



**GOVERNOR NORTHAM - COVID-19 BRIEFING  
MONDAY, MAY 18, 2020**

**Case Information**

Total Cases: 31,140 (+2,468 from 5/15)  
 People Hospitalized: 3,822 (+165 from 5/15)  
 COVID-19-Linked Deaths: 1,014 (+37 from 5/15)  
 People Tested: 194,677 PCR Test Only (+14,593 from 5/15)

**COVID-19 Outbreaks Statewide: 306 (+19 from 5/15)**

Long Term Care Facilities: 182 (+15)  
 Congregate settings: 73 (+3)  
 Correctional facilities: 22  
 Healthcare settings: 21  
 Educational setting: 8

**(Change since 5/15/20)**

<u>CITY</u>	<u>Total Cases</u>	<u>Hospital- zations</u>	<u>Deaths</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>Total Cases</u>	<u>Hospital- izations</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Charlottesville	72 (+1)	15	2	Newport News	206 (+22)	38	10
Danville	44 (+1)	13	1	Norfolk	361 (+12)	56	5
Hampton	163 (+5)	30 (+1)	3	Petersburg	60 (+2)	21 (+1)	2
Harrisonburg	633 (+13)	45 (+2)	21	Portsmouth	228 (+9)	39	10
Hopewell	53 (+4)	11	0	Richmond	779 (+114)	115 (+10)	18
Lexington	6 (+1)	0	0	Staunton	33 (-1)	3	0
Lynchburg	74 (+1)	7	1	Williamsburg	43 (+1)	9	3
Martinsville	8 (+5)	4 (+3)	0	Winchester	84 (+5)	4	1

## **Governor Northam - Briefing Notes: Monday, May 18, 2020**

### **Major Takeaways**

- Friday, May 22 - The City of Virginia Beach public beaches and First Landing State Park will be open to recreational activity with some restrictions – No group sports, tents or alcohol.
- K-12/Higher Education Fall Reopenings – The Governor has convened a team of experts for a Safe School Reopening Plan. Team of education leaders at all levels were named today and include the state Superintendent of Public Instruction Lane, local school superintendents, and college/university presidents. They will be laying out next steps over the coming weeks.
- Virginia Department of Health Commissioner Oliver announced that they just received word of Virginia's first child (age not given) diagnosed with Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome found in children and teens weeks after a COVID-19 infection.

### **Governor Northam**

- Good reports on Phase 1 reopening going well. People need to keep following the guidelines to wear masks in public and social distancing
- Testing concerns persist in high-risk communities. Petersburg will have testing this Saturday distributing 20,000 masks, hand sanitizer and information (Health Equity Group and VDH working with the National Guard)

#### **Data points:**

Testing – Percent positivity of PCR tests is trending down

Testing at sites around the state is ramping up for areas with at-risk populations

This data is informing the health equity and helping target their testing

#### **Public Beaches**

Officials in Virginia's beach localities have been working on a reopening plan with all the restrictions. Their first plan needed some more work to toughen it up. As of Friday, May 22, the City of Virginia Beach only will open its beaches to recreational activity including swimming, fishing, surfing and sunbathing.

- Parking capped at 50% capacity
- Enhanced cleaning activities for high tough areas
- Social distancing rules must not be ignored. If they are, he will not hesitate to close them down again. YOU MUST BE RESPONSIBLE
- Other localities that wish to reopen their beaches should begin to develop plans similar to the ones adopted in Virginia Beach.

### **Schools – K-12 and colleges and universities**

- Virginia was first state to close K-12 schools.
- All are looking toward the Fall for opening
- Today he named a team of education leaders at all levels that includes the State Superintendent of Public Instruction Lane, local school superintendents, and college/university presidents
- They will be laying out next steps over the coming weeks

## Courts and Evictions

- Today marks the first day for many court re-openings and it also means some evictions will move forward
- The state has worked with state housing agencies on a 3-month mortgage deferral for those experiencing economic hardship. Virginia Housing has committed \$12 million in funding to deliver housing support services.
- At the reconvened session last month, legislation amended for 60 day deferral on rent payments
- Late fees capped at 10% to prevent unfair and cascading late fees for missed payments
- Asking federal government to include rental assistance in next package
- [Stayhomevirginia.com](http://Stayhomevirginia.com) – Tools, information and resources for all things housing and homeless related, as well as state protections in place.

## Personnel Announcement

Dr. Jeffrey Stern at VDEM is moving on to FEMA as Superintendent of the Emergency Management Institute.

## Elections

For those going to the polls tomorrow, volunteers will help workers and with safety measures --- PPP for poll workers.

Moving into Phase 1 for those localities does not mean we can let down our guard. As we allow people to go more place, face coverings and social distancing is key. Continue to wash your hands frequently. We need to protect the health of the people around us, as well as ourselves.

## Q&A

Q. Are you satisfied that employees with complaints about workplace conditions have resources?

A. If employees don't feel comfortable they should be able to make that known. We are working hard with federal guidelines and getting the discussion going through the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry and OSHA. There are several avenues employees can take if they don't feel comfortable.

Q. Local elections in November have a June 9 deadline for signatures to get on the ballot. Have you looked into moving the deadline since obtaining signatures is so difficult at this time?

A. Governor: We encourage candidates to find ways to get creative in getting signatures.

A. Secretary Conner: We understand it is a hardship on candidates. Neither the Governor nor the Department of Elections has the ability to waive the ballot signature qualification requirements. Some candidates have sought relief through the courts and have had it granted.

Q. Regarding the COVID-19 drug Remdeivir, how are you deciding on its allocation to hospitals and patients? Can you say which hospitals have received it?

A. Dr. Oliver: It has received FDA emergency designation for hospitalized CV-19 patients. 1.5 million doses were donated to Virginia. Virginia Health and Human Resource sent a tranch to hospitals with high numbers of patients (Inova Fairfax). A few days after that HHS started sending it to a central site (Va Dept. of Health). Working within the unified command/medical advisory committee of hospitals and other health care providers they came up with a process that is a random selection of hospitals so there is an equal chance of getting this medication. Recently Virginia received 10 cases which is enough for a handful of patients. 96 received a few days ago to treat 350-400 patients. It is a scare resource. We will provide a name of the hospitals getting the medication later.

Q. Other states have gone further to stop evictions. Why isn't Virginia going further?

A. Governor: The steps we've taken in Virginia are designed to prevent evictions. We are communicating with national leaders for more resources for homelessness and evictions. He is not prepared to compare Virginia to other states right now.

Q. Planning and discussion regarding education re-openings (if and when) in the Fall?

A. Started to meet three weeks ago to communicate. Sub-groups are working on a variety of things. Working closely with the VDH in developing plans and phases for what reopening looks like for K-12 and higher education. The Governor will announce them down the road.

A. Governor: They are going to be options and not a "one size fits all" because there are so many unanswered questions with this novel virus. They are working different scenarios because they are unable to predict what the Fall will look like. "We appreciate the cooperation and understanding."

Q. Testing in localities. In Roanoke, why the discrepancy when data was up, taken down and now is back up? How do we really know the prevalence of the virus? It seems like a low rate for the population

A. Dr. Forlano: Percent positivity is a measure of how well testing capacity is going. The aim is for 10% or lower positivity rate.

A. Dr. Carey: Revisions and improvements to the website have been ongoing. We are keeping track of total test (PCR and serological tests). They will look into the exact data point for the Roanoke situation reporter mentioned.

Q. Have you connected with state legislators, e.g. Black Caucus, to address their health equity concerns and the virus affects on the black and brown population?

A. Yes, they have been. They have better communication about what they have been doing to increase testing, PPE around the state. They are improving communication with these folks all the time.

Q. A "gut check" question for the Governor on school re-openings ... How important is it for you to get those kids back to school in the Fall?

A. Governor: It is very important to get kids back in school. Thank you to teachers and principals reaching out through virtual learning, meals. The caveat is that we know this is not a perfect solution. All are much better back in the classroom because it is an equity issue. While it sounds reasonable that we are educating in a virtual environment, there are too many students that don't have internet access available to them. He is hopeful they will be back in the fall.

Q.1. Are there cases of kid's getting the multi symptom inflammatory disease?

A.1. Dr. Oliver: We have learned of one case. Just learned of it.

Q. 2. What about the replacement of Dr. Stern?

A.1. Governor: Antibody test is important to learning about this condition

A.2. Governor: We will find the best person to replace him and announce it shortly

Q. Nursing homes and PPE shortages. Will the state add additional resources? Is PPE supply adequate?

A. Governor: We have PPE. Anything we can do to make sure they have the equipment, staffing, testing and PPE is what we will continue to do.

Q. Does VDH view cases in congregate settings differently? E.g. correctional institutions

A. Dr. Oliver: The approach to containing the virus differs in the different congregate settings. For example, dealing with it in correctional facilities. Other than that, they do not differ.

**Next briefing, Wednesday, May 20 at 2:00 p.m.**