



## **GOVERNOR NORTHAM COVID-19 BRIEFING, MONDAY, MARCH 30, 2020**

**1020 confirmed cases**  
**136 hospitalizations**  
**25 deaths**  
**12,000 tested**

Message is very clear --- It is to STAY HOME.  
Social distancing and frequent hand washing are best tools to combat corona virus  
Everyone ... S TAY HOME

In Virginia over the past weeks, we have seen people doing the right thing to help others:

- Making masks
- Teachers driving through neighborhoods so students can see them and feel connected
- 1600 volunteers have applied to the Virginia Medical Reserve Corps, [vamrc.org](http://vamrc.org), since last week.

All of this has made the Governor so proud to be a Virginian

In this difficult time Virginians stepping up for their neighbors and their communities  
More people need to hear basic message: STAY HOME  
Our doctors, nurses and other medical professionals are putting their lives at risk every day working to help people sick with this virus. I'm so very proud of us.  
BUT, this weekend, some of our beaches and recreational areas were literally packed.

### **TODAY STAY AT HOME ORDER FOR ALL VIRGINIANS**

- Under this order, everyone must remain in their place of residence for food, supplies work medical care or to get fresh air or exercise
- NO gatherings of no more than 10 people are prohibited.
- Private campgrounds closed for short term stays
- Beaches closed to any activity except exercising or fishing
- All institutions of higher education will cease in-person instruction
- Cancel any gathering of 10 or more people
- If you can work remotely you need to do so. Companies need to allow this

Governor Northam "I want to be very clear ---- **DO NOT GO OUT UNLESS YOU NEED TO GO OUT**"

- “Wanting to go out is very different from needing to go out.”
- Do not go to the store until you have a list of things, not one or two things.
- If you’ve travelled to a hot spot, you are urged to self-quarantine for 14 days.
  
- As of today, almost half of the Covid-19 cases in Virginia are people under the age of 50
- Every age group needs to act responsibly and stay home
- No age group is immune from this virus

These orders are necessary to protect public health.

- As of today we have 1000+ confirmed Covid cases in Virginia.
- We know the numbers will rise
- What we are seeing now is the result of the way people interacted two or three weeks ago.
- What will see a few weeks from now will be determined by how behave today and in the following days.
  
- Be patient with social distancing. It will take time to see the results. We must all do our part to slow the medical surge for our hospitals

Virginia hospitals have 18,500 licensed beds.

About 2000 are ICU beds.

How many more we will need depends on the actions we take right now

We know we will need more.

Looking at several different models from FEMA, various universities and others. Each one of them shows different timelines and outcomes. We are working to unpack them and understand the underlying assumptions and predictions for Virginia.

We expect to share this information soon.

However, what all the models show is that Virginia will experience a surge in cases that will require hospitalization.

Virginia efforts are to run ahead of the surge

That’s why the state is working with the Army Corps of Engineers for potential sites for temporary hospital facilities.

The Corps has been assessing sites and their recommendations are expected in the next few days.

That’s why Virginia’s hospital systems are preparing for more hospital bed capacity.

3 great examples:

- Mary Washington Healthcare in Fredericksburg has established field hospital on its campus.
- Virginia Commonwealth University has identified a student dormitory on campus for Covid patients that need to be in the hospital, but not in the ICU.
- In Southwest Virginia, Ballad Health System has designated Lonesome Pine Hospital in Wise County as a covid-19 treatment and quarantine facility for acute care patients.

Last week Gov asked hospitals to postpone non-elective surgeries to preserve PPE for emergencies and covid-19 response.

A few other issues:

- Last week Virginia applied for Title 32 status for the National Guard. It was approved Friday night, 3/27/2020. That means the federal government will pay for National Guard activities supporting our efforts here in Virginia.
- Today Virginia will apply to the federal government to receive federal **Major Disaster Status**. If we receive it, we will be able to provide more disaster-related unemployment support, legal services, food assistance, transitional sheltering assistance and more.
- The Port of Virginia remains opens and this insures supplies are getting in. VPA is prioritizing PPE supplies
- USDA approval for Statewide Household Disaster Feeding Program. Entire food bank network can offer emergency food assistance for anyone needing food, not just those meeting income guidelines. This is an important change that mean that our food banks can serve approximately 200,000 Virginians who need help. Food distribution sites have seen a 20-50% increase since this outbreak. Go to [vafoodbanks.org](http://vafoodbanks.org) for more info on food bank services.

Important Phone Numbers

- If you need help getting food or other social services, please use 211
- Domestic Violence Services are still available to those needing it. Please call the statewide family violence hotline at 800-838-8238 for assistance

AGAIN STAY AT HOME to greatest extent possible

Key is education. This is a community-wide effort. We understand you need to go get groceries and seek medical attention. Other than that you should stay home to the greatest extent possible.

We are at the beginning of a period of sacrifice. This is an unprecedented and difficult time and it will be hard for people. The Governor has faith in us as Virginians that we will take this seriously and act responsibly. We will get through this together.

**Dr. Laurie Furlano**

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**Q & A**

Q. How does the Governor's order apply to offices of non-essential businesses and will they be forced to close? Will there be fines. How will this be enforced?

A. The Executive Order is public and everyone privy to it. A lot of businesses have already closed. Encouraging business to maintain 10 or less people. The Governor is expecting all Virginians to comply. "This is not a time that we are looking to put people in jail." We will continue to enforce the 10 or the less rule. If they see them gathered in beaches, parks it will be enforced. There's a difference in how we can enforce criminally or civilly. More than 10 people congregating can be subject to a Class 1 misdemeanor.

Q. What promoted change over the weekend for this order?

A. We suggested they stay at home. Majority has done this. Governor knows what it is like to be in hospital front line. He has seen heroes in our hospitals sacrificing their time, health, and their family's health. Seeing that and then people congregating on the beach completely ignoring this order is putting all at risk. So, while this has been a suggestion, today it is an order!

Q. FEMA models and projections?

A. Laurie Fulano: There is a team of people in the Virginia unified command looking at numbers and unpacking them. They will have Virginia-specific data hopefully by the end of the week.

Carey: There are academic models. Models are great to help you plan, but they also have uncertainty. We are focusing on real data and modeling that we feel comfortable planning on.

Q. MD order carries more specific misdemeanor and fine/penalties. Are there penalties attached to the Governor's latest order?

A. Penalty continues to be the same in Virginia for gatherings of more than 10 individuals. I will add that he was on the phone with Governor's Association and we are working closely together and in correspondence with NC. Formed all executive orders to be as consistent with one another as possible.

Q. What does this Executive Order mean in terms of limitation on restaurants and other non-essential brick and mortar operations?

A. Angela Navarro: Language in the Governor's Executive Order 53 issued last week still stands -- -- Restaurants for takeout or delivery. Brick or mortar still open as long as it is 10 patrons or less with adequate social distancing. This language remains.

Q. Did you consult with mayors in the beach cities? What would you say to those tourists that may still be here on vacation and those hotel operators?

A. Yes he was on the phone with them this morning. They realized folks in Hampton Roads that were not complying with guidelines and we agreed this was the most efficient step. Closed to all except those fishing or exercising.

Q. What do you say to tourists here from other states?

A. We would say that they comply with our orders just like Virginians.

Q. What do you tell people having to go to work but feel uncomfortable going or feel like they are working in unsafe conditions? to their employer

A. Secretary Meaghan Healy – Federal government OSHA is sending down standards. Our Virginia Dept of Labor or Industry will adopt them and take more action. If you have a problem, address it

with your manager. Then go through your Virginia regional offices. They are taking these complaints very seriously.

Q. How does this impact or apply to travel between two private residences?

A. If your travel to anywhere is essential than it is allowed. If it is not, stay at home.

Q. In over a month local governments having elections. Has there been any consideration for postponing elections or other planning for elections?

A. Active discussion with our Board of Elections. We will have further guidelines in next few days. Stay tuned.

Q. Testing --- Virginia has ramped up in recent weeks. Can state now test anyone who needs to? If not, what is the holdup?

A. Dr. Tony ---- No. The holdup is twofold: 1) There are still supply chain shortages (across nation) impacting the state lab, but also hospitals and private commercial labs because of difficulty getting kits, supplies for widespread testing.

Q. Have you considered treating rural areas differently than other areas of Virginia since the rate of infection is different in some counties.

A. This virus does not recognize county/city lines. It is a very contagious pathogen. The guidelines we have in place will stay for all of Virginia.

Q. Colleges and universities in Virginia ..... Will there be partial or total refunds of student fees like for housing, etc. Is there anything the state can do push this process along?

A. Applies to each college and university individually. We are looking at federal response and resources coming into Virginia and we are working through that and what it means to education sector. However, to-date it has not been addressed at the state level.

Q. Golf courses have taken different tact. Does the new order apply to golf courses?

A. One can go and play golf but clubhouses closed. Again, we will enforce the more than 10 gathering in one place. People can still go to the course and play golf.

Q. Some localities have postponed budget process. There are challenges for public input and social distancing. Exacerbated by rural governments with lack of internet facilities and access

A. Attorney General Herring can handle these questions.

Q. Any encouraging news? When will the Virginia Department of Health start reporting on the number of recovered patients?

A. Varies by local health department. Case volumes don't always allow this. Release from isolation come with specific guidelines.

Q. Parole Board expedited review and release

A. Secretary Moran: Reviewed with great diligence for second chances. They are doing a great deal of work. According to the Code of Virginia it is limited to geriatric release or those service before 1996. Victims must be identified and this is an ongoing process. Two steps have already been taken. 1) Withdrawn warrants on technical violations (waiving the warrants) and 2) Expedited release of parole (eliminates contact with parole supervisor). He is very proud of the Department of Corrections for insuring safety of DOC staff and residents. Extraordinary steps have been taken.

Locked down. Parole Board working overtime to prevent introduction of the disease in prisons. For those prisoners that can be released, they have to have a home health plan. Will share numbers later. It's a matter of determining the eligibility that is difficult. Will not release anyone without a home health plan.

**Governor Northam: The message today is to stay home. We know this will help minimize illness and flatten the curve. Think of what is essential and non essential and think of our medical professionals and what they are going through. Please do the right thing.**