

Pandemic Status

- Case numbers across the United States have leveled off; the current case rate in the US is about 14,000/day 7 day rolling average. 20 states, however, are reporting increasing case counts.
- Virginia continues to improve as well, our new case rate is less than 190/day 7 day average.
- Three Rivers is stable at very low new case rates; our new case rate is averaging only 2-3 cases/day for all 10 jurisdictions.
- Across Virginia, about 56.8% of the total population has received at least one dose of the vaccine, and 69% of the population over 18 has received at least one dose. In Three Rivers, about 58.6% of our population over age 18 has received at least one dose. Over 80% of our Three Rivers residents aged 65+ have received at least one dose.

Vaccination Program Update: Everyone age 12 and older is now eligible for vaccination in Virginia. The Pfizer vaccine was recently authorized for use in adolescents age 12-15. Twelve to seventeen year olds must be accompanied by a parent or guardian and provide proof of age such as a driver's license or birth certificate if seeking vaccination outside the school setting. Pfizer vaccine is available at Walmart, Walgreens, and Rite Aid pharmacies, and through local Three Rivers Health District events. Please visit [vaccinate.virginia.gov](https://www.vdh.virginia.gov) or call 1-877-VAX-IN-VA to find vaccination opportunities.

- Vaccination appointments are available through many sources to anyone who is eligible and desires one. Pharmacies, free clinics, Federally Qualified Health Clinics, medical practices, health care systems, and the Three Rivers Health District continue to offer vaccination appointments.
- We have established Health Department vaccination clinics in local jurisdictions. This week there will be a Moderna clinic at the Richmond County Health Department.
- We are planning to offer walk-up Pfizer vaccination opportunities at the following Juneteenth celebrations:
 - The Tavern behind the old courthouse in Heathsville from 3:30-7pm on June 19
 - The First United Baptist Church, 6188 George Washington Memorial Highway in Gloucester from 5pm-7pm on June 19
 - Lebanon Baptist Church, 11821 Tidewater Trail, Saluda VA 2pm-6pm on June 27.
- Please visit the Three Rivers Health District website for current vaccination opportunities at: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/three-rivers/>. Jurisdictional vaccination data can be reviewed here: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine-summary/>

COVID 19 vaccination program progression

- People eligible for COVID 19 vaccination seeking a vaccination appointment can contact their health care providers for initial consultation.

- Anyone wishing vaccination should visit vaccinate.virginia.gov; a link to Vaccine Finder is on the website, and everyone is able to search for vaccination clinics near them. People can also call 1-877-VAX-IN-VA to get help finding an appointment and registering for one. The call center is open from 8AM – 6PM, Monday - Saturday to answer questions and offer appointment assistance. Appointments are available online through vaccinate.virginia.gov 24/7.
- It is no longer necessary for a patient to receive their second doses of a two-dose vaccine from the same provider that administered the first dose, as long as both doses are of the same vaccine brand. Anyone who received a first dose and does not yet have an appointment for the second dose should visit vaccinate.virginia.gov or call 877-VAX-in-VA to make an appointment at any clinic offering the same brand, and should bring their first dose vaccination record with them to the second dose clinic. The two doses of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine should be given 21 days apart, and the two doses of Moderna vaccine 28 days apart. If that is not possible, the second dose for each vaccine may be scheduled up to 42 days after the first dose. It is very important to get the second vaccine dose to be as fully protected as possible.
- Virginia is placing a great deal of emphasis on equitable distribution of the vaccine, and is working to help reach all communities, especially those with vulnerable populations, to promote vaccine acceptance.
- Vaccine hesitancy and refusal is a challenge; we are progressing, however, and it looks like Virginia overall is on track to achieve a 70% vaccination rate of the population over age 18 in the next few weeks. At this time, 69% of the population over age 18 in Virginia has received at least one dose of the COVID 19 vaccine.
- If you have doubts or questions about COVID 19 vaccination, consult with your health care provider to consider the facts they tell you and to make a decision whether or not you will take the vaccine. If you do your own research, make sure the sources you consult are good ones; the CDC and the World Health Organization are great sources of information. Professional societies like the American Academy of Pediatrics and American Academy of Family Physicians are examples. The information available through any of these organizations is based on scientific evidence and best scientific judgement. Other sources, such as universities and major health care organizations (Mayo Clinic for example), are also trustworthy. Here are links to informative information about vaccine myths and facts:
 - American Academy of Family Physicians: https://www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/patient_care/public_health/COVID19-Vaccine-Myths.pdf
 - CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>
 - American Association of Medical Colleges: <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/transcript-vaccinevoices-covid-19-vaccine-myths-debunked>

Vaccine and virus update

- All three available vaccine types are available across the Commonwealth. Public health authorities recommend taking the first vaccination opportunity afforded to us regardless of manufacturer; there is no guarantee any of the available vaccines will prevent infection, although evidence is strong that they effectively do so in many people. They are all very effective in preventing serious and critical COVID 19 disease, and almost eliminate the risk of hospitalization and death. All available vaccines are effective in reducing viral transmission potential in the unlikely event of infection post vaccination as well.
- The COVID 19 virus continues to genetically drift.
 - The United Kingdom, South African, and Brazilian variants are all in the United States now. The UK strain is now dominant in the US. The variant from India (B.1.617.2, also known as the Delta variant) has also been detected in the United States, again demonstrating the ability of viral variants to spread rapidly across the globe.
 - The Delta variant is now the dominant strain of COVID 19 virus circulating in the United Kingdom, and is thought to be responsible for the COVID 19 resurgence there. The Delta variant is thought to be 50-60% more transmissible than the UK variant, and causes more severe disease. Even though cases in the UK are on the rise, hospitalizations and deaths have not significantly increased due to the effective UK COVID 19 vaccination program. Our vaccines appear effective against the Delta variant at this point. We will watch this carefully in the US: the Delta variant will compete for dominance with the B.1.1.7 variant. The Delta variant currently comprises about 10% of COVID 19 infections in the US.
 - The VDH has established a COVID 19 Variants of Concern Dashboard. The dashboard can be accessed here:
<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-data-insights/variants-of-concern/>
 - We are in a race to vaccinate people as fast as we can to keep case levels as low as possible. The higher the case levels in the population, the more opportunity exists for the virus to continue to evolve.
 - Moderna and Pfizer are conducting pediatric clinical trials, and Janssen is conducting a clinical trial in adolescents. Pfizer Emergency Use Authorization has been extended for use in 12-15 year olds. Moderna declared its vaccine highly effective for 12-15 year olds as well, and anticipates EUA in the next several weeks.
 - The CDC is reviewing reports of mild myocarditis following mRNA vaccination. The Vaccine Safety Technical Working Group (VaST) concluded that there are relatively few reports of myocarditis to date and that these cases seem to occur:
 1. predominantly in adolescents and young adults,

2. more often in males than females,
3. more often following dose 2 than dose 1, and
4. typically within 4 days after vaccination.

Review is ongoing concerning reports of myocarditis following mRNA vaccination. At this point it appears this is very rare, occurring at a rate of less than 20 cases/million vaccinations.

- Persons who have had COVID 19 disease can and should seek vaccination after the isolation period ends, and after their symptoms, including fever, have resolved.
- Fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in any setting, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. People are considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after receiving their second shot of Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or 2 weeks after receiving a single injection of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine.
 - The CDC has published Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People; those recommendations can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

How to volunteer with the Three Rivers Health District

- The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), our volunteers, are absolutely critical to our efforts at all times. We are extremely grateful for our volunteers, we could not carry on this pandemic mitigation effort without them.
- If you are interested in becoming an MRC volunteer, or have family or friends that are interested, please visit www.vamrc.org to learn more.
- If you have questions about the process, please reach out to the Three Rivers Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator at 804-758-2381. We welcome your help and participation in the fight against COVID 19, and in all other health department missions.

Testing, pandemic containment efforts

- COVID 19 testing will remain very important in the coming months. We are planning on resuming community testing in conjunction with our continued vaccination outreach.
- Our containment team is investigating all new cases with contact tracing of all high risk exposures. These activities will be very important to keep outbreaks from occurring and to keep new cases at a minimum.
- Based on the new CDC recommendations, declining case rates, declining hospitalizations, and increasing vaccinations:
 - i. *Masks are longer required for fully vaccinated individuals in most indoor settings. Exceptions will include public transit, health care facilities, and*

congregate settings. Anyone who is not yet vaccinated is strongly encouraged to wear masks in all settings.

- ii. Employees who work in certain business sectors—including restaurants, retail, fitness, personal care, and entertainment—must continue to wear masks unless fully vaccinated, consistent with CDC guidelines.*
- iii. Masks will continue to be required in K-12 settings, given low rates of vaccination among children.*
- iv. Businesses will retain the ability to require masks in their establishments if they choose to, and individuals will continue to be permitted to wear masks if they choose to.*
- v. State-mandated social distancing and capacity restrictions were lifted at 12:00 AM, May 28, when Executive Order 79 replaced Executive Order 72.*
- vi. Virginia's state of emergency will remain in effect at least through June 30. The Governor's Office is currently reviewing implications of ending the state of emergency, and will continue to engage with localities on future changes.*

K-12 School Status: In person learning has been very successful

- All schools pursued in-person learning with great success this spring; with expansion of vaccine availability to 12 year olds and above, and the potential for all school children to be eligible for vaccination this fall, safe full in-person learning is anticipated for the next school year.
- The VDH is planning a COVID 19 school testing program, to enhance safety and confidence for in-person school attendance. This program will expand in the fall.
- The Three Rivers Health district, in cooperation with the Riverside Health Care System and Main Street Pharmacy, is offering Pfizer vaccines in the schools for 12 – 17 year old students currently and for the next several weeks.

Useful links

- The FDA fact sheets for recipients and caregivers for the Pfizer vaccine can be found here: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144414/download>
- The FDA fact sheet for recipients and caregivers for the Moderna vaccine can be found here: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144638/download>
- The FDA fact sheet for recipients and caregivers for the Johnson and Johnson vaccine can be found here: <https://www.fda.gov/media/146305/download>
- The VDH vaccination phase by health district can be found here: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/covid-19-vaccine/phase-by-health-district/>
- The Virginia Department of Health is maintaining COVID-19 Vaccination Dashboards, which are available here: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines-received/> and here: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine-summary/>

- The VDH COVID 19 outbreak dashboard can be found here:
<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-data-insights/>
- Sixth Amended Executive Order 72 can be found here:
[https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-72-SIXTH-AMENDED-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Nine-Easing-of-Commonsense-Surge-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-72-SIXTH-AMENDED-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Nine-Easing-of-Commonsense-Surge-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)
- Seventh Amended Executive Order 72 can be found here:
[https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-72-SEVENTH-AMENDED-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Nine-Easing-of-Commonsense-Surge-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-72-SEVENTH-AMENDED-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Nine-Easing-of-Commonsense-Surge-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)
- **Links to useful information about COVID 19 myths and facts:**
 - i. American Academy of Family Physicians:
https://www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/patient_care/public_health/COVID19-Vaccine-Myths.pdf
 - ii. CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>
 - iii. American Association of Medical Colleges: <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/transcript-vaccinevoices-covid-19-vaccine-myths-debunked>