

6/18/20 Municipal & First Responder Call Outline and Talking Points

I. **Welcome and Introduction:** Deputy Commissioner Chris Herrick

- This is the weekly call for first responders, EMDs, RPCs, and municipal officials. **After this week we will be moving these calls to occur every other week. There will be no call next week. The next call will be Thursday July, 2 at 2PM. The invitation will go out on Monday morning.**
 - 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 myself and EMS Chief Dan Batsie. In addition, we have Capt. Mike Manley from the Vermont State Police, Director Michael Desrochers from the Division of Fire Safety, Chief Pete Lynch from the Vermont Fire Academy, and Karen Horn from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns 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 site 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.
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II. **COVID-19 Overview/VDH Comments:** Health Operations Center Incident Commander and EMS Chief Dan Batsie

- On Tuesday, Vermont recorded its first COVID-19-related death in weeks, bringing the state total to 56 deaths.
- Almost all newly reported cases of COVID-19 in Vermont are related to the outbreak in Winooski. The outbreak was identified quickly, and the Department of Health worked with local partners to aggressively mitigate its spread.
 - There have been 99 cases associated with the outbreak, geographically very confined to Winooski and Burlington, with only a couple cases in nearby jurisdictions. 63% of the positive cases are adults, which is a lower percentage than expected with COVID-19. The good news is that only 26% of those infected reported having symptoms. There are 2 hospitalizations associated with the outbreak, and no deaths.
 - The takeaway lesson from this outbreak for other municipalities is the value of communication. The relative success of the response and mitigation of the outbreak has been on shoulders of partnerships with local governments, organizations, and communities. Another lesson is that appropriate and understandable public messaging is essential for compliance with public health measures. The Department of Health's Health Operations Center added a health equity command staff member to aid with such efforts going forward.
- Testing/tracing updates
 - Testing for symptomatic individuals is still based on health care provider referrals. This is the best way for symptomatic individuals to access the services they may need.
 - In addition, there are ongoing pop-up testing sites, for asymptomatic individuals without a referral. This testing helps identify new outbreaks. Upcoming test sites:
 - 6/18: St. Albans, White River Junction, Barre, and UVM
 - 6/19: Middlebury, St. Johnsbury, and UVM
 - 6/22: Bennington
 - 6/23: Newport, Winooks, and Springfield
 - 6/24: Hyde Park, Brattleboro, and Rutland
 - 6/25: Barre, St. Albans, and White River Junction

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- 6/26: Middlebury and St. Johnsbury
 - There is also testing in Winooksi this week, in response to the outbreak centered in that community.
 - For more information on pop-up testing, and to sign up, visit healthvermont.gov or <https://humanresources.vermont.gov/popups>
 - EMS updates
 - The Office of EMS added new elements into the 2020 protocol update. There are new training materials and videos for administration of IV acetaminophen for Advanced EMTs.
 - A [hyperlinked PDF](#) of the new protocols is available on the Office of EMS website.
 - The refusal of care protocol was tweaked.
 - The quest for a hybrid EMT class is ongoing. The Office of EMS is working with the EMS Advisory Committee on planning.
 - The Department of Health is actively recruiting EMS services to assist with COVID-19 testing. There are 10 services currently assisting, and the hope is to add another 6 services, so that roughly 200 providers are actively participating in the program. Interested agencies should reach out to the Office of EMS.
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III. SEOC Overview/ VEM Comments: Deputy Commissioner Chris Herrick

- **SEOC status:** The SEOC is now partially activated, as opposed to fully activated, every day from 0800 until 1600. This means that certain partner agencies are no longer participating in SEOC operations, but can be recalled at any point should the need arise. The SEOC is entirely virtual.
- At yesterday's press conference, it was announced that some visitation is now allowed at long-term care facilities and hospitals.
 - Effective tomorrow, [long-term care facility residents](#) can have two visitors per day, as long as the visit is outside and guidance is followed. Rules around outdoor interaction between residents will also be loosened.
 - Patients at in-patient facilities and emergency departments may have one visitor, with additional visitors allowed for minors, those nearing end of life, and other special circumstances. Patients at out-patient facilities cannot have visitors except as needed to access care.
 - Individual facilities may choose to institute visitation policies stricter than this statewide guidance.
- On Wednesday, the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living [released guidance](#) allowing senior centers, but not adult day centers, to reopen if public health measures are taken.
- On Monday, Governor Scott [amended and restated](#) Executive Order 01-20, extending the state of emergency until July 15th, 2020.
- On Friday, Governor Scott announced Phase 2 of the Relief and Recovery Package to support the economy, with four components:
 - \$55 million in financial assistance to struggling businesses, to help prevent widespread foreclosures and bankruptcies, while supporting longer term recovery efforts.

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- \$11 million in housing and community recovery, such as grants, technical assistance, and resources to villages and downtowns. Also included in this category is direct financial assistance to stabilize households that could otherwise face foreclosure.
- \$20 million for a broadband expansion program.
- \$3.5 million for modernizing Vermont’s regulatory programs and environmental permitting tools.
- [Updated guidance](#) from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development allows campgrounds, RV parks, and marinas to operate at 100% occupancy as long as other restrictions are followed.
- The latest sector-specific guidance is on the ACCD website under [Resources for Businesses](#). For further questions, use the “[request additional guidance](#)” web inquiry form on the ACCD website or call 802-461-5143.
- **SEOC active missions that have been progressing this week:**
 - The Vermont Foodbank and Vermont National Guard is distributing food to those in need at distribution points to ease demand on food shelves around the state.
 - The next meal distributions:

Date	Town	Location
Thursday, 6/18	Dover Area	Specific location provided with pre-registration
Friday, 6/19	Chittenden County	

 - Participants must register for the distribution sites by visiting humanresources.vermont.gov/food-help. Those without internet or otherwise unable to complete the form should call VT-211.
 - These distributions only consist of Farmers-to-Families perishable meals; they no longer are accompanied by FEMA boxed non-perishable meals.
 - Further information, including a complete listing of dates and times, will be updated on VEM’s website: <https://vem.vermont.gov/pods>
 - The VT Foodbank is working in coordination with the SEOC to move their feeding operations back to the food shelves or other similar local sites. We will be sure to broadly distribute information as it becomes available, but you can also check the foodbank and VEM websites.
- **Vermont is under a Federal Disaster Declaration - DR 4532**
 - This means that the federal government will reimburse local government and some non-profits for many costs associated with responding to COVID-19. Information on how to apply and eligible costs can be found on the VEM website at: vem.vermont.gov/covid19/disaster.
- Vermont Emergency Management is hosting a virtual emergency preparedness conference on September 29th and 30th. The conference will cover relevant emergency management topics in sessions running from 1pm to 5pm on both days.
 - Registration and a call for speakers will be posted on the VEM website soon.
- 82% of Vermont municipalities have submitted revised Local Emergency Management Plans (LEMPs). Municipalities that have not yet submitted LEMPs will not be eligible for grants from Vermont Emergency Management or increased funding from the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) until it is submitted. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact your Regional Planning Commission.