

3/11/21 Municipal & First Responder Call Notes

I. **Welcome and Introduction:** VEM Director Erica Bornemann

- Welcome participants on the call.
- This is the weekly call for first responders, EMDs, RPCs, and municipal officials.
- The next call will be on Thursday, March 18th at 2pm. The invitation will go out on Monday, March 15th.
- The meeting invitations include a link to a survey we use to guide our talking points. The survey will only capture one question per response. To ask multiple questions, fill out the survey multiple times. The survey link will not change week to week.
- On today's call we will hear from DEPRIP Director Dan Batsie and Fire Academy Chief Pete Lynch. In addition, we have Vermont State Police Captain Mike Manley and EMS Chief Will Moran available to answer questions. We will be providing you all an overview of the State's response to COVID-19 and we will have time for additional questions at the end of the call.
- FAQs will be updated as needed and can be found at: <https://vem.vermont.gov/coronavirus>
- From this page you can also click on the ["Call Notes" section](#) on the left-hand side where we will post notes from this call. It will be added to the list of First Responder Notes.

AGENDA:

- I. **Intro/call format**
- II. **COVID-19/VDH overview**
- III. **SEOC overview/VEM comments**
- IV. **Q&A with participants**

II. **COVID-19 Overview/VDH Comments:** HOC Incident Commander and DEPRIP Director Dan Batsie

- **Overall update on COVID-19 in Vermont**
 - As of late last evening, total COVID-19 cases in Vermont: 16,500
 - The test positivity rate is 1.7%, up from 1.4% a week ago, but lower than a couple months ago
 - 4 deaths in the last week, 23 in the last month
 - 28 people are in the hospital today
 - 6 individuals are in the ICU
 - No one is on ventilators
- **Update on outbreaks and situations**
 - 99 total outbreaks, this has been a stable number of outbreaks.
- **Testing/tracing updates**
 - Priority testing is available for public safety providers
 - 19 daily test sites throughout Vermont today
- **Vaccination updates**
 - 133,988 individuals vaccinated
 - 71,900 have started vaccination
 - 24.4% of eligible population is vaccinated.
 - Completed first two age bands
 - 16 and over with high risk conditions can get vaccinated as of today (3/11/2021)
 - Started vaccinating educators
 - EMS stepping up with homebound vaccinations
 - Opened-up homebound vaccination call center. Nearly 300 patients have been identified through this process in the week it has been opened.
 - Vermonters 55 years old and older with [certain high-risk conditions](#) could register starting this past Monday, and those aged 16-54 with the same conditions can register starting today.
 - Beginning next week, the Department of Health will hold vaccination clinics for Black, Indigenous, and of color Vermonters who meet the above eligibility criteria and their households.

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- We received a question on whether municipal employees not old enough for the current age banding are eligible for vaccination.
 - Town municipal workers are not currently eligible unless they are part of a public safety organization.
 - **EMS updates**
 - We received multiple questions about whether the latest guidance for vaccinated individuals will impact guidance for fire and EMS agencies.
 - We will update the guidance the moment we are able to. At this point in time, we are not able to gather for training and other activities. We are waiting for guidance from the Governor.
 - The UK variant has been identified in Chittenden County.
 - The procedures we have asked everyone to take are relevant against the UK variant.
 - Please get your vaccine.
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III. SEOC Overview/VEM Comments: VEM Director Erica Bornemann

- **SEOC status:** The SEOC remains activated every weekday from 0800 until 1600. On weekends the SEOC is in monitoring status, meaning the watch officer is the point of contact for any resource needs that arise. The SEOC is entirely virtual.
 - **Recent policy changes:**
 - On Friday, Governor Scott announced that vaccinated individuals can gather with other vaccinated individuals, plus one other non-vaccinated household.
 - On Monday, the [CDC published new guidance](#) mirroring this announcement.
 - The SEOC continues to support Vermont's vaccination campaign, especially as the state's vaccine allocation increases. The SEOC is helping the Department of Health locate vaccination sites and coordinate other logistics. There continues to be significant support for school staff vaccination, which started this week.
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IV. Questions from Call Participants

Question: When registering for COVID-19 vaccination, could you clarify what information is collected from people with a medical diagnosis and how it's used and stored? I have had questions regarding how the private health information is being protected and who will be able to access it.

Answer: This question will be followed-up on.

Question: When will there be reimbursement for services supporting PODs?

Answer: Invoice the state when you are ready. If you are not under contract we can talk about that further.

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Question: Does the "gathering" allowed between a fully vaccinated person and one unvaccinated person mean gathering without masks and distancing?

Answer: We are still suggesting social distancing. In general, if there is any question about people being vaccinated, wear masks. Dan Batsie will follow up on this question as well.