



**GOVERNOR NORTHAM - COVID-19 BRIEFING  
MONDAY, MAY 4, 2020**

Total Cases: 19,492 (+2,591 from 5/01)  
 People Hospitalized: 2,700 (+284 from 5/1)  
 COVID-19-Linked Deaths: 684 (+103 from 5/1)  
 People Tested: 122,788 (+17,140 from 5/1)  
 Unique People Tested: 111,441

**VFC City Breakdown of Cases, Hospitalizations, Deaths Virginia Department of Health**  
 (Change since 5/1/20)

<u>CITY</u>	<u>Total Cases</u>	<u>Hospitalizations</u>	<u>Deaths</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>Total Cases</u>	<u>Hospitalizations</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Charlottesville	63 (+5)	13	2	Newport News	132 (+12)	33 (-3)	9
Danville	37 (+2)	13	1	Norfolk	239 (+35)	45 (+3)	4 (+1)
Hampton	128 (+9)	28	1	Petersburg	39 (+6)	15	2
Harrisonburg	497 (+41)	28 (+2)	11	Portsmouth	183 (+12)	35 (+2)	8 (+1)
Hopewell	31 (+6)	10 (+2)	0	Richmond	419 (+55)	72 (+6)	16 (+1)
Lexington	6 (+2)	0	0	Staunton	13 (+1)	0	0
Lynchburg	64 (+6)	5	1	Williamsburg	23 (+3)	7 (+1)	2 (+1)
Martinsville	2	1	0	Winchester	50 (+9)	1	0

**Outbreaks COVID-19 Statewide: 239 (+13 from 5/1)**

- 140 (+8) outbreaks are in long-term care facilities (2,766 {+354} cases, 382 {+71} deaths)
- 52 (+7) in congregate settings (750 {+86} cases, 13 {+1} deaths)
- 20 (+2) in a healthcare setting (86 {+13} cases, 0 deaths)
- 20 (+3) in correctional facilities (675 {+44} cases, 1 deaths)
- 7 cases in an educational setting (36 cases, 0 deaths)

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## **Major Takeaways**

- Executive Order 53 will be extended through midnight Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>
- Barring a spike in cases and deaths between now and then, we will enter **phase 1 May 15**
- There will be three phases
- Phase 1 will last for three weeks
- Guidelines and requirements in anticipation of Phase I will be coming later this week.

## **Governor Northam**

- We are entering a new phase of our response. The virus is still here and won't go away until we have a vaccination. All of our efforts have slowed the spread, but not cured it.
- Phase 1 – Guidelines for all businesses are physical distancing (keeping co-workers and customers separate); Wearing face coverings at work; More cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces. Making sure there are safe places to wash one's hands. Additional guidelines for specific industries will be coming.

Bottom line: You can get your hair cut; you can go out to eat (less seating); there will be more retail open at lower capacity; you can go to the gym (fewer people, but more requirements for cleaning); Farmers markets open; Needs of churches for worship.

- Phase 1 could last about 3 weeks.
- Phase II and III also would last about two weeks.
- Phase II will proceed if there is a downward trends of cases, hospitalization, stable supply of testing,
- Phase III will proceed when there is no evidence of a rebound
- The Virginia Department of Health is hiring 1,000 people to do contact tracing
- They tested over 6,000 people per day this past weekend.
- Last Friday Virginia received first of three Battelle Critical Care Decontamination System™ machines. The first one has been installed in Blacksburg. Richmond and Hampton will have them by the end of this week.
- The Governor is concerned about the rising number of cases in poultry processing plants. The Eastern Shore has over 260 CV-19 cases. With federal government help, the testing of plant workers and the community is ongoing. They are also doing the same in the Shenandoah Valley poultry plants. (It appears the number of cases are leveling off in the Valley).
- Today is the start of two weeks of Teacher Appreciation Week and Resiliency Week. Teachers have truly stepped up and we thank them. Resilience is how well we relate to trauma. Go to [grscan.com](http://grscan.com) to find virtual events, training and events for children. We all are dealing with some level of stress. For some, it is trauma. It is important for children to learn these skills. Proud of how Virginians are handling this situation.

## Q & A

Q. Are you coordinating with Maryland and DC and NC for reopening?

A. Yes. Each state has their own unique challenges. MD, NoVA and DC are densely population. We probably won't all open up at the same time, but they are trying to be as consistent as possible.

Q. As businesses try to prepare for reopening, do you expect that if you have to move off of the May 15<sup>th</sup> date that business owners and employees will know in advance of the change of date?

A. Yes. The Governor will do everything possible to give as much notice as possible.

Q. Is there one metric that is being considered or that you look at more heavily than others?

Q. Hearing from private doctors that there is still a lack of swabs. Can you address that?

A. The Governor looks every morning at the number of new cases and deaths. That is very powerful. This is the powerful metric that gets his attention.

A. Swabs – Virginia has put in an order with FEMA. Anticipate the number of swabs to go up as the testing goes up. The goal is to get to 10,000 tests per day. We have confidence in our supply chain to get to the goal.

Q. Where are you in terms of regional reopening more rural parts of Virginia where there are not a lot of cases?

A. Business leaders (some of whom are from rural areas) have advised to reopen as a Commonwealth, not by region. We don't want to pick winners and losers. When we made the decision to close down, it was as a Commonwealth. He has seen this bring Virginians together. We don't need more division in this state and in this country.

Q. Will restrictions on businesses and the guidelines be tailored on a regional basis?

Q. Will the goal of 10,000 tests per day be met?

A. There will not be a regional differential for business reopening.

A. Dr. Remley – This week they will survey doctors and free clinics to see where the gaps are. They are working through the Hospital and Health Care Association. They are walking through how to test. They don't want any barriers for symptomatic individuals or those that have been in contact with symptomatic individuals.

Q. There is confusion about campgrounds being able to reopen and the differential between Executive Order 53 and Executive Order 55. How will it be enforced?

A. We will clarify the guidelines as we move through this week. Will reopen private and state campgrounds. People can't stay more than 14 days. There will be spacing requirements. All industries want answers and those guidelines will be forthcoming in the next few days.

\* There is another purpose for the week extension of Executive Order 53 and that is so businesses can assure customers that it is safe to come back. It will give us all time to provide guidelines to the businesses.

Q. For folks that are hesitant to go back to work because they have an underlying condition making the vulnerable, will they still be able to collect unemployment?

A. Meaghan Healy/Workforce Development: The top priority is workplace safety. Virginia awaits guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor and what eligibility for unemployment will look like. However, there is currently an adjudication process. She anticipates that the guidance from U.S. Department of Labor will provide criteria.

Q. Could you provide additional information about the hiring process for the 1000 contract tracers that the Governor mentioned would be hired? Who will be hired and how will they be hired?

A. Dr. Oliver: As reopening begins, they know cases will rise. Identifying new cases and exposure to new cases, isolation, etc. To do that will require a new workforce. They are being hired through the Virginia Department of Health. Feel that they will be ready and up and running by May 15.

Q. Farmer's Markets: Some have already reopened. Will they have different guidelines than other retail businesses?

A. Governor Northam: So important for farmers to get products to market.

A. Secretary of Agriculture Ring: Looking forward to opening up the markets even more and using best practices. Safe browsing (wearing of masks). More information will be shared and guidelines coming over the next week.

Q. Restaurants and bars that have been able to serve alcohol during the CV-19 crisis. Will this continue as we enter phases 1- 3 reopening?

Q. Is there an update to the Eastern Shore worship center lawsuit and DOJ statement of interest?

A. Governor: As long as restaurants are not at full capacity and are doing takeout and delivery, he anticipates that policy will stay in force. He hasn't addressed it with the ABC.

A. Legal Counsel Rita Davis: The Chincoteague Lighthouse Fellowship Church sued Governor Northam for violation of the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution. On Friday The Eastern District of Virginia denied the church's claims in a 30-page decision. The church has appealed. The U.S. Department of Justice has entered a statement of interest on behalf of the church in its appeal that alleges that there is a disparity between religious institutions and secular businesses. "While the Administration applauds the U.S. Department of Justice for standing up for Virginia's civil liberties, we continue to believe the Governor's Executive orders were prudent, necessary and Constitutional, and we look forward to the Fourth Circuit's ruling."

Q. How do you respond to those that think you are not responding and have not acted Constitutionally?

Q. President Trump said that only one Governor spoke out on calls with him to say that they needed supplies. Why didn't you let him know?

A. Governor: I abide and do everything to uphold the Constitution. My decisions have been made to keep Virginians healthy, safe and to prevent death. He understands that people are upset. He is standing up there to keep Virginian's safe and get this health crisis behind us.

A. Governor: Having been in the Army and a conflict, Governor's have been asked to fight this war without any supplies. We started at ground zero competing for PPE, swabs. In the last couple of weeks, he commends FEMA for communication and implementation with supplies and CARES Act money. We started two months behind because we've had to go out on our own. When he is on the presidential phone calls, he listens and hears the other Governor's requests. We are all dealing with the same thing. Financial resources, PPE and testing supplies.

- In closing, anytime there is a crisis or tragedy, we must, as a society, try to bring some good to it. And, how can we prepare for the next crisis. There are some good things going on:

There are universities and pharmaceutical companies trying to find a vaccine for this pandemic and others. Remdisivir studies are very promising and the FDA has approved it.

Companies and researchers are working around the clock on a vaccination for this pandemic. Whether it will be this year or next, they are working as hard as they can and is encouraging.

Thank you to all of those folks who have made sacrifices during this pandemic. We will have resources and support groups for our medical responders that are under tremendous amount of stress.

**Next Briefing on Wednesday, 2 p.m.**