



**GOVERNOR NORTHAM - COVID-19 BRIEFING
FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2020**

Case Information

Total Cases: 28,672 (+1,926 from 5/13)
 People Hospitalized: 3,657 (+137 from 5/13)
 COVID-19-Linked Deaths: 977 927 (+50 from 5/13)
 People Tested: 180,084 (+12,326 from 5/11)
 Unique People Tested: 160,077 (+10,641 5/11)

COVID-19 Outbreaks Statewide: 287 (+9 from 5/13)

Long Term Care Facilities: 167 (+3)
 Congregate settings: 70 (+5)
 Correctional facilities: 22 (+1)
 Healthcare settings: 21
 Educational setting: 7

(Change since 5/13/20)

<u>CITY</u>	<u>Total Cases</u>	<u>Hospital-izations</u>	<u>Deaths</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>Total Cases</u>	<u>Hospital-izations</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Charlottesville	71 (+3)	15	2	Newport News	184 (+13)	38 (+2)	10
Danville	43 (+2)	13	1	Norfolk	349 (+22)	56	5
Hampton	158 (+10)	29	3	Petersburg	58 (+5)	20 (+2)	2
Harrisonburg	620 (+13)	43 (+4)	21	Portsmouth	219 (+6)	39	10 (+2)
Hopewell	49 (+4)	11	0	Richmond	665 (+73)	105 (+3)	18
Lexington	5	0	0	Staunton	34 (+13)	3	0
Lynchburg	73 (+1)	7	1	Williamsburg	42	9	3
Martinsville	3 (+1)	1	0	Winchester	79 (+6)	4 (+1)	1

Governor Northam's Briefing Notes: Friday, May 15, 2020

Major Takeaways

- Announcement on Monday regarding Virginia's beaches and Memorial Weekend
 - The Governor directed the Virginia Department of Health to disaggregate antibody testing numbers from the PCR viral testing numbers.
 - As much of Virginia saw some public restrictions lift on Friday, Gov. Northam said that if any localities wish to return to stricter COVID-19 measures, he would consider those requests. "We are open minded and willing to have those discussions,"
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Governor Northam:

Today we will be talking about: Testing, Phase 1 reopening, and State Revenues

Important that we are making significant progress on our testing:

- On April 21 we were testing at 58 sites
- On May 14, they have 215 public testing sites and 52 more lined up
- State labs are supporting local clinics

Today begins Phase 1 or a slight easing of restrictions:

- Northern Virginia region allowed to delay Phase 1 restrictions
- Yesterday, the Governor granted Richmond Mayor Stoney and the Accomack County Mayor's requests to delay Phase 1 in these two places.

Revenue Report

The first monthly revenue report was released yesterday in which we really see the impact of CV-19 on our economy

- April – Virginia's revenue collections were down 26%. This is about \$700 million less than what we would normally collect
- Predicting a \$1 billion loss by the end of June
- Worked with the General Assembly to set aside funding that was planned for FY21 to have time to assess the impact of CV-19 on our finances. We will continue this work going forward.

Secretary Layne – Revenue Situation

- There was a \$700 million decrease in revenues for the month of April, but economic activity in the Commonwealth held up well.
- Approximately 80% of revenues were from payroll withholding and that was up 4% for the month. This means we had quite a few businesses operating and paying their employees. This has to do with the underlying strength of our economy going into this, our reliance on the defense spending, like shipyards. The federal government and defense contractors remaining open. Not a total shutdown of economic activity. With 60% of our revenues ongoing revenues up about 4%.
- About 20% of the state's revenues come from sales taxes which were even for the month. This reflects sales taxes moving away from in-store purchases to online purchases. That was strong. This also reflected the shift from sales taxes being paid in restaurants now to grocery stores. It also reflects that our ABC store sales up substantially.

- While economic activity was impacted by the CV-19 and the shutdown of businesses, economic activity continues in the Commonwealth.
- Where the loss came from for the month was related to the Governor's decision to delay the tax filing payment due date from May 1 to June 1. We would have normally received money at the end of April for the May 1 due date. Now that money will come in at the end of May, June 1st and some into June.
- 260,000 individuals and business paid this year versus 540,000 paid last year. This will pick up, we are assuming in May and June. And, this is where and when we will know where we stand.
- The good news is that we have predicted being about \$1 billion down for the quarter and it looks like we are trending right on that.
- It is prophetic that today is the first day of Phase 1. We will have 45-60 days to see how that goes, and we will have tax payments coming in and some real data points coming in to give us a more realistic view going forward with our reforecast.
- **Stimulus Funds** – Virginia has received over \$6 billion in stimulus funds from four different relief acts and 61 or so different revenue streams. The \$3.1 billion CARES Act gets the attention and activity around that.
 - On May 12 we issued instructions to local governments that we would be distributing approximately \$650 million to be use for direct costs related to the virus. These monies will be distributed by June 1. They are waiting on the certifications to come back.
 - They have already obligated about \$121 million under the purview of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management for the purchase of PPE and \$43.2 million for testing. This is an ongoing expenditure. Before knowing that the state would get this money, they had alloted \$58 million in general funds. However, they will use these stimulus funds instead.
 - All together the state has obligated \$878 million dollars out of the \$3.1 billion we've been given so far. On Monday, May 18 we will receive agency requests for how to allocate the rest of the money.

Governor Northam

- We continue to work on other areas of response to the CV-19 pandemic.
- As businesses expand their operations under Phase 1, we know there will be employees that will have concerns with how their workplaces are following the guidelines. The Health Department and other state agencies regulate businesses and have the authority to investigate complaints and shut down a business that is not complying. Worker's can also file a complaint with the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry who will also investigate and enforce worker protection rules.
- For workers afraid to go back to work because of medical reasons --- every state is dealing with this issue because we are restricted by federal requirements. The Governor has reached out to the congressional delegation and asked them for the flexibility that is needed here. In the meantime, Virginia is strictly enforcing the workplace safety guidelines. Directed Secretary of Workforce Development, Dr. Meaghan Healy, to provide relief under the unemployment adjudication process. If you can show your workplace is not safe, we want you to have the support you deserve.
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- Reminder that there are many local elections on May 19th. He has encouraged mailing in voting. As we move forward in Phase 1, Virginians are reminded that, the easing restrictions doesn't mean we are going back to they way we were. No one should let their guard down.

Dr. Oliver – Disproportionately higher deaths. For example,

- African Americans: 4,586 cases which is 23% of total cases
 - 207 deaths which is about 24%
- LatinX: 8,466 cases which is 44% of cases
 - 76 deaths or about 10% of deaths

They have received 4,000 applications for Contact Tracers. Health District Directors are working to see what staff they need and coordinating on-boarding for 1,000 new contact tracers.

- The Department of Health is working to protect the health and well being of all Virginians and to reduce and eliminate health inequities. They are ramping up contact tracing through the lens of health inequities.

Q&A

Q. Why did you wait to respond to testing recording results after your chief of staff defended the methodology?

A. The Governor said that he became aware on Monday that they were aggregating the tests. As we move forward, the antibody test will be important. He took issue with the way it was reported. He went to the VDH and asked them to disaggregate. He took leadership. He is proud of his team. They are working around the clock and doing everything they can to keep Virginians safe.

Q. 210 infections at Dillwyn Correctional Center. How long will they be in lockdown?

A. Secretary Moran: The reason they know there are so many positive cases is because they have done point prevalence testing. They are pleased that they can do PPT. A lawsuit filed against the Department of Corrections for cruel and unusual treatment was thrown out. The court decision affirmed the practices that the DOC is taking. They are following CDC guidelines to ensure safety. The lockdown means that units are separated. There is no intermingling so there is diminished opportunity to spread the disease.

Q. Regarding piecemeal restrictions, how effective is it to have the City of Richmond and Accomack County delay Phase 1?

A. He has said all along that this is a fluid situation. As a doctor, things change, and we have to reevaluate and change our plans to move forward. As we have looked at the data, there are several regions where the numbers are not as promising. He listened to the local leaders and he granted their requests.

Q. Three supervisors in western Loudoun County wanted to be treated differently than the more eastern and urban part of the county. Are you interested in helping the more rural portions to not delay Phase 1 reopening?

A. If you do something to carve up counties, it will get out of hand. We will continue to concentrate on public safety and that's why we made those decisions. If we continue to make progress, then we can move into Phases II and then III.

Q. Richmond requested data to make their request. Can other localities feel confident that with data available today from the VDH, that they are ready for Phase 1? How did you make the decision to let Richmond delay?

A. He has spoken to local leaders, VML/VaCo. If they are uncomfortable with it, we are more than open to working with them. Please be cautious when looking at the aggregate of Virginia. If you go into a locality and just picking out their data from the entire set, it makes it difficult. He has been in constant communication with leaders.

Q. Petersburg's request about utilities being reconnected. Did someone file a complaint with the Governor?

A: No. One of the delegates came to us and asked us to make sure everybody has running water. Dr. Oliver took steps to be sure they'd have water during this pandemic. He looked into it further and had conversations with Petersburg leaders. He will make decision soon.

Q. A. Dr. Oliver: He had an opportunity to speak to the Mayor and the City Manager and they had a good conversation about the steps they had taken to get folks hooked back up. He will make a decision regarding the certification issue.

Q. Culpeper County Sheriff choosing not to enforce our laws. Comments? Is there a role for law enforcement in this?

A. That is not a good idea. Law enforcement does have a role in enforcement.

Q. What are you doing to protect poll workers on Tuesday?

A. Encouraged absentee voting. Poll workers – using volunteer medical corps and the National Guard to man the polling places. Making sure they have PPE at the polling places. We have done everything we can to make voting as safe as it can be.

Q. Regarding Richmond exemptions, should people not leave the city and come into the City?

A. It is still stay at home in Richmond. Most people know the boundaries of the City. Please maintain the guidelines.

Q. Letter to the Virginia Congressional delegation you said you had to get federal government permission for testing? Why is this?

A. These are not state or regional jails. They are operated by the federal government ICE. That is why the Governor asked the delegation to intervene. We have volunteered our services and our supplies to help here.

Q. Richmond decision and percent positivity. Was Richmond the only local government that got the percent positivity in their jurisdiction?

A. Dr. Carey: The metrics are being developed to best measure this novel virus. Richmond asked VDH for the information, so they constructed it as quickly as they could as the data sets were being reconstructed.

Q. Can other localities that want to go back to Phase 0 do that?

A. Not aware

Q. Virginia Beach and beaches opening up for Memorial weekend?

A. We are actively in touch with leaders in Hampton Roads. Virginia Beach is working on a comprehensive plan for Virginia Beach. The plan has been very collaborative. There will be an announcement on Monday. The most important thing is to do it safely and he is proud of Virginia Beach for doing it safely so beach goers feel comfortable.

Q. If a county that has zero cases can they petition to go into Phase II earlier than others.

A. He is open to it, but has made no decisions on this.

Q: Testing data for minorities and the Legislative Black Caucus is concerned about the racial inequities shown in the data. What is your response?

A: I have a great relationship with them and they raised valid concerns. We are working to make sure that there is enough PPE in communities, and we have gone into communities with testing. We are

looking forward to expanding that testing. Thinking also about the children and we want to be sure that the parents have safe childcare as parents go back to work. We will continue to work with the Black Caucus. Also, they raised concerns about people who aren't comfortable going back to work and we want to help them through those challenges.

Q: Health Equity Task Force, what about their work?

A: That's important and we have a department dedicated to that. We would invite those interested in learning more to join us.

Conclusion: It's a big step moving into Phase I, and we all have a responsibility to keep others safe. If we all work together, we won't have to go backwards. Everything's heading in a good direction and we want to get through this safely.

NEXT BRIEFING: Monday, May 18, 2 p.m.