Governor Outlines Phased Plan to Safely, Gradually Ease Restrictions

May 4, 2020—Governor Ralph Northam outlined a three-phase plan to ease restrictions on businesses and gatherings, when health data supports doing so.

Governor Northam said he will extend key provisions of Executive Order 53, which places restrictions on businesses and gatherings of more than 10 people, at least through next Thursday, May 14, at midnight. The Northam administration will continue to monitor health data to ensure that trends of positive cases are going downward, that hospital capacity remains steady, that testing is increased, and that hospitals and medical facilities have necessary supplies of PPE. For more information on key metrics, please see here.

Phase I of easing restrictions would continue social distancing, teleworking, recommendations that people wear face coverings in public, and the ban on social gatherings of more than 10 people. It would ease some limits on business and faith communities, and would transition the stay at home directive to a “safer at home” guideline, especially for those in vulnerable populations.
It is expected that Phase I would last two to four weeks, as would the two subsequent phases, depending on health metrics.

More specific guidance on each phase will be available in the coming days. Slides from the Governor's briefing are available here.

**Accurate, reliable information about COVID-19 can be found on the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) website.**

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**News Releases**

**RICHMOND**  
**MAY 2, 2020**

**Governor Northam Announces Virginia to Receive Three Critical Care Decontamination Systems**

Governor Ralph Northam today announced that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has approved Virginia to receive three Battelle Critical Care Decontamination System™ (CCDS) that can collectively sterilize up to 240,000 units of personal protective equipment (PPE) per day for reuse. The three systems will be operational in the Town of Blacksburg, the City of Newport News, and Chesterfield County within the next week.

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**RICHMOND**  
**MAY 1, 2020**

**Governor Northam Announces Administration Appointments**

Governor Ralph Northam announced additional appointments to his Administration today.

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**RICHMOND**  
**APRIL 29, 2020**

**Governor Northam Announces Expansion of Payment Relief for Student Loan Borrowers**

Governor Ralph Northam today announced that Virginia has secured relief options for more than 200,000 Virginians with privately held student loans. The payment relief is the result of a new initiative by Virginia and several other states to work with the major private student loan servicers to expand on protections for federal student loan borrowers through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

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**RICHMOND**  
**APRIL 28, 2020**
Governor Northam Acts to Ensure Liability Protections for Healthcare Workers

Governor Ralph Northam today signed Executive Order Sixty, which reinforces certain existing statutory liability protections for Virginia healthcare workers. Due to COVID-19, public and private healthcare providers are operating with limited resources and may be forced to serve patients outside of conventional standards of care.

Governor Northam Announces Administration Appointments

Governor Ralph Northam announced additional appointments to his Administration today.

Governor Northam Unveils Blueprint for Easing Public Health Restrictions

Governor Ralph Northam today presented the “Forward Virginia” blueprint, which will help guide the Commonwealth on when to safely begin easing public health restrictions. The blueprint includes a phased approach that is grounded in the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines and has specific goals to contain the spread of the virus through increased testing, personal protective equipment and supplies, and medical capacity.

Governor Northam Postpones Upcoming May Elections in Response to COVID-19

Governor Ralph Northam today invoked his statutory authority to postpone the May General and Special Elections by two weeks, from May 5, 2020 to May 19, 2020. Elections are scheduled in 56 localities across the Commonwealth. The Governor also moved the June primary elections from June 9, 2020 to June 23, 2020.

Governor Northam Taps Broad Group of Leaders for COVID-19 Business Task Force

Governor Ralph Northam today announced a diverse group of leaders participating in the Commonwealth’s COVID-19 Business Task Force, which will continue to provide advice and guidance to the Cabinet on a safe, responsible strategy for easing restrictions on businesses and individuals.
Governor Northam Signs Executive Order Giving Flexibility to Medicaid Providers

Governor Ralph Northam today made it easier for Medicaid recipients to access medical care amid the current public health crisis, by signing Executive Order Fifty-Eight. This order is a companion to the COVID-19 relief package approved yesterday by the General Assembly and will give the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) to flexibility to make critical services more accessible to people who need them as a result of the pandemic.

Governor Northam Extends Ban on Elective Surgeries, Closure of DMV Offices

Governor Ralph Northam today extended the current ban on elective surgeries by one week, until May 1, and the closure of Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) public-facing offices by two weeks, until May 11. Virginia State Police are directed to continue suspending the enforcement of motor vehicle inspections and take several additional measures through July 31.

Public Events

The Governor has no public events scheduled for today.