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 and Health Department officials today announced the state is increasing and strengthening its testing and contact tracing programs. As Vermont begins to restart the economy, more testing and tracing – coupled with technology – will be used to quickly identify and isolate outbreaks, and better understand COVID-19 in Vermont. [Read the press release.](#)

Governor Scott, Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD and State Epidemiologist Patsy Kelso, PhD today detailed a phased-in approach to have the state conduct up to 7,500 tests per week – more than triple the current number. The increase will take place in stages over the next month, each expanding on the targeted populations to be tested. The Governor also announced the establishment of the Vermont Enhanced Testing and Tracing Task Force to help monitor new developments and recommend new strategies.

The Health Department will enhance its contact tracing efforts using SARA Alert technology, a text-based illness monitoring system that will allow us to keep in touch with contacts and help them manage symptoms. The state plans to handle 300-900 cases and contacts per week under the new strategy. The state currently has 53 trained contact tracers who could handle up to 500 contacts per week and is implementing a plan to train additional tracers as needed.

Gov. Scott emphasized these efforts won’t completely eliminate the risk. We still need to physically distance ourselves from one another and follow other guidance, but it will help in the state’s phased approach to get more Vermonters back to work and increasing activities. It’s still up to each and every one of us to make this work, he said.

It is also more important than ever to make wearing cloth face coverings a habit whenever we leave home. [Learn more about why and how we need to wear masks.](#)

**WIC program is still open and ready to serve Vermonters**

The Vermont Department of Health [WIC Program](#), and other public programs, remain open to serve Vermonters. Vermont WIC provides healthy foods, nutrition education, and breastfeeding support to pregnant and postpartum Vermonters and infants and children up to their 5th birthday. Good nutrition and WIC foods help to support a strong immune system.

Vermont WIC is open and invites new and returning families to join. Since March 16, over 600 new participants joined WIC for the first time. If you are pregnant, postpartum, or are the caregiver for an infant or child under 5, [apply today](#). Medical providers, with patient permission, can [refer patients to WIC here](#).

We've made a few changes to keep our families and staff safe during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- All appointments are being done by phone. WIC staff are primarily working remotely.
- WIC has expanded its approved foods list to make it easier to find WIC foods in the grocery store. These changes include larger bread loaf sizes, more varieties of eggs, and shredded cheese.
- WIC is beginning to offer breastfeeding classes online.

If your family financial circumstances have changed due to a job loss or reduced hours, you could be eligible for WIC. [Apply today](#). For more information on food access, visit [hungerfreevt.org/coronavirus](http://hungerfreevt.org/coronavirus).

### **New on healthvermont.gov**

A new map of Vermonters who have tested positive for COVID-19 by town can now be found at [healthvermont.gov/covid19](http://healthvermont.gov/covid19) (*click on the map of Vermont*). The data reflects lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 among Vermont residents, by town of residence. All case data is preliminary and is updated as new information comes in.

Residents of a long-term care facility or inmates at a correctional facility are counted in the town where the facility is located when they were tested. **Information that had 38 cases at Northwest State Correctional Facility mistakenly counted in Swanton (the facility's mailing address) will be listed under St. Albans Town (physical location) when the map is updated on Friday.**

The map does not represent people with active infections, and no town is "safe" from COVID-19 regardless of how many – or few – lab confirmed cases are listed. We know the virus is in our communities and we should continue to follow stay home orders and health guidance to slow the spread of COVID-19 – no matter what town we live in.

### **Meal Distribution to Vermonters**

**DATES HAVE BEEN UPDATED** for the Vermont Foodbank and Vermont National Guard's food distribution to those in need. [Read the press release](#).

From 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. each day:

- Thursday, April 30 - William H Morse State Airport (Bennington)
- Friday, May 1 - Northeast Kingdom International Airport (Coventry/Newport)

## Accessing Emergency Care

Vermont hospitals are safe. 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.

## 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 has issued [guidance about disinfectant product use](#). 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.

## Volunteering

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 28, 2020*

Total cases*	862
Currently hospitalized	11
Hospitalized under investigation	15
Deaths+	47
Total tests	15,429
People being monitored	18
People completed monitoring	832

\*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](#), call your health care provider.
- **Most information is online:** Visit our [Frequently Asked Questions page](#). Type in your question in our [Ask A Question tool](#) and the web bot searches our information for you! Added today:
  - **Who is getting tested for COVID-19 in Vermont?**
- **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. For more outdoors info visit: <https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/outdoor-recreation-and-covid-19> and remember to Be Tick Smart: [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).

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