



March 20, 2020

Governor Ralph Northam Daily Briefing

Daily Numbers

- U.S. has more than 13,000 cases and 916 deaths.
- In VA 114 cases, 2 deaths, 19 hospitalizations, and there are 35 tests being processed at the state lab.
- SW VA has its first case
- Health Department stresses that the ONLY means of preventing greater spread is through social distancing.

Testing and Equipment

- Increased testing capacity – 1,000 tests.
- State Lab is actively training workforce to be able to increase number of people capable of testing.
- There is no backlog on testing, there is a backlog getting the testing supplies.
- Virginia has received additional respirators and PPE which the state is distributing to first responders and hospitals first, then to others based upon need. Virginia also has orders into the National Stockpile and expect shipments.
- Feds have been responsive to VA's requests.
- The state is looking at a lot of other areas to get the PPE – many industries use these materials and may be able to help with the short supply.

Restaurant/Theatres/Gym Restrictions



WARNING - Some businesses are not complying. All localities can enforce the 10 person limit in restaurants, theaters, and gyms.

Business Activities

- Directed ABC to allow on-premises licensees the ability to offer beer/wine for takeout and delivery.
- Any employees who feel unsafe at work are suggested to discuss with their employer. Governor said that employees could also contact OSHA/Dept of Labor to lodge any concerns or complaints.

Managing Stress

Federal Substance Abuse has a hotline available 24/7.

Also, there is around the clock help available at the National Suicide Hotline.

Workforce Update

The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) is seeing a marked increase in the number of claims for unemployment compensation due to COVID-19 impacts on businesses. As of this today, 30,000 unemployment claims have been filed. Updated instructions for filing claims and answers to FAQs are available at www.vec.virginia.gov. Note that many Career One Stop Centers are being closed to the public or are providing limited access to the public by appointment only.



Capacity at the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) has been increased to help with online and call center questions. VEC has taken over the DMV call center to make the processes faster. The Governor wants everyone to apply because the rules are changing daily, allowing more and more people to qualify for claims.

Mandated Government Shut Down

- Administration has been in a lot of discussions and there is a great deal of public talk about essential vs non-essential businesses. Virginia continues to evaluate daily.
- Governor takes a broad view – any business that helps or provides services daily are essential.
- Businesses can help to avoid any additional closures if people adhere to the social distances, good hygiene, no more than 10 people in any one confined area.

Census Forms

Governor encouraged all Virginians to comply with the census reporting requirements. He shared that it is critical to fill out forms so that Virginia can qualify for its portion of the \$645 billion in funding available.

Hospitals and Research Expansion



UVA has developed a testing process to help increase testing capacity in the Commonwealth. VCU and others working to do the same.

Medical Equipment

Virginia is doing all possible to ensure that hospitals and medical professions can meet the needs of every patient.

Get Outside

Encourage people to get outside, exercise, keep moral high – just do it at a safe distance from others.

To view today's briefing, click [here](#).