

News from Fairfax County Supervisor Kathy Smith, representing Sully District.

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A Message from Kathy Smith

In response to COVID-19 surges across the country, Governor Northam announced today new actions to mitigate the spread of the virus in Virginia. The Governor's press release is below.

I added the "Coronavirus Column" from today's regular newsletter below. The column includes information on how to keep yourself and your household safe.

Sincerely,

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Gov. Northam Announces New Statewide Measure to Contain COVID-19



As COVID-19 surges in states across the country, Governor Ralph Northam today announced new actions to mitigate the spread of the virus in Virginia. While the Commonwealth's case count per capita and positivity rate remain comparatively low, all five health regions are experiencing increases in new COVID-19 cases, positive tests, and hospitalizations.

"COVID-19 is surging across the country, and while cases are not rising in Virginia as rapidly as in some other states, I do not intend to wait until they are. We are acting now to prevent this health crisis from getting worse," **said Governor Northam**. "Everyone is tired of this pandemic and restrictions on our lives. I'm tired, and I know you are tired too. But as we saw earlier this year, these mitigation measures work. I am confident that we can come together as one Commonwealth to get this virus under control and save lives."

Governor Northam shared a **new video** to update Virginians on the additional steps the Commonwealth is taking to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, which is available [here](#).

The following measures will take effect at midnight on Sunday, November 15:

- **Reduction in public and private gatherings:** All public and private in-person gatherings must be limited to 25 individuals, down from the current cap of 250 people. This includes outdoor and indoor settings.
- **Expansion of mask mandate:** All Virginians aged five and over are required to wear face coverings in indoor public spaces. This expands the current mask mandate, which has been in place in Virginia since May 29 and requires all individuals aged 10 and over to wear face coverings in indoor public settings.
- **Strengthened enforcement within essential retail businesses:** All essential retail businesses, including grocery stores and pharmacies, must adhere to statewide guidelines for physical distancing, wearing face coverings, and enhanced cleaning. While certain essential retail businesses have been required to adhere to these regulations as a best practice, violations will now be enforceable through the Virginia Department of Health as a Class One misdemeanor.

- **On-site alcohol curfew:** The on-site sale, consumption, and possession of alcohol is prohibited after 10:00 p.m. in any restaurant, dining establishment, food court, brewery, microbrewery, distillery, winery, or tasting room. All restaurants, dining establishments, food courts, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, and tasting rooms must close by midnight. Virginia law does not distinguish between restaurants and bars, however, under current restrictions, individuals that choose to consume alcohol prior to 10:00 p.m. must be served as in a restaurant and remain seated at tables six feet apart.

Virginia is averaging 1,500 newly-reported COVID-19 cases per day, up from a statewide peak of approximately 1,200 in May. While Southwest Virginia has experienced a spike in the number of diagnosed COVID-19 cases, all five of the Commonwealth's health regions are currently reporting a positivity rate over five percent. Although hospital capacity remains stable, hospitalizations have increased statewide by more than 35 percent in the last four weeks.

On Tuesday, Governor Northam announced new contracts with three laboratories as part of the Commonwealth's OneLabNetwork, which will significantly increase Virginia's public health testing capacity. Contracts with Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, University of Virginia Medical Center in Charlottesville, and Sentara Healthcare in Norfolk will directly support high-priority outbreak investigations, community testing events, and testing in congregate settings, with a goal of being able to perform 7,000 per day by the end of the year.

The full text of amended Executive Order Sixty-Three and Order of Public Health Emergency Five and sixth amended Executive Order Sixty-Seven and Order of Public Health Emergency Seven will be made available [here](#).

For information about COVID-19 in Virginia, visit vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus.

Coronavirus Column

Important reminders to keep yourself and others safe:



[Update on Coronavirus in the Community:](#)

- The Virginia Department of Health reported 214 new cases of COVID-19 in the Fairfax Health District yesterday, November 12, 2020.
- **It is important that everyone stay vigilant and not let pandemic fatigue lead to letting our guard down.**
- Cases of COVID-19 are increasing in Fairfax County and our [community transmission level](#) has increased from low to moderate. **Our case investigators are seeing more exposures occurring in work places, at celebratory events and gatherings, and within households.**
- **What You Can Do to Keep Yourself and Your Household Safe:**
 - Wear a face covering and maintain social distancing (at least 6 feet) in public settings.
 - Avoid travel and large gatherings as much as possible.
 - Wash hands frequently and disinfect commonly touched surfaces.
 - **Stay home when sick!**
- Find out more about COVID-19 and ways to stay healthy and safe at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19.

Guidelines for a Safe and Relaxing Thanksgiving During COVID-19:

- While travel and large gatherings are typically common during this time of year, **it is still vital to remember that we all have an important role to play in slowing the spread of COVID-19.** [Details](#)
- You can further lower your risk during holiday get-togethers by following CDC's recommendations on [holiday celebrations](#) and [hosting gatherings or cook-outs](#).
- **Higher-risk activities (NOT RECOMMENDED!):**
 - Going shopping in crowded stores.
 - Participating or attending crowded public events, even outdoor ones.
 - Attending large indoor gatherings with people from outside of your household.
- **Moderate level of risk activities include:**
 - Small outdoor dinner with family and friends who live in your community.
 - Visiting pumpkin patches or orchards where COVID-19 safety procedures are encouraged or enforced.
 - Attending small outdoor sports events with safety precautions in place.
- **Low level of risk activities include:**
 - Small dinner with people who live in your household.
 - Virtual dinner and sharing recipes with family and friends.
 - Preparing recipes for family and neighbors and delivering them in a way that doesn't involve contact with others.
 - Shopping online (rather than in person) on the day after Thanksgiving and other sales holidays.
 - Watching sports events, parades, and movies from home.

Recent Headlines:

- [REV Initiative Provides Scholarships to COVID Impacted Workers](#)

Download Virginia's FREE COVIDWISE Exposure Notifications App:

- COVIDWISE uses Bluetooth Low Energy technology to quickly notify users who have likely been exposed to COVID-19 so you can reduce the risk of infection for your friends and family.
- **Download the free app** [iPhone App Store](#) or [Android Google Play Store](#).
- For more information about COVIDWISE, visit: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/covidwise/>.

FREE COVID-19 Testing Offered Every Tuesday:

- In partnership with the Centreville Labor Resource Center, Healthworks for Northern Virginia is offering FREE COVID-19 testing **every Tuesday from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. for walk-ins and 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. by appointment only.** Location: 5944 Centreville Crest Lane, Centreville, VA.
- **COVID-19 testing is free for uninsured patients.**
- To make an appointment call 703-443-2000, select option #1.

Inova COVID-19 Update:

- Inova Blood Donor Services is currently experiencing a critically low supply of O+ blood and is asking the community to help. Additionally, beginning September 14, all successful blood donations will be tested for COVID-19 antibodies. For more information, and to make an appointment, please visit www.inovablood.org.

Ways to Stay Informed:

- Call our Health Department Call Center at 703-267-3511 with Coronavirus questions; open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays and 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends.
 - Text FFXCOVID to 888777 to receive updates from Fairfax County about COVID-19.
 - Email questions or concerns to ffxcovid@fairfaxcounty.gov. This email account is staffed Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. through 6 p.m.
 - Visit a [web portal for coronavirus](#) that serves as a one-stop online resource for information.
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Reminders!

2020-2021 Flu Season:

With the COVID-19 pandemic still in full force and influenza season now starting, it's more important than ever that everyone do their part to help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses. **We encourage everyone 6 months of age and older to get a flu shot this year and every year.** [Roll Up Your Sleeve Now to Keep Respiratory Illnesses Down.](#) While flu and COVID-19 share many characteristics, one key difference is that there are vaccines to prevent flu. [Learn more about flu vs. COVID-19.](#) For more information about the flu, including the flu vaccine clinic schedule, [click here.](#)

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