



**GOVERNOR NORTHAM - COVID-19 BRIEFING
MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020**

Total Cases: 13,535 (+1,941 from 4/24)
 People Hospitalized: 2,066 (+229 from 4/24)
 COVID-19-Linked Deaths: 458 410 (+48 from 4/24)
 People Tested: 80,180 (+11,165 from 4/24)

City Breakdown of Cases Virginia Department of Health

Charlottesville	50 (+5)	Newport News	112 (+5)
Danville	33 (+2)	Norfolk	184 (+43)
Hampton	108 (+9)	Petersburg	30 (+3)
Harrisonburg	383 (+28)	Portsmouth	114 (+14)
Hopewell	24 (+5)	Richmond	304 (+37)
Lexington	3	Staunton	10
Lynchburg	51 (+3)	Williamsburg	15 (+1)
Martinsville	0	Winchester	33 (+2)

199 (+23 from 4/24) Total Outbreaks of COVID-19 Across the State

- 113 of the outbreaks are in long-term care facilities (1,320 cases, 106 deaths)
- 43 in congregate settings (139 cases, 2 deaths)
- 18 in a healthcare setting (54 cases, 0 deaths)
- 16 in correctional facilities (141 cases, 0 deaths)
- 7 cases in an educational setting (10 cases, 0 deaths)
- 2 - Other

- 1/3 of cases and 1/3 of deaths are African Americans

Governor Northam

Major Takeaways

- Meat processing plants – CDC-led teams are on the ground in VA, MD, and DE. Epidemiologists, translators, contact tracers, etc. are making an overall assessment of the situation to determine scope of the problem. New guidance should be issued today.
- Vaccinations – Parents are strongly urged to keep up their children’s vaccination schedules so they can avoid life-threatening diseases.

- Behavioral Health – Virginia has received a \$2 million federal grant to address behavioral health impacts. The money will flow through Community Service Boards and the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association.
- Phase 1 – GO Virginia economic grant program will use \$14.6 million for an economic recovery program
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Update on PPE

- Receiving 800,000 gloves and 300,000 masks as part of Northfield contract.
- Receiving 14,000 swabs from FEMA
- Virginia Department of Corrections has made 470,000 masks distributed to incarcerated individuals, staff, and health care workers.
- Testing: 41% increase in testing over the last week, statewide
- Priority testing and a pilot project: Public housing, prisons, long-term care facilities. Also providing PPE and information on accessing healthcare.

Thank you to Dr. Remley because since she came on board, testing has doubled

Meat Processing Plants

- Teams across MD, VA, DE – Virginia has 10 poultry processing facilities between the Shenandoah Valley and the Eastern Shore.
- Rising number of cases at these plants. These plants and workers are vital to our East Coast food supply chain. The companies are taking additional safety measures, but still we are very concerned in the rise in the number of cases. Our medical resources on both the Eastern Shore and the Shenandoah Valley could be overwhelmed with a surge in cases needing hospitalization.
- We've received more help with testing. CDC-led teams are on the ground in VA, MD, and DE. Epidemiologists, translators, contact tracers, etc. are making an overall assessment of the situation to determine scope of the problem. New guidance should be issued today.
- In many cases, workers are Hispanic and language barriers can be a problem. Also isolation and quarantine are difficult
- Virginia, Maryland and Delaware have asked the federal government for assistance because a coordinated approach is critical.
- Virginia has 120 federal inspected meat processing facilities. We are all on the ground to screen workers, protect non-symptomatic workers.

Vaccines

- Parents are strongly urged to keep up their children's vaccination schedules so they can avoid life-threatening diseases.
- Because of CV-19 we are starting to see a decline in visits to pediatricians offices. We don't want an outbreak of measles on top of the CV-19 pandemic.
- Please call pediatrician and family doctors to make sure these vaccinations are up to date.

Mental Health

- Some Virginians feeling are isolated and depressed. The CDC tells us that those that are the most stressed are children, teens, health care workers, and those with alcohol and drug abuse issues. We expect demand for behavioral health to increase.

- Virginia has received a \$2 million federal grant to address behavioral health impacts. The money will flow through Community Service Boards and the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association.

Business/Recovery

- GoVA economic grant program will use \$14.6 million for an economic recovery program. Money will go through regional councils focusing on resilience and recovery
- Commonwealth Transportation Board - \$100 million in federal transportation funding/CARES Act to offset the revenue losses that state and local governments are seeing.

Moving of May elections

- May 12 is the last day to request a mail-in absentee ballot. Contact your local registrar. Returned ballots must be received no later than May 19, the day of the election.
- The state will do everything to protect poll workers. Will use the volunteer medical corps.

Q&A

Q. The court case reopening a Lynchburg gun range.

A. The decisions we are making are to promote health and safety. No particular business has been singled out. While the Governor respects the judicial decision, they will be looking at it further. Many are sacrificing now. The sooner we can get past this health crisis we can get to Phase I to get businesses back open.

Q. Virginia lagging other states in testing, especially NC and MD. What is causing the holdup?

A. The evolution of our testing process dictated that tests had to go to Atlanta, GA. Now our state lab is doing about 400 tests per day. State universities are doing testing. Private labs are doing testing. And now healthcare systems are doing in-house testing. He is proud of the team. A factor in not being able to test more is the competition for PPE supplies. Now we have CDC swabs and things will be improving for tests. Next few weeks, the goal is to get to 10,000 tests per day. All of the states have been going about this on their own.

Q. State GOP is complaining that the Governor is not coordinating with Kentucky and Tennessee.

A. Governor: This statement is inaccurate. We continue to communicate with all our neighboring states. If not the Governor personally, someone from his team has on a daily basis. Any input he receives is appreciated and he takes it under consideration. He will continue to use data and science to make the best decisions for Virginia. The business task force will meet this afternoon. Their input has been invaluable.

Q. You say decisions are based on science/data, but the science and data is all over the map. Are you picking or choosing which science to pay attention to?

A. It's not a perfect science. Virginians are reminded that, going back to March 7 and our first case, there are still things we don't know. We are doing the best we can, with a great team, to make a science-based decision to make Virginians safe and get our economy up and running again.

Q. Deploying tests in rural Virginia and reopening parts of Virginia that are not as affected. Has enough testing been done in rural areas to have them reopened sooner than other Virginia places?

A. Our testing capabilities are increasing all the time. Confident that testing will be where it needs to be this summer. Regarding opening some regions of the state sooner than other regions, consistency is key. For example, Bristol, Virginia is right there at the border with Tennessee that might be opening sooner. How can we do this? Please stay tuned for more information. We still haven't gone into Phase 1 yet.

A. No. There's not been enough testing anywhere.

Q. Fairfax started providing zip code level information on CV-19 impacts. Maryland has, as well. Does the Virginia have the capability to know and show zip code level?

A. Looking at all different kinds of apps. Data is important. We will use the technology when we can.

A. Dr. Oliver: We have granular level. Exploring other ways to show people concentrations without using numbers. He believes zip code information can be misleading, as it can combine two localities (e.g. Henrico/City of Richmond/Chesterfield County)

Q. The FEMA test swabs that were received Does this even make a dent in the shortage? Will the Defense Production Act be used to ramp up supplies?

A. Every bit helps for swabs, reagents. We are not where we want to be. We will continue to improve every day, but we are not where we need to be.

A. Dr. Carey: An additional 200,000 swabs on order with FEMA. We are seeing steady progress. Re Defense Production Act, he can't point to that today.

Q. From Gloucester/Matthews Gazette: Is there any indication that cases/peaks are appearing later in rural areas?

A. Case in point, the Eastern Shore, cases have lagged cases in more urban areas. The point is that this virus is highly contagious. Whenever a person is exposed, it spreads like wildfire. We must continue to social distance, crowds less than 10, being 6 feet apart. We have to be vigilant.

Q. What is Virginia doing to protect our veteran's facilities?

A. They are following CDC guidelines. Keeping isolated, except in end of life cases. Restricting access by asking that anyone entering the facility be screened (temperature taken/questionnaire). Extremely close coordination with the three federal veteran's facilities.

Q. When will there be a detailed plan for Phase 1? How long for these phases?

A. We are in the process of coming up with the plan. Met once already with business task force and second meeting is this afternoon. We will use same criteria between phases? The number of cases, PPE, ventilators, hospital beds, etc.

Closed by thanking all for following the guidelines. We will get through this together. As a health care provider, it is important that we take care of our own health care needs and those of our family. This will be a consumer and business led recovery. There is no group working any harder than our healthcare providers and hospitals. Doctor's offices are safe.

Next briefing scheduled for Wednesday, April 29, 2020