

Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) May 8, 2020

New information is in red

Find this update at 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

Gov. Phil Scott announced Friday that child care centers can reopen June 1 and summer day camps will be able to open this summer, provided they can follow safety guidelines expected to be issued next week. State officials acknowledged opening child care programs will be an important part of ensuring Vermonters can get back to work, as [modeling](#) continues to indicate a slow in the spread of COVID-19.

Education officials also provided [guidance on end-of-the-year gatherings](#). Large gatherings will not be permitted through the end of the school year, and events should be virtual. Schools are encouraged to plan creatively with their communities for opportunities to celebrate milestones and graduations in ways that are safe and supportive of students and their achievements. All end of year gatherings and graduations shall be designed to ensure equal access and participation by all affected students.

Vermonters can now participate in outdoor recreation and limited social interactions under strict health and safety precautions. [Read the Governor’s May 6 press release](#).

While the [Stay Home, Stay Safe order](#) remains in effect, the Governor's [May 6 order](#) allows for certain social activities if Vermonters follow outlined safety measures:

- Gatherings of 10 or fewer. Vermonters may now leave home for outdoor recreation and fitness activities with low or no direct physical contact and to resume limited social interactions and gatherings of 10 or fewer, preferably in outdoor settings that allow for greater physical distancing.
- Inter-household socializing. Members of one household may gather – and allow children to play – with members of another trusted household, provided health and safety precautions are followed as much as possible.

[Read the Health Department's guidelines](#) on how to weigh the risks and connect with family and friends safely.

Keep a list of your close contacts

As the state slowly reopens, Vermonters should consider keeping a contact journal – a list of other people who you have been in close contact with each day. If you did get sick, this would make it easier to get in touch with those people and so they can take proper precautions to prevent further spread of COVID-19.

Health Department to open additional COVID-19 testing sites

A pop-up site in Colchester will be open on Saturday, May 9 to offer COVID-19 virus testing for workers on the frontlines of Vermont's pandemic response. The specimen collection site is one of several to be opened around the state in the coming days for health care workers, first responders (EMS, fire, and law enforcement), and child care providers currently serving essential workers.

The clinic is by appointment only and is not open to the general public.

Organized by the Department of Health and the state's Enhanced Testing and Contact Tracing Task Team with support from the Vermont National Guard and EMS agencies, the clinics are designed to increase current testing volumes five-fold to meet [the goal set by Governor Phil Scott to conduct 1,000 tests per day](#).

For more information about the clinic, [read the press release](#).

Vermonters with mild symptoms of COVID-19 can be tested

The Health Department encourages all Vermonters with even mild [symptoms](#) to contact their health care provider to get tested. This includes parents of children who have symptoms that could be related to COVID-19.

Your provider will refer you to a hospital or health center near you for the free testing. The sites. If you don't have a health care provider call 2-1-1 to connect with a [community or hospital-connected clinic](#).

Be sure you [know the symptoms associated with COVID-19](#).

In addition to fever, cough and shortness of breath, symptoms may include:

- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Health care professionals are urged to ensure Vermonters with

any symptoms be tested. The state is expanding its [testing and contact tracing capabilities](#) and is ready with the necessary supplies and resources.

We are relying on health care professionals to help achieve this important public health goal. Visit healthvermont.gov/covid19-providers for more information.

By being tested for any associated symptoms, Vermonters can help us quickly identify and isolate outbreaks, and better understand COVID-19 in Vermont.

Opioid-related fatalities decreased in 2019

Opioid-related fatalities in Vermont have decreased for the first time since 2014, the Health Department announced Wednesday. [Newly released preliminary data](#) show a 15% decline in the number of deaths attributed to opioid misuse — down from 130 in 2018 to 111 in 2019.

Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD said that our strategies to meet this public health challenge are making a difference, “but even a single death tied to opioid use is too many.”

Vermont’s efforts have included providing rapid access to medication-assisted treatment, patient education and rules governing prescription monitoring, the creation of a statewide network for naloxone distribution, safe drug disposal, syringe service programs, a statewide network of recovery centers, and building strong community partnerships.

[Read the press release.](#)

New on healthvermont.gov

Our data dashboard on healthvermont.gov/covid19 now includes the estimated number of people who have recovered from COVID-19.

We calculate this recovery estimate in two ways:

1. People who have tested positive for COVID-19 report they have recovered to our investigation teams during their follow-up calls.
2. Thirty days or more have passed since the date the person’s illness began. (If that information is not available, we use the date the positive test is reported to the Health Department.)

Collecting recovery data is not something epidemiologists normally do in disease investigation. Because of this new challenge, this method provides us our best estimate, and many other states are reporting recovery data this way.

The number of people recovered **does not** tell us who is actively sick with COVID-19 in Vermont. This is because:

1. There are likely people with COVID-19 who haven't been tested (therefore we don't know about them), and
2. People we do know about may be recovered – we just haven't reached out to them yet or we haven't deemed them recovered yet.

Read more info about our data by clicking on ***About Dashboard Data – New Questions on People Recovered*** – above the data dashboard.

Case Information

Current COVID-19 Activity in Vermont

As of 11:00 a.m. on May 8, 2020

Total cases*	919
Currently hospitalized	5
Hospitalized under investigation	10
Total people recovered	737
Deaths+	53
Total tests	19,008
People being monitored	24
People completed monitoring	842

*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 information on new data dashboard at healthvermont.gov/covid19 by clicking on the map of Vermont.

Guidance for Vermonters Accessing Emergency Care

Vermont hospitals are safe. If you are having symptoms of a serious medical condition, such as heart attack or stroke, seek medical care right away. Please always wear a face covering when going to a hospital, health care provider or Emergency Department.

Who to contact:

- 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 regularly updated [Frequently Asked Questions](#).
You can also type in a question to our [Ask A Question tool](#).
- Newly added FAQ:**
- **My health care provider is out-of-state. Can I be tested in Vermont?**
 - If you still have health-related COVID-19 questions, call the Health Department at 802-863-7240.
 - For non-health related questions, dial 2-1-1 or 1-866-652-4636.

Keep a Distance and Wear a Mask

We still need to physically distance ourselves from one another and follow other health guidance. Keep 6 feet between you and other people, and give each other a wide berth when walking or biking. Make wearing cloth face coverings a habit whenever we

leave home. [Learn more about why and how we need to wear masks.](#)

Enjoying the outdoors? Remember to take the [usual precautions](#) to stay safe and healthy. Ticks are out, so make sure you know how to Be Tick Smart: healthvermont.gov/BeTickSmart.

For more outdoors information, visit: <https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/outdoor-recreation-and-covid-19>

Take Care of Your Emotional and Mental Health

Feeling anxious, confused, overwhelmed or powerless is common during an infectious disease outbreak. **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.