

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

## **GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ANNOUNCES NEW GUIDANCE ON COVID-19 COMMUNITY MITIGATION MEASURES, INCLUDING THAT ALL BARS AND RESTAURANTS MUST CLOSE OR OFFER TAKEOUT ONLY**

**16 MARCH 2020**

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott today announced new guidance in response to COVID-19, commonly known as the novel coronavirus. Today's guidance updates the executive order he issued on March 13, which declared a state of emergency in Vermont.

First, as announced at a press conference Monday morning, new guidance further restricts the size of mass gatherings to the lesser of 50 people or 50% of the occupancy of a facility. This restriction applies to all social, recreational or entertainment activities, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, theater, gymnasium, fitness center, library or any other confined indoor or confined outdoor space.

The Governor is also ordering the closure of all bars and restaurants statewide. Establishments can continue to offer food takeout and delivery service. This measure is effective beginning 2 p.m. Tuesday, March 17 and is in effect until April 6, though this could be extended.

These changes reflect the growing trend of confirmed coronavirus cases in Vermont, new recommendations from the CDC, social distancing and mitigation efforts recommended by the Vermont Department of Health, and ongoing discussions with neighboring states.

Additional reductions or prohibitions may be implemented or amended as needed.

Additionally, state government agencies and departments are working to transition the state employee workforce to remote work, while also implementing measures to limit person to person transactions in state offices, like the DMV. Those measures will be combined with 90-day extensions in license and registration renewals.

Most individuals affected by COVID-19 will experience mild to moderate symptoms but some individuals – especially the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions – are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. Through his emergency powers, Governor Scott is implementing additional mitigation strategies to protect those at greatest risk, slow the spread of illness in our communities and minimize the risk to the public.

“I want Vermonters to know we’re continuously evaluating other mitigation steps and we’ll continue to communicate those as they are put into place,” said Governor Scott. “It’s important to remember that in times of crisis we all need to make sacrifices. But Vermonters, and all Americans, have risen to many challenges before, and this time will be no different.”

Details on the specific actions taken are outlined in the Governor’s Executive Order, which is available by [clicking here](#). Addendum 1, reducing gathering size, is available by [clicking here](#) and Addendum 2, closing bars and restaurants, is available by [clicking here](#).