



Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) September 18, 2020

New 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

Governor Phil Scott announces updated hospitality guidance

At his press conference Friday, Governor Phil Scott announced lodging facilities may now rent all their rooms, as long as guests comply with all other requirements.

That includes mask-wearing, physical distancing, and travel and quarantine requirements, in addition to limits on dining and gathering size, he said.

The Governor said that bar seating in restaurants will also be allowed, with physical distancing requirements in place. This means food and drink service can be served at the counter. But there needs to be a minimum of 6 feet between parties, and a Lexan barrier between the customers and the staff behind the counter.

Officials also announced that Vermont’s [travel map](#) will now be updated on Tuesdays instead of Friday. The map displays those counties from which travelers to Vermont may need to quarantine.

“This will give folks a few more days to see the latest map, and adjust their travel plans to comply,” Gov. Scott said.

Both the Governor and Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD noted Dr. Anthony Fauci’s praise for Vermonters’ work to limit the spread of COVID-19, but also his warning that we not let our guard down.

“With change in the seasons and colder weather, we will be moving indoors, and that will have an impact on our cases,” Dr. Levine said. “We’ll be living and breathing closer together for longer periods of time. Sharing spaces and germs. Exactly the environment in which

COVID-19 thrives. This makes it imperative that we keep up the core prevention practices to avoid illness.”

“Let’s keep up the good work, and keep Vermont the national model for staying healthy and open that Dr. Fauci said we are,” Dr. Levine said.

Health Commissioner thanks Public Health Lab workers

Dr. Levine also noted Friday that September is Public Health Lab Appreciation Month.

“These incredibly hard-working Vermonters put in the long hours – many working without a day off for weeks or months at a time – to process, analyze and report out on the test samples taken from, so far, more than 153,000 people in the state,” Dr. Levine said.

They do this within days, sometimes hours, of receiving the samples, through work that is meticulous and must be performed to exacting specifications.

“So, to everyone associated with our public health lab: you have not just my thanks, but the appreciation of every Vermonter whose health and well-being you work to protect around the clock,” Dr. Levine said.

Working to Reduce COVID-19 Stigma

While the rate of virus in Vermont remains low, we continue to see additional cases of COVID-19. As the state carefully reopens, it’s an important time to understand stigma, and how it has caused real, tangible harm to people’s health and safety.

Let’s start with a core fact: No single person or group of people are more likely than others to spread COVID-19.

This is key because stigma is associated with a lack of knowledge about how COVID-19 spreads, which fuels fears about disease and death, gossip that spreads rumors and false information, and a need to place blame. Certain groups may be more likely to experience stigma and discrimination, but stigma hurts everyone by creating fear or anger toward ordinary people – instead of focusing on the disease that is causing the problem.

Some ways we can help reduce stigma:

- Maintain the privacy and confidentiality of people seeking healthcare and those who may be part of any contact investigation.
- Quickly communicate the risk, or lack of risk, from contact with products, people, and places.
- Correct negative language by sharing accurate information about how the virus spreads.
- Speak out against negative behaviors and statements, including those on social media.

COVID-19 does not respect borders or prejudices. When we focus on supporting and respecting people in our actions and deeds, we can protect one another and help end this pandemic.

Learn more about [reducing stigma](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

COVID-19 Testing Data for Colleges/Universities and Schools

PreK-12 Schools: A table of School-Based COVID-19 Transmission is now available at healthvermont.gov/currentactivity.

Colleges/Universities: The Department of Financial Regulation's [School Reopening web page](#) now includes links to each Vermont college and university that is currently maintaining a public dashboard or otherwise publicly maintaining information regarding their COVID-19 testing results.

Case Information

Current COVID-19 Activity in Vermont
As of 12 p.m. on September 18, 2020

Description	Number
Total cases*	1,706 (2 new)
Currently hospitalized	3
Hospitalized under investigation	3
Total people recovered	1,536
Deaths+	58
People tested	154,099
Travelers monitored	464
Contacts monitored	32
People completed monitoring	8,489

* 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 Vermonters

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

- If you are having a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 or go to the hospital.
- If you think you have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), call your health care provider.
- Maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet and [wear a mask when near others](#).

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.

Return to School Guidance

Schools: [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](#)

Sports: [Fall Sports Programs for the 2020-2021 School Year](#)

Child care: [Health Guidance for Child Care and Out of School Care](#)

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

Traveler Information

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

Business Guidance

Visit the [Agency of Commerce and Community Development's website](#) for "Work Safe" guidance.

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](#).

For more information:

- COVID-19 health information, guidance and case data: healthvermont.gov/covid19
- Governor's actions: governor.vermont.gov/covid19response
- The state's modeling: dfr.vermont.gov/about-us/covid-19/modeling

#

Media Contact: CV19media@vermont.gov

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