



**Summary of Governor Northam's Briefing on COVID-19
05-28-2020**

TOPLINE UPDATES

- Over 100,000 Americans have died of COVID-19, including 1,338 Virginians.
- **Starting tomorrow, May 29, face coverings will be required for everyone inside public places.**
- Virginia's request to extend Title 32 status has been approved by the federal government.
 - Under Title 32 of the United States code, the federal government is able to continue funding the presence of the National Guard in Virginia's response to COVID-19.

FORWARD VIRGINIA PLAN: Phase One - Began Friday, May 15th

- Tomorrow, May 29, all of Virginia, including Richmond City, Accomack County, and the Northern Virginia region will have entered Phase 1.
 - All Phase One guidelines will apply throughout the state.
- Rita Davis, Council to the Governor, clarified the ways in which the face covering mandate will be enforced:
 - The enforcement mechanism in EO 63 is the same statutory process through which ALL Orders of Public Health Emergency are enforced.
 - This is not a new process, nor is it unique to Executive Order 63.
 - Title 32.1 of the VA Health Code provides two avenues by which the Department of Health can enforce orders made by the State Health Commissioner.
 - Civil process by which an injunction is obtained.
 - Warrant issued by a magistrate.
 - Only "gross, egregious, and repeated" violation of the order should rise to the attention of the VDH and law enforcement.
 - Law enforcement should only become involved in cases of confrontation or other applicable violations of the law in a place of business.
 - The Governor does not expect business owners to enforce EO 63, but rather encourages them to take the opportunity to educate non complying patrons on the importance of wearing a mask.
 - Each individual should be responsible for making sure that they are wearing a face covering in public.
 - Governor Northam encourages all Virginians to wear a face covering simply because it is the right thing to do to protect yourself and others.
- Virginia will remain in Phase One for a minimum of another week.
 - Areas that delayed entering Phase One may still enter Phase Two with the rest of the state next Friday, provided that their data trends show that they are ready.
- Governor Northam continues to stress that Virginia's economy cannot recover until the health crisis has been controlled.

HOSPITALS, PPE AND TESTING

- Percent of positive tests continues to trend down.
- Testing capacity is continuing to increase.
 - Virginia's testing is a combination of public testing events, and tests available at doctor's offices, pharmacies and clinics.
- 39 CVS Pharmacies across Virginia will be providing testing via self-swab kits.
- 200 new shipments of PPE have been distributed throughout the state's health districts this week.
- Another shipment from Virginia's contract with Northfield arrived yesterday.
 - This included 2 million N95 masks, and 5 million pairs of gloves.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

- Executive Order 51, which declared a state of emergency for Virginia in response to COVID-19, has been amended to no longer expire on June 10.
 - The order is in effect indefinitely or until amended or rescinded.
- The state of emergency facilitates a number of the state's response efforts, for example:
 - Medicaid funding of telehealth
 - Deployment of the National Guard
- This extension allows for greater flexibility in responding to the health crisis.

BEACHES

- Tomorrow, all public beaches in Virginia will open for recreational activity.
- "Virginia Beach's plan for social distancing and sanitation practices should be a model for other beaches to follow."
- As beaches re-open, the following guidelines will be in place:
 - No gatherings over 10 people
 - No tents
 - No alcohol
 - No group sports

COVID-19 CASES, STATISTICS AND MODELING

- Total cases: 41,401
 - 1,152 new in the last 24 hour reporting period.
- Total deaths: 1,338
 - 57 new in the last 24 hour reporting period.

OTHER TOPICS

- This weekend marks the one year anniversary of the Virginia Beach Municipal Center shooting.
- NASCAR and horse racing will be allowed to run single-day events under strict guidelines:
 - Closed to the public
 - No spectators
- Microsoft will open a new research development hub in Reston, VA, creating 1,500 new jobs.
- Due to the slow re-opening and high demand for DMV appointments, Virginians whose drivers licenses expire before June 31, 2020 will now have until August 31, 2020 to renew.

Next briefing: Tuesday, June 2 at 2:00PM.

NOTE: This is an informal and timely summary of the Governor's live press briefing. To access recordings of the briefings, visit <https://www.facebook.com/GovernorVA/>. To access the Governor's official news releases, visit <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/news-releases/>.