

Private Sector Conference Call Agenda

For those who have not participated previously, the intent of this call is to provide our private sector partners with an update of actions that Virginia is taking to mitigate, respond to, and now recover from COVID-19 in Virginia. The flow of our agenda will include a situation update (policy and procedure standpoint), followed by State Agency briefs, and a brief from DHS CISA representative in Virginia. Finally, we will open the lines for questions so please hold those questions until the end and the operator will open the line where you will have an opportunity to ask questions the; all speakers will stay on the line. As always, while we may not have answers for every question on the phone today, we always provide responses to you individually whether that be through emails, the Private Sector Portal, updates on our website, or this weekly meeting call.

The purpose of these calls is not meant for solicitation or procurement offers; those need to be directed to the Private Sector email at: Private.Sector@vdem.virginia.gov

Nor is this call is for media; if you are media, please hang up and contact the JIC at COVID19JIC@vdem.virginia.gov

This call is intended to get actionable information from state government into hands of businesses and industries in Virginia both for situational awareness and decision-making purposes, and it becomes even more important now that we have moved into Phase One of re-opening, as businesses look to resume their operations & also take into account health and safety of your employees, and customers.

VDEM Situational Update

As of today, the **number of confirmed COVID19 cases in Virginia is 40,249**, current total of **hospitalizations as of today is 1,459**, the total **cumulative hospitalizations reported is 4,385**; there have been **1,281 fatalities**.

To recap on where we are with the Executive Orders (EO) and the Forward VA process: On Monday, May 4th the Governor extended key provisions of Executive Order 53: [EO-53 Temporary Restrictions on Restaurants, Recreational, Entertainment, Gatherings, Non-essential Retail Businesses, and Closure of K-12 Schools Due to Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) through last Thursday May 14, at 12 midnight.

As the economy re-opens, the detailed health metrics that we continue to monitor are:

- **Positive cases in a downward trend for 14 days**

- **Hospital capacity remaining steady for 14 days**
- **Increased capacity for testing**
- **Necessary PPE supplies readily available to continue providing care in hospitals and health care facilities**

There is an online slide show regarding these metrics on the Governor's website, as well a link to it on the VA Private Sector page. Additionally, these new graphics are available daily on VDH's website and are downloadable.

On May 9, the Governor signed [EO 61 Phase One- Easing Of Certain Temporary Restrictions Due To Novel Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](#), presenting a detailed framework for the first phase of Forward Virginia, which began last Friday. Phase One is a gradual ease of public health restrictions while we continue to try and contain the spread of COVID-19. The Phase One guideline implementation began on Friday May, 15 in most of Virginia where public health criteria that was already outlined by the Commonwealth, was currently being met.

The Exceptions are as follows (these localities will begin Phase One on Thursday May, 28):

- **Accomack County**
- **City of Richmond**
- **NOVA counties & cities**

On May, 25 NOVA counties alerted the Governor that they are now in a posture to re-open based on health metrics and will commence Phase One at the start of Friday May,29. Accomack county has also made a similar notification of their intent to also begin Phase One on Friday May, 29.

The City of Richmond made a request to delay Phase One, which has been denied by the Governor's Office. Discussions between the Governor's office & the City of Richmond are ongoing at this time. The Governor has made it clear that the Commonwealth's guidance is a 'floor' not a 'ceiling', meaning businesses that are not prepared to open do not have to do so. More to come.

As a reminder, the Governor's Phased approach is based on Science & Data and includes mitigation strategies to slow the spread of the COVID19 virus through enhanced safety practices. The plan allows localities to consider delaying implementation of Phase One based local health conditions. The guidance for all business sectors can be found on the Commonwealth's COVID19 webpage, and links are also on the private sector webpage.

Business sectors with specific guidance include the following:

- **Restaurants & Beverage Services**
- **Farmer Markets**
- **Brick & Mortar Retail**

- **Personal Care & Grooming Services**
- **Fitness & Exercise Facilities**
- **Campgrounds & Summer Camps**
- **Religious Services**

On Monday, May 11 the Governor announced a pilot program with the City of Richmond to support the Commonwealth's ongoing focus on health equity. The partnership aims to increase equitable access to PPE in underserved communities that may be the most adversely impacted by the virus. Virginia's Health Equity Leadership Taskforce is working to leverage data to prioritize areas experiencing disproportionate impacts and is partnering with those localities to establish policies & programs to address these critical issues. We are also working with other localities to implement similar programs and community events throughout the Commonwealth. This includes Harrisonburg, Petersburg, Prince William and Emporia.

Just a quick review on the Blueprint for Forward Virginia and the Phase One Restrictions that are in place now: this is a move away from **'stay at home'** to **'safer at home'** guidelines.

Additionally, Phase One also includes:

- **Ban on Social Gatherings of more than 10 People**
- **Continue Social Distancing**
- **Teleworking, where possible**
- **Face Coverings for People in public**
- **Easing *some* restrictions on Businesses & Faith-based Communities**

Phase One is still expected to last somewhere between 2-4 weeks. Phase Two metrics are currently being discussed, but there is not a set date to move into Phase Two at this time. The Governor will make those announcements when we are ready to do so.

It is important to note that anticipated Phase Two restrictions will include:

- **Stay At Home for vulnerable populations**
- **Ban on Social Gatherings of 50 People OR more**
- **Continue Social Distancing**
- **Teleworking, where possible**
- **Face Coverings for People in public**
- **Additional Easing on limitations for Businesses**

Phase Two is anticipated to last 2-4 weeks, or more, determined by health metrics. Phase Three is our long term plan, and those restrictions and recommendations have yet to be determined.

During the Governor's Press Conference, yesterday May, 26, he announced EO 63: [Requirement-To-Wear-Face-Covering-While-Inside-Buildings](#). So while Phase One initially made recommendations for face-coverings, there is now a **requirement** for face-coverings when you are in public, inside buildings. Measures undertaken over the last 10 weeks has slowed the

spread of the virus; however, transmission continues to threaten our communities. We must remain vigilant as we reopen Virginia. It is critical that we become even more vigilant.

Requirements to wear face masks include:

- **Everyone Age 10 or older** (*please note: the Governor does recommend face-coverings for children as young as 3, if at all possible, but is not a requirement*)
- **Inside any brick & mortar retail establishments**
- **Inside all personal care & grooming establishments**
- **Inside places where people congregate**
- **Inside Food & Beverage establishments** (*except when eating and/or drinking*)
- **On public transportation, to include Train Stations & Bus Stations**
- **Inside Government Buildings when accessing state or local services**

The Virginia Department of Health will have the authority to enforce this order. Any willful violation or refusal, failure or neglect to comply with this Order is a Class One Misdemeanor. The State Health Commissioner may also seek injunction relief in Circuit Court for violation of this order. No minor shall be subject to criminal penalties for failure to wear a face mask. Nothing in this order shall require the use of a face covering by any individual for whom doing so would be contrary to his/her health/safety because of a medical condition.

Exceptions to wear face masks include:

- **Eating and/or Drinking at a restaurant**
- **Exercising, or using exercise equipment**
- **Individuals who have trouble breathing and/or are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face mask without assistance**
- **Communicating with Hearing-Impaired community where the mouth needs to be visible**
- **Temporary face mask removal when necessary to secure Government and/or Medical Services**
- **Individuals with Health Conditions that prohibit wearing a face covering**

Also, during the Governor's Press conference yesterday, it was announced that the Department of Labor & Industry will be drafting new regulations to help keep workers safe while at work. The new regulations will apply to all employers, employees, and places of employment in an effort to control, prevent, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These regulations will include the **use of PPE, sanitation, record keeping, and access to information**. Once developed, the new regulations will need to be approved by the Virginia Safety & Health Code Board. There will be more to come on this as the day's progress.

The Governor is still holding press conferences, but as of yesterday they are now taking place on Tuesday's and Thursday's at 2pm EST.

Agency Reports

Virginia Department of Health:

Updates have been made to the website, there is now a business specific page that is continually updated with materials and resources (i.e.: signage toolkit); these materials are available in both English and Spanish.

Seafood Industry Guidance has been developed based on the Poultry Industry guidance, which was previously developed. This is also posted on the website.

The Governor's COVID website now has FAQ's for Phase One posted online, and there is a link to that as well on the VDH website.

With regard to testing front-line workers and if they were to be included in the goal-number of 10K tests per day metrics, currently it is not a state program to test essential workers; however there are times that front-line worker tests have been included in some of the testing sites. VDH is increasing community testing events in general throughout the Commonwealth. As testing supplies and capacity increases throughout the Commonwealth VDH is looking at ways to expand testing to various sectors of the public.

Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services:

The market news office has reported sales of the livestock auction markets, which continues to be held according to the schedule throughout the Commonwealth.

For the week ending last week prices were varied, up as much as down \$4.00 earlier in the week, then up by \$4.00 at the end of the week.

Cattle prices have stabilized, for the most part. Over the course of the past few weeks, the headcounts show comparable figures from previous years, despite being very low in mid-April.

Grain prices are mostly steady and some are actually trending upward. Corn and Soybean prices were steady; wheat was up by 3%. However, all of these numbers remain lower than they were late-February; wheat prices are 1% lower, soybean 6% lower, and corn 11% lower.

National Beef & Pork slaughter capacity continues to improve, though it is still down significantly as a result of processing plants being closed, plants operating at reduced capacity, and less efficiency.

As of May, 21 cattle slaughter is down 17% nationally compared to numbers from this same period last year; three weeks ago, however, cattle slaughter was down 37% nationally. So it is improving, but it is taking a little time with implementing safeguards, which causes stress on efficiency and strain on the system. Main concern of food processors at this time is worker safety, along with tendency of employees beginning to not properly following social distancing as things re-open, etc.

As for produce, sales are steady with fairly good demand and prices in the retail grocery markets are good. Farmer markets are just now starting to come online with local produce. There are some reports of lower numbers of customers at farmers markets (*this could be related to both weather conditions as well as the safety precautions individuals are taking in this time of re-opening with COVID still a threat*).

The seafood industry, especially shellfish, was particularly hard hit from this pandemic largely due to the loss of Restaurant Food Service Trade; they are starting to pick up again due to work with major grocery retailers.

Last week we had several conversations with VA and USDA meat & poultry inspection group, looking primarily at opportunities for increasing capacity, given they have a full slate for processing orders but have no additional capacity, so we are aware of this challenge and are looking for ways to improve this situation.

Export markets, especially in terms of grain, have continued to be steady. Last week over \$10M worth of wholesale soybean-meal went to Morocco. Also containers of Yellow Soybean, Soybean-meal, Soybean pulp pellets, and Yellow Corn went out to 11 countries, at a total of \$15.6M.

VA Fusion Center

The fusion center is already preparing for the upcoming elections in June, working closely with localities, the Commonwealth, and Federal partners.

Continuing to analyze data from this pandemic and how the restrictions have affected criminal activity throughout Virginia, as well as overdoses.

DHS recently released a document regarding vulnerabilities exploited by Ransom Wear. It looked at a two year period (January 2018- January 2020, so pre-pandemic) but what is significant is that some items studied are the same things we are seeing exploited in this pandemic environment, i.e.: **Remote Desktop Protocol**, which allows your system to be taken over remotely, and while it has legitimate benefits, it can be exploited if not protected. Another commonality is **server message blocks**, by which certain protocols can remotely access files and there is a variety of Ransom Ware attacks that allow for criminals to be opportunistic. What is different is the attacks are being tailored to exploit COVID-19, with click bait ranging from PPE tag lines to false sites to sign up for swimming exercise time slots as pools begin to re-open.

New initiative: VFC Shield program. The original Shield program was conceived by the NYPD post 9/11 driven by the need to loop in private security firms regarding matters of counterterrorism. This established good relationships and regular communications between NYPD and the Private Security firms regarding counterterrorism. In short, it is a force multiplier.



Virginia's Shield program is not limited to Private Sector Security Personnel; rather, VFC Shield is targeting a variety of important groups (i.e.: Critical Infrastructure, Faith Based Communities, Public Health Care, etc) with a focus on two-way unclassified information sharing. Anyone is able to sign up, which gives access to real-time alerts from VFC Shield (i.e.: active shooter and an open source summary of what is know at that time), weekly/monthly newsletters, and allows for sector specific information to be sent to PSAPS and Emergency responders. You can sign up by visiting: www.VSP.Virginia.Gov/FusionCenter/ and there is also more information on the program on this webpage.

DHS/CISA

Nothing significant to report

VDEM

Virginia still has 136 localities under local emergency declarations. 58 Emergency operation centers are still open to some degree.

VDEM has moved to ORANGE/Partial Activation, which means that weekends are on-call not on-duty, allowing for rest before Hurricane Season officially starts June 1. The Watch remains on a 24/7 schedule.

VEST continues to coordinate efforts to expand the number of testing opportunities across the Commonwealth, in coordination with the Health Equity Group and the VA Dept of Health. We are using the National Guard to increase our testing capacity for congregate housing, (i.e.: Long term care facilities, jails & prisons), as well as meat processing plants; and, finally, the community at large testing in conjunction with locality officials is also ongoing. The Virginia Department of Health's website has a map showing testing facilities and locations throughout the Commonwealth.

We enter Hurricane Season officially on June, 1 (next week). There have already been two named Tropical Systems, Arthur and Bertha, so an active hurricane season is anticipated. VDEM is preparing, and preparing for a COVID-19 public health emergency environment. This includes a decreased capacity for sheltering due to the need for social distancing, so non-congregate sheltering is being explored. Additionally, enhanced sanitation, and mass-feeding operations. Working closely with all state agencies that are part of the Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST), to include the Department of Health, State Police, Social Services, and many other state agencies that play a role in Hurricane Response activities. We are coordinating with localities as well to ensure they have what they need and their contingency plans are being developed along the same lines as the Commonwealth.

We have also developed an Incident Support Plan (aka, Incident Action Plan) that will allow us to run simultaneous events at the same time, i.e.: COVID-19 response, as well as a Hurricane. FEMA and VDEM are also preparing for a state coordinators TTX on June, 3 to walk through Hurricane pre-planning.

VDEM Private Sector:

Working with FEMA on cloth face-mask distribution. If you have not received any, and you would like them, some of the next allocation will be dedicated for Small Businesses and Essential Frontline workers as we look to re-open. Please email Private.Sector@vdem.virginia.gov to arrange coordination.

In addition to the cloth face masks being supplied by FEMA, there are also PPE & additional equipment FEMA will be supplying the Commonwealth. At this time the quantity and exact items are TBD, but as it arrives we will relay that information to the Private Sector as the intent in giving states this additional equipment is to help with the re-opening of Businesses & Industry.

In terms of PPE sourcing options, any contract with the Commonwealth of VA is a public document and those contracts that have been issued in conjunction with COVID-19 are listed online. If you are having difficulty, and you have needs, please be aware of the following three resources (all of which can also be accessed thru the link that is listed in the daily VDEM PS email for the dashboard):

1. [Virginia Department of General Services](#)
2. [Virginia Manufacturing Association](#)
3. [ProjectN95.org](#)

With regard to the PS Survey, if you have offers of assistance and you have submitted to the survey, or you are thinking about doing so, here are some reminders:

- The survey is where Business & Industry can submit any offers of assistance (donations and/or procurement) at www.Virginia.gov/COVID19supplies relative to critical supplies for hospitals and Health Care workers, first responders, and emergency responders in general.
- The Survey is not limited to PPE; it can be services, equipment, skilled teams, etc.
- Please coordinate within your company if you are making a submission, as your company can use one submission for any type of offer; this also avoids duplicative submissions which slows down tracking and follow up for everyone, because of time spent having to de-conflict multiple submissions from the same company.

- If you are a vendor that wants to submit your testing products for consideration, please fill out the new survey and answer the additional questions. Select “COVID19 testing kit” as ‘BUSINESS TYPE’, which will drive you to the questions we need answers to.
- If you have received a follow up email from VDEM PS in response to your submission, especially as it relates to PPE, and you have test kits to offer, we will be going back through our database to pull such vendors and send an additional follow-up email. You do NOT need to submit a SECOND survey, if you already have submitted one.
- If test kits are a NEW capability you have, please email Private.Sector@vdem.virginia.gov and include “TEST KITS” in the subject line, and we will ADD it to your EXSISTING survey.
- Please read through our reply closely to ensure you reply with all the requisite information. This is necessary for you to move forward in the process; if you have not replied with all of the additional information that was requested after 3 attempts to reach you, your offer will be placed on hold, and you will need to reach out at that point. So, check your spam folder if you are waiting for a response from VDEM PS. Turn around time for all offers of assistance is between 48-72 hours (business days), with the exception of any submission made on a Friday afternoon or over the weekend (as these requests are being reviewed Monday-Friday only).
- Recently there have been some changes to the Survey as testing becomes a top priority. Working with Division of Consolidated Lab Services to incorporate additional questions on the Survey relative to testing.

In closing, please remember the frequency of our PS distribution emails has decreased; emails are no longer going on a daily basis, but rather will now go out only on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Tuesday, Thursday and weekends will have exceptions if there is a major Press Release from the Governor’s office, or an Executive Order, etc.

Q&A

Q: Are there any processes or programs to start manufacturing PPE and sanitizer in the Commonwealth? We are a company in New Jersey and can be reached at (782) 361-1386; we want to bring 10K jobs to Virginia.

A: Please email Private.Sector@vdem.virginia.gov

Q: CDC guidance does not provide much detail on assistance to the Business community with regard to tracing if you have an active infection. Additionally, manufacturers and breweries



VDEM Private Sector Conference Call Notes May 27, 2020 @1230EST



keep asking questions as they re-open or start to get ready to re-open about 'what it is that they don't know, they don't know', meaning if we have tracing obligations from an infection and follow CDC guidance, what are the further obligations from a HIPPA and ADA point of view, what are the legal liabilities, etc. We need better guidance on how we can protect ourselves, as well as our employees, as it pertains to the tracing responsibilities.

A: VA Department of Health and VDEM spoke this morning, and with feedback from the Private Sector we will be able to develop guidance. In the interim, the community mitigation working group will also look into this as they are the ones developing policy, in conjunction with the Governor's office. We will readdress this on the call next week once more information is available.

Next call: June 3 , 2020 12:30PM EST

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