

PRESS RELEASE

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT DETAILS DEVELOPMENT OF COVID-19 TASK FORCE

02 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – At the direction of Governor Phil Scott, Vermont Emergency Management has assembled an interagency task force to support the overall public health response being led by the Vermont Department of Health and further prepare for the likelihood of COVID-19 cases in Vermont.

The task force is charged with ensuring a coordinated statewide response to COVID-19, including for communicating potential community mitigation measures to slow or minimize the spread of the virus if cases occur and accelerate in the state. The group will also work to ensure communications and continuity planning occurs in a coordinated fashion across state government.

“We have plans in place for all hazards in the state of Vermont, including infectious disease. These are plans we update and exercise regularly, but each individual incident requires coordination of plans, resources and responsible agencies,” VEM Director Erica Bornemann said. “This group will be able to develop a COVID-19 specific long-term response plan to support the execution of potential community mitigation measures in the case of an outbreak in Vermont.”

As of March 2, 2020, there were no reported cases of Coronavirus in Vermont. For additional guidance and the latest information from the CDC and Vermont Department of Health, visit healthvermont.gov/covid19 or dial 2-1-1.

The COVID-19 task force includes representatives from Vermont Emergency Management, Vermont Departments of Public Safety, Health, Human Resources, Buildings and General Services, Agencies of Education and Human Services, Vermont National Guard,

Vermont Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Coalition, E-911 Board, Governor's Emergency Preparedness Advisory Council Chair, and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"I want to thank our public health and emergency response teams for the work they've done to monitor and respond to this quickly evolving situation over the last several weeks," said Governor Phil Scott. "As this virus continues to spread globally, ensuring we stay ahead of it with a long-term mitigation plan is an important step in our response process, and I appreciate the expertise and leadership of this interagency group."

Public Guidance from the Vermont Department of Health

Person-to-person spread of the virus is thought to occur mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Much is still unknown about how the virus spreads. Take these everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of germs:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

If you have recently traveled to countries where there is transmission (China, Iran, South Korea, Italy or Japan), please contact the Vermont Department of Health (800-464-4343), which will provide guidance on what to look for, and what to do if you develop symptoms that could be from Coronavirus.

For more details on the state's response,

visit <https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HS-COVID-19-Feb-28-2020-update.pdf>.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ORDERS ACTIVATION OF STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

10 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – To support the ongoing work of the Vermont Department of Health and expand the capacity of state government to coordinate the COVID-19 response, Governor Phil Scott today ordered additional state agencies and departments to activate through the Vermont State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). The activation is in accordance with the State Emergency Management Plan and will organize efforts, as well information sharing and communications with local and state officials.

The SEOC will begin regular daily operations Wednesday, March 11 at 7:30 a.m., and will house the multi-disciplinary team of state agency and department representatives currently assigned. The SEOC will work closely with the Health Department's Health Operations Center to ensure preparedness for the potential of widespread transmission of COVID-19 as well as the implementation of community mitigation measures as they become necessary. The health operations center has been activated since early February.

"While COVID-19 is not widespread in Vermont and the risk to the general population remains low, we can slow its spread by following the Health Department's guidance," said Governor Scott. "With an increasing number of Vermonters being monitored, the first positive test and the likelihood that there will be more cases, ensuring enhanced coordination and information sharing is critical. This step positions the state to scale its response as COVID-19 becomes more prevalent at the community level."

The SEOC opens ahead of, and during, potential and likely emergencies to support prevention, response and recovery efforts. The last major incident managed from the SEOC was the flooding

event of October 31 and November 1, 2019.

For updated information on Coronavirus, visit the Vermont Department of Health website: www.healthvermont.gov/covid.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY TO IMPLEMENT NEW COVID-19 COMMUNITY MITIGATION MEASURES

13 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott today issued an executive order to declare a state of emergency in Vermont in response to COVID-19, commonly known as the new coronavirus.

With this executive order, the Governor can exercise his emergency powers to take important community mitigation steps to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect the most vulnerable.

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.

“The best information we currently have from the experts concludes that slowing it down and preventing as many cases as possible is the best way to make sure the most vulnerable – the very ill and the elderly – get the care they need, which in many cases will include hospitalization, when they need it,” said Governor Scott. “We all have to do our part to slow down spread to protect the ill and older Vermonters who are at risk.”

Through his emergency powers, Governor Scott is implementing additional mitigation strategies to prevent or control outbreaks of COVID-19, to protect those at the greatest risk, to minimize the risk to the public, to maintain the health and safety of Vermonters, and to limit the spread of infection in our communities.

The Governor’s executive order outlines several new actions, including restricting visitor access to hospitals and facilities that house and serve the elderly and very ill; prohibiting non-essential

gatherings of more than 250 people in a single room or a single space; and prohibiting all non-essential out-of-state travel by state employees. More details are included in the executive order.

In consultation with the Vermont Department of Health and Agency of Education, the state will not be requiring K-12 school closures at this time but advised that will be continually re-evaluated and could change if circumstances demonstrate a need. Students absent from school due to concerns arising from COVID-19 will not be penalized, per this order.

"There is no doubt these are difficult steps that, for a few weeks or possibly months, will change what we do in our daily lives and I also need you to know more may be necessary," said Governor Scott.

"But the compassion and commitment of our people and communities will see us through. We have to rise above frustrations and fear. We can't focus on how this may set us back because what it's really about is who we are as Vermonters, and how we're going to lead our state forward."

Governor Scott outlined these actions at a press conference Friday, joined by Commissioner of Health Mark Levine, MD, Director of Emergency Management Erica Bornemann, Human Services Secretary Mike Smith, Education Secretary Dan French, Secretary of Administration Susanne Young, Commissioner of Public Safety Michael Schirling, Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living Commissioner Monica Hutt, Acting Commissioner of Labor Michael Harrington and additional members of the cabinet.

For the most current information – including current case and testing status, the latest guidance for specific groups and informational materials in multiple languages – please regularly visit healthvermont.gov/covid19.

Details on the specific actions taken are outlined in the Governor's Executive Order, which is [available by clicking here](#).

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOV. SCOTT ORDERS ORDERLY CLOSURE OF VERMONT PREK-12 SCHOOLS THIS WEEK

15 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Phil Scott has announced a Continuity of Education Plan for the orderly dismissal of all schools, and cancellation of all school related activities, no later than Wednesday, March 18. This directive, which will be distributed to schools later today, will last through April 6 -- but may very well be extended for a longer period.

Governor Scott's directive will task local districts with three key components to support the State response:

- Food and special needs services for children;
- Collaborating with the state to provide childcare options for healthcare workers and others essential to the response; and
- Systems for ensuring maintenance of education during the initial dismissal; and a continuing education plan if schools are dismissed for an extended period.

No student is required to be in school Monday or Tuesday, if their parents or guardians would prefer to keep them home.

Education professionals should report to work as scheduled to assist in these efforts during this period of school dismissal. Districts are directed to follow workplace hygiene guidance issued by the Vermont Department of Health.

"This decision is based on the best scientific evidence available to the experts at the Vermont Department of Health," said Dr. Mark Levine. "Closing schools at the end of the day Tuesday is another important step to help keep us ahead of the curve, in terms of preventing and reducing spread of COVID-19."

“The orderly dismissal of schools is essential to support both the State’s response to COVID-19 and the needs of children and families across Vermont,” Governor Scott said. “We must ensure children are safe, nourished, and still learning even as the traditional structure of school is disrupted. The work of educators will be essential in this effort.”

Governor Scott continued: “This is a moment of service for all of us. I know that educators across Vermont will do their part to support students and families. I’ve asked the Agency of Education to work with superintendents and local districts to ensure every child continues to receive the services they need from their schools, as well as assignments to take home to continue their academic studies.”

Governor Scott said that, while he hoped schools would only need to be closed through April 6, it is possible they will be closed for a longer period and families and businesses should prepare for this possibility.

MORE ON CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION AND SERVICE PLANS

Governor Scott said, to prepare for the potential for an extended dismissal, each district must have a Continuity of Education Plan that includes:

- Meal service for those who need it;
- Services for children with disabilities and special needs;
- Working with the state to provide district-based options that meet the childcare needs of healthcare workers and other Vermonters essential to the response (EMS, Fire, LEO, National Guard personnel, etc.);
- Ensuring children have trackable work to do when schools are dismissed Tuesday; and

- Remote learning plan that prepares for schools to be closed for a longer period.

School districts that have Continuity of Education Plans in place that meet these directives may elect to close before Wednesday. All schools should be closed for instruction at the end of the school day on Tuesday.

Under the Governor's directive, schools will remain operational for administrators, teachers and staff to sustain essential services and to plan and implement continuity of education through remote learning. The Vermont Department of Health has provided "social distancing" guidance that districts should use to ensure a healthy workplace.

Governor Scott also added that the State understands there will be many unique challenges around specific students or specific programs, and that every district is going to have a different localized approach.

"We need local government – and especially our schools and educators – to lend their capable hands and their enormous hearts in this effort. It is very important to the overall response."

[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](#).

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ORDERS IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILD CARE SYSTEM FOR PERSONNEL ESSENTIAL TO COVID-19 RESPONSE - CHILDCARE CENTERS CLOSED; URGED TO PROVIDE CARE FOR CHILDREN OF VERMONTERS RESPONDING TO CRISIS

17 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott today issued a directive and announced additional guidance for preK-12 schools and childcare centers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Governor directed childcare centers across the state to close normal operations but encourages continued operation exclusively where needed to provide childcare services for workers who are essential to Vermont's ongoing effort in community mitigation of COVID-19.

To support those most critical to Vermont's ongoing COVID-19 response, the Governor has ordered schools to provide childcare for "essential persons" working in response to the crisis. District by district information will be available as those local plans are finalized.

"Teachers, childcare providers and school support staff are going to be as critical to our response as our doctors, nurses and healthcare support staff," said Governor Phil Scott. "That's why, even as we ask the public to step back to help slow the spread of this virus, we are asking others, including our educators and child care providers, to step in and provide a critical service so those who are on the frontlines of our response can continue to care for the sick, protect the public and manage this evolving challenge. I am incredibly proud of the selflessness of these public servants at this time of need."

Essential persons are defined as:

- Providers of healthcare including, but not limited to, workers at clinics, hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), nursing homes, long-term care and post-acute care facilities, respite houses, VNAs, designated agencies and emergency medical services;
- Criminal justice personnel including those in law enforcement, courts, and correctional services;
- Public health employees;
- Firefighters;
- Vermont National Guard personnel called to duty for this response;
- Other first responders and state employees determined to be essential for response to this crisis under the State Emergency Operations Center; and
- Staff and providers of childcare and education services (including custodial and kitchen staff and other support staff) for children of other “essential persons.”

The definition of essential persons may evolve as needed to respond to the crisis.

This new guidance outlines the protocols educators and childcare providers should follow as they develop plans to care for children of “essential persons.” It also addresses facility and class/group size limits, hygiene and cleaning protocols, social distance practices, as well as communications and plans for emergency notifications.

The Governor’s directive provides for continuity of funding for schools and providers during the period of school dismissal and closure to help preserve these important services for Vermonters post-response. It also directs the Agency of Human Services and the Agency of Education to work with childcare providers to identify

and address funding gaps in order to allow for these emergency services for children of “essential persons.”

“This is a rapidly evolving situation and we need our educators and childcare providers to be flexible and creative in their approach, and we’ll do everything we can to support them. At the same time, we need all Vermonters to be patient and supportive of their efforts,” continued Scott. “How each district and region meets these guidelines may look very different depending on where you live, and that is ok. We must work together to meet the challenges we face today and in the days ahead.”

For Schools & Childcare Providers with Questions

Schools and childcare providers should direct questions to the agencies noted in the guidance.

For Parents with Questions

Parents need to know that schools and childcare providers will communicate directly to you regarding locations, hours of operation and eligibility. We ask for your patience as providers and educators work diligently to establish service for children of those essential to the response.

For Additional Details

For additional details, [read the full guidance document here](#) and Governor Scott's [gubernatorial directive here](#).

MEDIA NOTE: Governor Scott and other state officials will host a media availability tomorrow (Wednesday, March 18) to provide an update on overall response and answer questions. To encourage social distancing a call-in option will be available and strongly encouraged. Details to follow.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

TRANSCRIPT: GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT MARCH 18 ADDRESS ON COVID-19 RESPONSE

18 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – At a press conference Wednesday, Governor Phil Scott and members of his administration provided an update on recent mitigation actions in response to COVID-19, including additional details on the closure of schools and child care centers while maintaining child care services for essential persons.

Education Secretary Dan French shared the latest education guidance following the Governor's March 15 directive to [close preK-12 schools statewide](#) and the March 17 directive to [close child care centers statewide](#). Child care centers are encouraged to continue operations exclusively where needed to provide services for [workers who are essential to Vermont's ongoing effort in community mitigation of COVID-19](#).

Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD, gave an update on the state's response to COVID-19 and its mitigation strategy. Dr. Levine stressed the importance of social distancing and other precautionary measures. To view the latest case and testing data, and important health guidance, visit healthvermont.gov/covid19.

View the full press conference at <https://www.facebook.com/GovPhilScott/videos/1039273673119164/>.

Below is a transcript of Governor Scott's remarks:

As we face a growing number of cases of coronavirus here in Vermont and across the country, there is no doubt these are difficult and uncertain times. It's important for everyone to understand our mission which is to slow down the spread of this virus in order to protect those at risk of getting very sick, which includes the elderly

and very ill. It's also important to understand that even though most of us will have mild to moderate symptoms if we get it, we can all transmit it so we all have a role to play in making sure we don't pass it on to those who are at the highest risk.

To further the point, the best information we currently have from the experts learning from other countries says that slowing it down is the best way to make sure we have the care available to those who need it, especially the most vulnerable who may need hospitalization.

This is literally in our hands. We need everyone to accept this reality and be a part of this effort.

Slowing this down—or "Flattening the Curve" as it's called—is the most important thing we can do. These mitigation steps, along with simple steps like washing your hands, staying home when you can and social distancing, can help protect those loved ones, friends and neighbors who are at higher risk.

On Friday, to act on this strategy, I declared a State of Emergency and we've put in place a wide range of measures to slow this pandemic. From limiting public gatherings and restricting visitors at long-term care facilities and hospitals to banning state employee work travel, encouraging and facilitating telework, extending unemployment benefits to those who have to self-isolate and much more.

Sunday, I ordered the dismissal of preK-12 schools which began today. With it came the challenge of coming up with a continuity of education plan so kids can continue to learn.

Monday, I ordered the closure of bars and restaurants statewide though they can still offer takeout.

And yesterday, I directed the closure of licensed child care centers across the state, however, I've asked centers and schools to provide child care services for those deemed essential personnel. This

includes healthcare and public health workers, first responders and those involved in our State Emergency Operations Centers and many others—because we may need to add to this list.

I realize even as we ask many to step back to help slow the spread of this virus, we're asking others, including educators and child care providers, to step up and provide a critical service so those who are on the frontlines can continue to care for the sick, protect the public and manage this evolving challenge.

I know some won't be able to and that's ok, but for those who can, we appreciate your help. Because filling this need by teachers, child care providers and school support staff is critical to our response.

Understanding how challenging but important these directives are, I've also asked Neale Lunderville and Liz Miller to lead this effort to support the Agency of Education with this critical work. Liz, who served under Governor Shumlin, and Neale, who served under Governor Douglas, have a wealth of experience in state government and the private sector and have already hit the ground running. And they're working on projects beyond education as well.

I want to again remind Vermonters that more measures are inevitable. We're already working on a directive for hospitals to postpone elective procedures. More details will come on this and others. I will continue to make decisions based on science, data and the guidance of an incredible team of leaders and experts I have working with me.

This is a moment of service for all of us, from those working on the front lines in healthcare to those who are simply following our social distancing guidance to protect others. We're all in this together and we will get through it. Just like during Irene, we're facing new challenges every day. I know some are feeling scared, worried and overwhelmed—just like after Irene—and we made it through. And we'll do it again because we're Vermont strong.

In times like this, Vermonters rise to the occasion. We help our neighbors; we answer the call of duty and we get creative to solve big problems. I'm seeing it every day, from healthcare workers, state employees, school administrators and business owners; from those adjusting hours at grocery stores and adding curbside service to organizing online card drives to send love to their grandparents who can't have visitors right now and so many more.

These people, with their compassion and commitment to service, show me that we will get through this and we'll do it together.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT HIGHLIGHTS MEASURES TO HELP SUPPORT WORKERS, FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES IMPACTED BY COVID-19

20 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – At a press conference Friday, Governor Phil Scott and members of his administration outlined the recent implementation of initiatives – as well as forthcoming actions – to help provide relief for individuals, families and businesses stemming from the COVID-19 response.

A full transcript of the Governor’s remarks is provided below and you can view the full press conference at <https://www.facebook.com/GovPhilScott/videos/245010629858807/>.

MEDIA NOTE: For more information about specific initiatives, please follow the links inserted throughout the Governor’s transcribed remarks.

Transcript:

I know this is an incredibly difficult time with disruption most of us have never experienced, and there’s a lot of uncertainty, fear and anxiety across the nation. I understand how tough things are right now and will continue to be. But what’s really important is to focus on and complete our first mission: to work together as one community to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Yesterday, when we announced the death of two elderly Vermonters with COVID-19, we had a stark reminder of why the mitigation actions we’re taking are necessary. We have to recognize that many of us will get this virus and while many will have moderate symptoms, we must do all we can to protect our older Vermonters

and those with underlying conditions who are at greater risk for severe outcomes like what we announced last night. The consequences are serious, but the response is literally in our hands.

So, I want to thank Vermonters for their flexibility and help in responding to this pandemic.

From folks picking up supplies for elderly neighbors; to the grocery store crews restocking shelves.

From our restaurant owners, workers, educators and school administrators who've met recent adversity with understanding and a sense of service; to our healthcare workers, nurses and doctors on the front line doing all they can to fight this virus and keep us healthy.

From our Department of Health workers and those from other agencies—many of whom I visited last night at the call center—working second and third shifts to answer questions and track response needs; to state employees—even former employees—stepping up outside their daily jobs to help and do whatever they can.

I want every Vermonter to know I fully understand the incredible economic and emotional toll coronavirus is having and will continue to have on each and every one of us. The measures we're implementing, while disruptive, are based on the best science we have from experts and we're committed to doing all we can to help people weather this storm.

As we continue to work on our first mission to protect the health of Vermonters, we also know financial security is critical for us to recover from this pandemic as well. So, we're here today to announce steps we've taken to support working Vermonters affected by COVID-19 and additional actions we're going to put into place.

Let me be clear: my team and I are fully aware these initiatives are not enough. People are hurting and businesses are at risk. Let me assure you we will pull every lever and turn every dial we can to support folks through this time and look towards economic recovery even while we're closing in on the eye of the storm. The initiatives we're outlining today are small steps but they're just the beginning and we need people to know what resources are available to them right now.

We've already taken several actions to provide some economic relief for Vermonters.

To start, we made [unemployment available to all Vermonters who can't work because of coronavirus](#). We also [waived the work search requirement](#) for those who are laid off or had their hours reduced during this emergency. This of course means many more Vermonters calling the Department of Labor for help and we continue to expand capacity and have simplified the process for Vermonters. This includes an [online form for initial claims and tripling the number of staff in our claims center](#), borrowing people from other agencies and departments to help out, including a generous offer of staff support from the Auditor's office.

With schools and daycares now closed, it's my hope we can extend these benefits to those who need to stay home to care for their kids and we'll work with the legislature to do so. To further protect workers, I'll also ask the legislature to extend job protections for those employees of small businesses who cannot work due to family and medical reasons.

Knowing the burden of healthcare and how utility costs weigh heavily on families, I've directed the Department of Financial Regulation and DVHA to take several actions to help reduce financial pressure where we can and make sure Vermonters continue to have access to care and prescriptions. DFR acted quickly to ensure [Vermonters didn't have to pay out of pocket for COVID-19 testing](#) and directed insurers to allow for a [30-day supply of](#)

prescription medication for patients. Commissioner Pieciak is now working with MVP and Blue Cross Blue Shield to try to make sure no one loses their healthcare coverage during this time. And I've directed DVHA to waive premiums for the Dr. Dynasaur program.

DFR is also working with financial institutions to encourage flexibility for customers, things like waiving fees and delaying loan repayments, which is just the start to providing relief.

On the utility front, my team at the Public Service Department has been working with our utilities to ensure that folks are not disconnected during this emergency due to inability to pay. I'm happy to report that our utilities overwhelmingly stepped up to do the right thing and their good conduct and cooperation was acknowledged in the PUC's recent order to formalize this protection.

I know the steps we've had to take to slow this virus down are already taking an incredible toll on businesses and their employees, especially our bars and restaurants which are so vital to our economy and our culture. Again, we will do everything we can to help these businesses and their employees, but my heart goes out to each and every one of them as they face the brunt of this right now.

We've acted on some other opportunities to provide relief and we will do more.

For instance, yesterday I eased liquor laws to allow restaurants—which can only offer takeout and delivery to help mitigate the spread of the virus—to sell alcoholic beverages as part of takeout service. While this may seem trivial, I wanted to allow as much flexibility as possible while their dine-in service is closed.

We've also requested** a disaster declaration from the Small Business Administration which would make emergency loans available to Vermont small businesses. To supplement this, we'll be working with the legislature to create a business loan program

through VEDA, as we did in the immediate response to Tropical Storm Irene.

As we work to expand UI benefits, we're also working with the legislature to make sure UI experience ratings are not negatively affected.

ACCD is also providing resources to support businesses with technical assistance, regular guidance and more at accd.vermont.gov.

Again, we know this is not nearly enough and there will be much more coming in the future to help our small businesses—the backbone of our economy.

While working to provide some economic relief, we're also working to ease the regulatory burden and simplify government services in ways that will help us better respond to this crisis.

For example, the Department of Motor Vehicles shifted to [online, phone and mail services](#), and to help take some of the stress off, I directed them to grant a [90-day extension for all license and registration renewals](#).

We know two areas of tremendous need right now are in our health and communications systems. We've already [expanded telehealth services](#)—including for mental health needs—and we'll also work to give our healthcare providers more flexibility on licensing, staffing and referrals and ease ANR's procedural requirements to accommodate surge capacity needs at healthcare facilities.

And we're looking to ease up on barriers to communications infrastructure to make sure those systems aren't interrupted.

Additionally, the Public Service Department is developing an interactive map of free Wi-Fi hotspots to support our students and workers now learning and working remotely.

On the federal level, we continue to assess what's being passed and being considered in Washington, which will provide more relief for workers and businesses. I want to thank our congressional delegation—Senators Leahy and Sanders and Congressman Welch—who have been so supportive and taking my numerous calls each and every time I make them.

I also want to thank the legislature—particularly leadership—who have been standing ready to act on our needs in this crisis and who we will continue to work closely with on several of the proposals outlined.

As I've already made clear, these are just the first steps of many to come that we think can make a difference for Vermont, but we know—I know—that many more will be needed and we'll take those steps together. We'll take each challenge as it comes, calmly and with the best interest of all Vermonters in mind. Each and every decision we make will be informed by the best science and with information from subject matter experts to protect Vermonters.

I want to close by again commenting on how proud I am of the people of our state and how encouraged I am with what I've seen as we pull together. Little things like neighbors encouraging others to get takeout from our restaurants, businesses donating masks and personal protective gear to hospitals, bus drivers delivering meals and learning materials on the routes they used to pick up students on and folks taking a moment to thank the custodians for working overtime to keep our spaces clean and safe.

Just like Irene or the Great Depression of the 30s or the flood of 1927, we will get through this and we'll get through it together.

- End Transcript -

****Following Friday's press conference, the Small Business Administration approved Vermont's request, meaning small business owners suffering economic injury due the COVID-19 pandemic can apply for Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loans,**

offering up to \$2 million in assistance per business. [Click here to read more.](#)

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ANNOUNCES ECONOMIC INJURY DISASTER LOANS AVAILABLE TO SMALL BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY COVID-19

20 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott today announced Vermont small business owners suffering economic injury due the COVID-19 pandemic can apply for Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loans, following a statewide disaster declaration.

SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) offer up to \$2 million in assistance per business, providing economic support to overcome temporary loss of revenue. EIDLs may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact. The interest rate is 3.75% for small businesses and 2.75% for private non-profit organizations, which are also eligible for EIDLs.

"I want every Vermonter to know I fully understand the incredible economic and emotional toll coronavirus is having, and will continue to have, on each and every one of us. People are hurting and businesses are at risk. Let me assure you, we will pull every lever and turn every dial we can to support folks through this time and look towards economic recovery even while we're closing in on the eye of the storm," said Governor Scott. "These loans offer one initial step in helping our small businesses weather this crisis as we continue to measure the impact it will have, and I want to thank the SBA team at our District Office for their support."

Scott said that he hoped these loans helped businesses recover, however, he encouraged businesses to seek professional business counseling and technical assistance before taking on additional debt. Vermont has a robust business technical assistance provider

network. More information about these resources can be found online at <https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/resources>.

“The SBA wants to thank Governor Scott and his team at the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for their hard work. They immediately reached out to Vermont small businesses to quantify the impact and gather the required documentation allowing SBA to issue this Economic Impact Disaster Declaration,” said SBA New England Regional Administrator Wendell Davis.

“Even if the Coronavirus has not taken an immediate impact on your business, you should apply as soon as possible. Given the unknown duration of the pandemic, a few days from now it may start affecting your business and you will be glad you already applied for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan,” said Darcy Carter, SBA Vermont District Office Director.

For small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private nonprofit organizations, the SBA offers EIDLs to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. EIDL assistance is available regardless of whether the business suffered any physical property damage.

SBA offers loans with long-term repayments in order to keep payments affordable, up to a maximum of 30 years. Terms are determined on a case-by-case basis, based upon each borrower’s ability to repay. Small businesses with credit available elsewhere may not be eligible.

To apply online, visit <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/>. Documents that may be requested when applying include recent federal tax return, profit-and-loss statement and balance sheet.

For more information, call the SBA disaster assistance customer service center at 1-800-659-2955 (TTY: 1-800-877-8339) or e-mail disastercustomerservice@sba.gov.

For local SBA information, call 802-828-4422.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ANNOUNCES NEW COVID-19 COMMUNITY MITIGATION MEASURES - DIRECTS THE CLOSURE OF CLOSE-CONTACT BUSINESSES AND FURTHER RESTRICTS THE SIZE OF MASS GATHERINGS TO 10 OR LESS

21 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott today announced additional community mitigation measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

While most individuals affected by the Coronavirus will experience mild to moderate symptoms, others – especially the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions – are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. Governor Scott and public health officials have set a strategy aimed at protecting those at greatest risk, slowing the spread of illness in our communities and minimizing the risk to the public.

In consultation with the Department of Health, the Governor has determined it is necessary to prohibit in-person operations at close-contact businesses, meaning those unable to comply with guidelines for social distancing. That's why Governor Scott has directed gymnasiums, fitness centers and similar exercise facilities, hair salons and barbers, nail salons, spas and tattoo parlors to close all in-person operations no later than 8:00 p.m. on Monday, March 23.

"As I've said throughout this crisis, I will continue act to slow the spread of this virus in Vermont because we must protect those at greatest risk of serious illness and ensure they can get the care they need, when they need it," said Governor Scott. "We will continue to make decisions based on science and guidance from our experts. I don't make these decisions lightly and my heart goes out to these

workers and small business owners who are feeling the negative effects.”

On Friday, Governor Scott outlined initial actions his administration has taken to support individuals, families and businesses through this challenging time.

On March 13, Governor Scott [declared a State of Emergency](#) and has since directed numerous mitigation strategies to reduce close contact among individuals, including the temporary [closure of bars and restaurants](#), [schools](#) and [child care facilities](#) (other than those providing services for the children of essential personnel) and [DMV district offices](#); and [postponing all non-essential medical procedures](#).

At this time, all other businesses not named may remain open, but must work to implement CDC and the Vermont Department of Health guidance related to COVID-19, including:

- Maintaining a distance of six feet between people;
- Ensuring employees practice appropriate hygiene measures, including regular, thorough handwashing;
- Ensuring that employees who are sick remain home; and
- Regularly cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The addendum requires all public and private enterprises to post appropriate notices for compliance with the above listed recommendations.

Governor Scott has also further reduced the allowable size of non-essential mass gatherings, which are now limited to no more than 10 people at the same time in a single space.

A "non-essential gathering" does not include normal operations at airports, bus or railway stations where persons may be in transit; typical office, construction, manufacturing, grocery, food

production, retail and retail banking, professional or other employment environments; gatherings of the press; or operations of the Vermont Judiciary or General Assembly consistent with their constitutional authority.

“There is no doubt these are difficult times, and my administration – with the help of the legislature and Vermont’s Congressional delegation – will do all we can to help those impacted by this virus or these measures,” Governor Scott added. “I’m proud of the people of our state and how they’ve pull together. The strengthen of Vermonsters is how I know we’ll get through it. I encourage everyone who is able, to join this movement to make a difference in this time of crisis.”

For details on these new measures, [click here to read the full addendum](#).

Commercial entities, employers, event sponsors and others with questions should contact the State Emergency Operations Center at 800-347-0488.

For the latest information and guidance relating to Vermont’s COVID-19 response visit www.healthvermont.gov/covid19.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ANNOUNCES PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT WI-FI HOT SPOT MAP TO HELP VERMONTERS ACCESS INTERNET DURING COVID-19

23 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. - Governor Phil Scott today announced the Vermont Department of Public Service has released an interactive Public Wi-Fi Hot Spot Map to help Vermonters connect to publicly available internet service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Internet connectivity is an important resource for Vermonters during this crisis, which is keeping us physically distanced from one another," said Governor Phil Scott. "As we're asking many to work and learn remotely, these public Wi-Fi points are especially critical to keeping workers and students connected if they do not have access at home."

The map includes the location of the Wi-Fi hot spots and pertinent information about how to access them, including places where users can access Wi-Fi from outside the building or in a parked vehicle to encourage social distancing.

The Department received assistance from libraries, schools and municipal governments in creating the map, as well as support from the Agency of Digital Services, the Department of Libraries, the Agency of Commerce & Community Development, the Agency of Education, the Vermont Center for Geographic Information and the Department of Health.

"I extend my sincere gratitude to these organizations for their assistance, without which the Department would have been unable to put together this map," said Public Service Commissioner June Tierney.

The map can be found
at <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/announcements/public-wifi-hotspots-ver...>.

Additional connectivity resources can be found
at publicservice.vermont.gov/content/new-connectivity-resources-support-you-during-covid-19-state-emergency-vermont.

The map will be updated as new information becomes available.
Vermonters are encouraged to send information about Wi-Fi hot spots to psd.telecom@vermont.gov.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ORDERS BUSINESSES AND NON-PROFITS TO IMPLEMENT WORK FROM HOME PROCEDURES

23 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott today announced additional mitigation measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In consultation with the Department of Health, Governor Scott has directed all businesses and not-for-profit entities - to the maximum extent possible - to put into place telecommuting or work-from-home procedures, no later than 8:00 p.m. on Monday, March 23.

"We're now entering a new phase in this fight to flatten the curve," said Governor Scott. "Vermonters should also expect additional steps in the coming days that will further reduce contact and direct more to stay home in order to keep everyone safe."

This order follows [further reductions to the allowable size of non-essential mass gatherings](#) to no more than 10 people and the [closure of all close-contact businesses](#), both announced Saturday, March 21.

At this time, any entities not required to close under a previous order, or unable to implement work-from-home procedures, must implement – and publicly post – CDC and the Vermont Department of Health guidance related to COVID-19, including:

- Maintaining a distance of six feet between people;
- Ensuring employees practice appropriate hygiene measures, including regular, thorough handwashing;
- Ensuring that employees who are sick remain home; and

- Regularly cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The Governor has also said Vermonters should prepare for a forthcoming announcement on further restrictions and a stay-at-home directive. He further advised all Vermonters, "All of us should already be taking personal responsibility to physically distance ourselves from others and to follow the guidance in place to help keep each other healthy and safe."

For details on these new measures, [click here to read the full addendum.](#)

Commercial entities, employers, event sponsors and others with questions should contact the State Emergency Operations Center at 800-347-0488.

For the latest information and guidance relating to Vermont's COVID-19 response, visit www.healthvermont.gov/covid19.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ISSUES A “STAY HOME, STAY SAFE” ORDER, DIRECTS ADDITIONAL CLOSURES

24 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott today issued a “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order and directed the closure of in-person operations for all non-essential businesses.

These restrictive measures are in place to minimize all unnecessary activities outside the home to slow the spread of this virus and protect the public. These actions were implemented in consultation with the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Health and his evaluation of the latest data.

“I want to be very clear about this: We need everyone to limit activities outside of the home and to practice social distancing at all times to slow the spread of this highly contagious and potentially deadly virus,” said Governor Phil Scott. “We all must do our part to slow the spread of COVID-19 to minimize infections - particularly for those who are elderly or have underlying chronic health conditions - and prevent it from overwhelming our healthcare facilities. The more Vermonters who take this seriously and stay home, the faster we can return to normal.”

The Governor’s order directs Vermonters to stay at home, leaving only for essential reasons, critical to health and safety. If leaving the home, Vermonters should adhere to social distancing policies, including remaining six feet from others (except for those with whom they share a home) and thoroughly and regularly washing hands.

Effective March 25, 2020 at 5:00 p.m., all businesses and not-for-profit entities not expressly exempted in the order must suspend all in-person business operations. Operations that can be conducted

online or by phone, or sales that can be facilitated with curbside pickup or delivery only, can continue.

The Order provides exemptions for businesses and entities providing services or functions deemed critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security. This includes – but is not limited to – health care operations; retail serving essential human needs, like grocery stores, pharmacies and hardware stores; fuel products and supply; news media; maintenance of critical infrastructure; and transportation and critical manufacturing sectors. For a full list, please review the order at <https://governor.vermont.gov/content/addendum-6-executive-order-01-20>.

All exempt entities must still strictly adhere to CDC and Vermont Department of Health guidance to ensure social distancing and proper hygiene and disinfecting is occurring. All exempt entities conducting retail operations should also facilitate curbside pick-up or delivery to the extent possible.

“I fully recognize the emotional, financial and economic impact of these decisions, but based on the best science we have available, these measures are necessary,” said Governor Scott. “I need all Vermonters to understand that the more quickly and closely we follow these stay-at-home measures, the faster and safer we can get through this and get our daily lives, and our economy, moving again. I have tremendous faith in Vermonters and our ability to follow these guidelines, to save lives and support each other throughout – even as we are physical separated.”

Governor Scott declared a State of Emergency on March 13, and has since directed a number of mitigation strategies in order to reduce close contact among individuals, including visitor restrictions for long-term care facilities and other health facilities; the closure of bars and restaurants, schools and day care centers and close contact businesses; limiting the size of mass gatherings; postponing

all non-essential medical procedures; and ordering all businesses to implement telecommuting wherever possible.

The Stay Home, Stay Safe order will be in effect until April 15, 2020, though may be extended or shortened as needed. For full details, please [click here to read the full addendum](#).

Commercial entities, non-profits, employers and others with questions about acceptable continuation of business operations should contact the Agency of Commerce and Community Development via this online form: <https://bit.ly/covid-vt-business-operations>.

For the latest information and guidance relating to Vermont's COVID-19 response, visit <http://www.healthvermont.gov/covid19>.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT DISMISSES SCHOOLS FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION FOR REMAINDER OF 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

26 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. - Governor Phil Scott today [directed schools to remain dismissed](#) through the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Districts will close schools for in-person instruction and be required to implement continuity of learning plans for remote learning. This extends the Governor's previous directive dismissing PreK-12 schools from March 18 to April 6.

This decision was made in consultation with the Vermont Department of Health and the Agency of Education in the continued effort to slow the spread of COVID-19. To minimize disruption to students' learning, the Governor's order directs school districts to come up with plans for distance learning by April 13.

"The education of our students and the bonding and learning experiences they have at schools are tremendously important, so I fully appreciate the impact and difficulty of this decision," said Governor Phil Scott. "I also recognize it will be challenging for some schools to implement remote learning through the end of the year. But I'm encouraged by the creativity I've seen from administrators, educators and parents already, which is why I know, together, they can rise to the occasion."

Governor Scott also noted that some school districts have also set up creative and critically needed programs to offer onsite care for their students whose parents are working on the frontlines in this response. "These educators and staff who are finding ways to support these families have been critical to our COVID-19 response efforts and I am so proud and appreciative of their hard work, creative can-do attitude and their willingness to step up in this

moment of service. These educators, and the staff supporting them, represent the very best of our public education system.”

The Agency of Education will provide technical guidance to districts on how to implement continuity of learning plans by the end of the week, specifically looking to address challenges around equitable access to learning opportunities, Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students with disabilities, continuation of school meals, and school attendance and school calendar requirements.

The Department for Children and Families will also provide updated reimbursement provisions for providers who are not currently offering services and for providers who are delivering child care through this health crisis.

Read the full directive

here: <https://governor.vermont.gov/content/directive-5-continuity-learning-planning-pursuant-eo-01-20>

For the latest information and guidance relating to Vermont’s COVID-19 response, visit www.healthvermont.gov/covid19.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

TRANSCRIPT: GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT MARCH 27 ADDRESS ON SCHOOL DISMISSAL

27 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. - At a press conference Friday, Governor Phil Scott and members of his administration provided an update on the [Governor's directive to dismiss schools for in-person instruction for the remainder of 2019-2020 school year.](#)

"The education of our kids, along with the bonding and learning experiences they get at school, are incredibly important, so I fully understand and appreciate the impact this will have on our kids individually and families across Vermont," said Governor Scott. "But from my vantage point, I believe it's the right decision because it's for the health of our kids, communities and the entire state. That's why we're doing this—to keep people safe, to slow the spread and to save lives."

[Click here to view the full press conference](#) and see a full transcript of Governor Scott's remarks below.

For the latest information and guidance relating to Vermont's COVID-19 response, visit www.healthvermont.gov/covid19.

Transcript:

Good morning. Thank you all for continuing to tune into these important updates.

As this pandemic continues, the health and safety of all Vermonters is my top priority. Every decision I've made is guided by what's best for public health based on the best science we have available. And, as I've said, as the virus continues to spread and we learn more about COVID-19, Vermonters can expect we may have to take further action to help slow it down.

Slowing the spread of infection is critical to making sure we can protect the vulnerable, meaning the elderly and others who are at risk for serious illness and, in too many cases, even death.

These steps are also necessary to keep our healthcare system from being overwhelmed like we're seeing right before our eyes in other states like New York. What we're doing is important to the health and safety of all Vermonters.

To help reach these goals, on March 15, I ordered the temporary dismissal of schools. While we hoped this would be enough, that has not proven to be the case.

So, working closely with the experts at our Department of Health and the Agency of Education, I came to the difficult decision to extend dismissal and close in-person instruction at schools for the remainder of the school year. However, to make sure our kids continue learning, I'm asking districts to complete plans for continued education through remote learning so we're ready to go April 13.

I know this news is incredibly difficult. Let's face it: It's disappointing, frustrating and it's just plain sad for kids, parents, teachers and all school employees. My heart goes out to all of you. It's going to be hard. I know that.

The education of our kids, along with the bonding and learning experiences they get at school, are incredibly important, so I fully understand and appreciate the impact this will have on our kids individually, and families across Vermont.

But from my vantage point, I believe it's the right decision because it's for the health of our kids, communities and the entire state. That's why we're doing this—to keep people safe, to slow the spread, to save lives.

The sobering reality is: Before too long, each of us will know someone who has lost their life from this virus. That's why we must come together and support each other to get through this.

Even with this decision, it's my hope that with the mitigation steps we've taken, our children will be able to return at the end of the year for activities like graduation. But we won't make that decision until we're certain it's safe.

For now, we need to use our creativity to find ways to deliver quality remote learning for our students through the end of the school year.

I want to thank school administrators, superintendents, educators and staff around the state who are working hard to adapt to incredibly challenging circumstances. The fact is, we need your help and we appreciate your public service.

Childcare providers will also remain closed but will still be able to provide care for the children of those workers critical to the state's response. I've been impressed with school districts who have worked very hard to set up creative and critically needed programs to offer care for students whose parents are working on the frontlines. These educators and staff, who are finding ways to support these families, have been so important to our COVID-19 response efforts.

I'm proud and appreciative of their hard work, creative can-do attitude and their willingness to step up in this moment of service. These educators, and the staff supporting them, represent the very best of our public education system.

We find ourselves at a time when there's no road map available. So, our education leaders, parents and kids—and all Vermonters for that matter—have never been asked to do anything quite like this. But these times require all of us to think outside of the box to find creative solutions, and we must work together to ensure we still get the best outcomes possible for our kids.

I want to assure you, me and my team are here to help every step of the way as we navigate these uncharted waters together. Our way out of this is using the best information we have, common sense about what we want and what we need and working together in service to Vermonters.

The Agency of Education will be providing technical guidance to districts by the end of this week and Secretary French is with us on the phone today to answer questions.

I want to thank the many education leaders, teachers, parents, staff and others who've stepped up during this difficult time. I know this is not easy. But your commitment to public service and your ability to adapt is exactly what we need.

It's what makes us Vermont strong—and united as well. We will get through this and we'll do it together.

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ISSUES ORDER ON TRAVEL AND LODGING RESTRICTIONS TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH “STAY HOME, STAY SAFE” ORDER AND NEW CDC GUIDANCE

30 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott [today ordered](#) additional restrictions on travelers arriving in Vermont and announced additional guidance for the lodging industry to enhance compliance with his Stay Home, Stay Safe order.

The measures under the Stay Home, Stay Safe order, effective March 25, were implemented in consultation with the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Health to minimize all unnecessary activities outside the home to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus and protect the public.

Governor Scott is taking additional action to encourage compliance with newly released CDC guidance around interstate travel from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, which advised residents of those states to refrain from non-essential domestic travel for 14 days.

In light of the significant risk posed by the further spread of this dangerous virus to Vermonters and the viability of Vermont’s health care system, this new order directs residents and non-residents coming from outside the state for anything other than an essential purpose to home-quarantine for 14 days and strongly discourages travel to Vermont by those located in COVID-19 “hot spots.” Details and exemptions are outlined in [Addendum 7](#).

“We all must do our part to slow the spread of COVID-19 to minimize infections – particularly for those who are elderly or have underlying chronic health conditions – and prevent it from overwhelming our healthcare facilities,” said Governor Scott. “I

understand there will be some who need to travel from other states to return to a home in Vermont or support a vulnerable family member. But we need anyone entering Vermont to abide by this 14-day self-isolation directive, and then follow Vermont's Stay Home, Stay Safe order while here. We must work together to slow the spread of this virus."

The Governor's order also provides additional guidance to lodging providers to ensure compliance with the Stay Home, Stay Safe order, which suspended lodging operations.

The order makes clear that lodging facilities – which includes hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, inns, short term rentals (e.g. VRBO, Homeaway, Airbnb, etc.), and all public and private camping facilities and RV parks – are to be closed except for stated exemptions when supporting the state's COVID-19 response. Additionally, the Governor has suspended online lodging reservations.

Under this order, the Vermont State Police and local law enforcement will monitor lodging providers for compliance and work with the Attorney General's Office on additional compliance measures if needed.

Addendum 7 provides lodging operations with additional details on requirements, and state agencies will also be reaching out to these businesses directly.

"These are incredibly difficult times, but the more closely we can follow all of the CDC and Health Department guidance, the more effectively we can slow the spread and save lives," said Governor Scott. "I know we're asking a lot of business owners, workers, school employees, parents, students and all Vermonters. But your sacrifice is not for nothing. If we do this now, we can slow the spread of this deadly virus and keep many of our neighbors and loved ones alive and healthy."

The Stay Home, Stay Safe order and today's updated travel and lodging order are in effect until April 15, 2020, though may be extended or shortened as needed. For full details, [please see Addendum 7 by clicking here.](#)

For the latest information and guidance relating to Vermont's COVID-19 response, visit [www.healthvermont.gov/covid19.](http://www.healthvermont.gov/covid19)

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

GOVERNOR SCOTT CALLS ON VERMONTERS TO SUPPORT COVID-19 RESPONSE

31 MARCH 2020

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott is calling all Vermonters into service with the launch of a new website allowing people to sign up for volunteer assistance to support the state's response to COVID-19: <https://vermont.gov/volunteer>.

This website directs those with medical and healthcare skills to the Medical Reserve Corp (MRC), and those with other needed skills to a quick registration process to sign up to help.

"I am asking every Vermonter to dig deep and find a way to give more in this incredibly challenging time," said Governor Phil Scott. "As we prepare for a surge in COVID-19 cases expected in the coming weeks, it will require each and every one of us to do our part to ease the burden on our health care system, the struggles of those less fortunate, and, ultimately, to save the lives of our friends and neighbors."

Medical Reserve Corp Volunteers Needed to Bolster Existing Health Care Workers

Those with medical experience or other health care background and the ability to volunteer are needed to bolster the ranks of Vermont's current health care workforce.

The [state's volunteer website](#) directs these individuals to Vermont's MRC units, community-based groups of volunteers who can supplement local emergency, health care provider staff and public health resources. This is needed because Vermont's existing health care workers are going above and beyond to respond to this challenge as it unfolds, and they are going to need reinforcements.

“In every health care facility in Vermont, staff have been working extraordinary hours, performing herculean tasks under great pressure and with limited resources,” said Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD. “Knowing we have qualified volunteers ready to serve will help our current health care workers and strengthen Vermont’s response. We are all in this together.”

The Vermont Medical Reserve Corps is seeking these qualified and experienced volunteers:

- Licensed and certified health care professionals;
- People with mental health, or other types of clinical or professional experience;
- Health care administrative experience, such as with medical data entry or language translators; and
- People who have worked with displaced individuals, such as homeless shelter programs.

State officials emphasize this effort is about drawing more skilled personnel, such as retirees or those not currently employed in the healthcare field, into the response and not about redirecting existing healthcare workers.

Vermont has eased licensing requirements for the purposes of aiding this emergency response. Individuals who are licensed in other states or who were previously licensed should visit the Health Department website and [review the guide on emergency licensure](#).

Other Volunteer Workers and Donations Also Needed to Strengthen Vermont’s Response

Other individuals who do not have medical or healthcare backgrounds but are willing to volunteer their time in Vermont’s response effort can register through the [state’s volunteer web portal](#) and indicate their expertise and availability.

The State expects to draw upon many skills to meet the challenge of serving those affected by COVID-19, potentially including drivers, food service, construction, IT, security, skilled trades and more.

In addition to volunteering their time, Vermonters can also contribute to blood banks, food banks, and other emergency supply efforts. The American Red Cross of Northern New England faces a severe blood shortage and many local food banks and other community organizations are in need of support and donations of supplies. In addition to volunteering, Vermonters can also give back in the following ways:

- Donate PPE: Donations of N95 masks, medical and industrial grade or surgical masks can be brought to your nearest State Police Barracks. You can find the location nearest to you here: <https://vsp.vermont.gov/stations>.
- Give blood: Visit the American Red Cross to learn how to safely donate blood: <https://www.redcross.org/local/new-hampshire-vermont.html>.
- Support your local Food Bank. Donate online at vtfoodbank.org or you can text GIVEHEALTH to 85511. If you're in need of help, please visit vtfoodbank.org/gethelp.

Governor Scott is calling on all Vermonters to support these critical needs. "Our state is at its best when Vermonters pull together to help each other. The coming weeks will be very difficult, but united in common purpose, we will face, fight and defeat this virus – and emerge stronger together," he said.