

Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) April 20, 2020

New information is in red

Find this update on 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.

The path to restart Vermont

At a press conference on Monday, Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD, said that as the state continues its work to protect the health of Vermonters, and begins measured steps to restart Vermont’s economy, we will continue to keep our eyes on the growing body of data to inform our decision-making.

Governor Phil Scott and Dr. Levine emphasized that the public’s cooperation and support in following guidance for preventing the spread of germs is both saving lives and essential for Vermont to move toward recovery.

Steps forward will be informed by careful analysis of the growing body of case data and knowledge about the virus itself, as well as measurements of social distancing, [mask wearing](#), and mobility, and ongoing review of how businesses are able to provide a safe environment for employees and customers.

The Vermont Department of Health is focused even more on expanding an aggressive testing strategy and maintaining supplies, as well as sustaining contact tracing capacity to prevent the virus’s spread and keep long-term care facilities as safe as

possible.

A new [addendum](#) to Gov. Phil Scott's executive order was announced Friday, April 17:

- Allows small crews for outside construction or other outdoor trade jobs, and single-worker low- or no-contact professional services
- Clarifies guidance for retailers to allow additional operations using delivery and curbside service
- Outlines safety requirements for these entities and others already operating to ensure continued social distancing, hygiene and disinfection

[Read the press release](#). Read ACCD's guidance: accd.vermont.gov

Serologic (antibody) testing

A working group of Vermont experts researching antibody tests has found the tests that are currently available are not accurate or reliable enough to make decisions or recommendations to change individual or population-level behaviors. The group will continue reviewing the information periodically to see if there are improvements.

Serologic testing measures antibodies in the blood of a person who has been infected with COVID-19, whether they felt sick or not. In other words, it measures the body's immune response to the virus, but does not detect the virus itself.

New on healthvermont.gov

Race and ethnicity data

The Health Department is now including data about race and

ethnicity on its data dashboard at healthvermont.gov/covid19 (click on the map of Vermont). We can use this data to help to prevent the spread of illness, improve care for patients, and present a more complete picture of how COVID-19 may be affecting everyone in Vermont.

How Are You Staying Safe and Happy at Home?

We know it can be tough staying home. But there are still lots of ways we can keep living happy, healthy lives. [Watch and share our new video](#) to see a few of our fellow Vermonters doing just that. We're all in this together!

Cloth Face Coverings

The department recommends that all Vermonters wear cloth face coverings when outside of the home, since COVID-19 can spread before a person has any symptoms. Learn more in this [fact sheet](#). NEW: Find a list of [where to buy cloth face coverings](#).

Facial coverings are encouraged for essential workers in stores and their customers. Read our [Health & Safety Tips for Essential Businesses](#).

Expedited Temporary Licenses for Health Professionals
[Health professionals can quickly become temporarily licensed](#) to provide care during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Volunteering

We still need your help! 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 20, 2020

Total cases*	816
Currently hospitalized	24
Hospitalized under investigation	25
Deaths+	38
Total tests	12,981
People being monitored	28
People completed monitoring	813

*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 by clicking on the map of Vermont.

Guidance for Vermonters

Who to contact:

- **If you have questions:** Use the [Ask A Question tool](#) on healthvermont.gov and review the FAQs.
- Call the Health Department at **802-863-7240** for COVID-19 health-related questions. Calls are answered 8 a.m. - 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.
- **If you are sick:** Stay home and contact your health care provider online or by phone. Do not go to the hospital, except in a life-threatening situation.

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 for more information.

Enjoy the Outdoors Safely

Spring in Vermont is great – so take the proper precautions and go outside. Just be sure to stay close to home, practice social distancing, choose low-risk activities and respect all signs for closed areas. For more info visit: <https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/outdoor-recreation-and-covid-19>

Ticks are Terrible at Social Distancing

As you go safely outdoors, remember that the ticks are starting to come back and are hungry for their spring meal. It's up to us to stay away from them. Use insect repellent, avoid wooded and brushy areas, and always do a tick check when you get home. Get more tick tips at 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.