



All About Algonkian

Juli E. Briskman | Algonkian District Supervisor



COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 NUMBERS	
VIRGINIA	LOUDOUN
28,672	1,374
3,657	134
977	48

From Supervisor Juli Briskman

Dear Neighbors,

I know we are all frustrated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our county and our neighbors. As you know, I fully support the Northern

Virginia Region's request and the Governor's subsequent order to keep our region at Phase Zero for at least the next two weeks. I have had a number of questions and concerns from constituents via email and social media and wanted to take this opportunity to respond.

It is clear from the evaluation of five of the region's health directors that we do not meet Virginia's or the national criteria to begin reopening our region. All of these criteria are interconnected and important. But we must experience a 14-day downward trend in positive cases and hospitalizations as required by both protocols before considering Phase 1 reopening. Right now, if you analyze the number of new cases in Virginia, our county and the region, we are not flattening the curve. Our county added 35 cases yesterday and a whopping 73 cases the day before.

While these two metrics are critical, the other three are just as crucial to sustained community health, which is the foundation for economic well-being. If we do not have enough testing capacity, we will not have the information required to judge if the virus is coming back and to what degree, especially because we know that asymptomatic humans can infect each other. We still are only testing those with symptoms. We also see the same challenges with testing supplies that we have

had with, personal protective equipment (PPE) (masks, gloves, gowns). To address this issue, the county is standing up a working group on testing, thanks to the work of county staff and my colleague Matt Letourneau.

And without PPE, we cannot ensure the safety of our front-line workers and medical professionals who serve our community every day. One Algonkian first responder just got out of the hospital after 28 days! He was infected after responding to a call. Long-term care facilities are challenged with these supplies as well. And while some want to say this disease only affects the elderly, outbreaks in communities across the country are occurring because facilities like these, and meat processing plants, are not able or willing to implement appropriate precautions. This impacts the entire community because workers leave facilities and go to the grocery store, home improvement outlets and home to infect others.

It is also clear that we need to be analyzing data at the county and regional level in a transparent way so that you understand what lies behind these decisions. I have been advocating for a regional and county specific dashboard, that can be shared publicly, so everyone has the same data and can clearly see where we stand as a county and a region. I understand this will be unveiled next week. We cannot answer *when* we can re-open until we have the correct view of our data.

Lastly, this is absolutely not about politics. Those who support the delay of Phase 1 want our county opened as much as anyone else. We are also home, some not working second jobs because of the economic shut down. We are watching our budget get squeezed, cringing about hiring freezes for county workers, scrambling to find funds to offer more support to our small businesses and nonprofits, and watching the much-needed increases to our school budgets evaporate. This is not fun for anyone! And this could affect us for years to come. We are lucky to be in a relatively strong financial position as a county despite all of this. But to ignore the professional opinions of the Chief Administration Officers and Health Directors of our five largest Northern Virginia jurisdictions would be wholly irresponsible and a disservice to those we have pledged to serve. For those who intimate that there is something to *gain* politically by keeping our community closed: that is simply not true.

Stay safe,

Juli



Governor's Update

Virginia has changed how it collects testing data relative to COVID-19, Governor Ralph Northam announced today. Virginia Department of Health (VDH) had included two types of tests in its overall tally of COVID-19 cases. These were antibody blood tests and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests. The former is used to test if someone had COVID-19 in the past while a PCR test is used to determine if someone has an active case. Antibody tests accounted for 15,000 of the approximately 184,000 total COVID-19 tests performed in Virginia since February. Governor Northam directed VDH to remove antibody tests from the tally of active cases.

Governor Northam stated that varying social distancing measures within counties will make controlling the spread of COVID-19 much more difficult. Northern Virginia's numbers should continue to improve as guidelines are followed. While the Governor understood that delaying Phase I for Northern Virginia was a controversial decision, it was done to protect public health and will continue to be evaluated regionally.

Lastly, Governor Northam discussed the Commonwealth's latest revenue report. April General Fund revenue collections are down 26.2 percent from the previous year and fiscal year-to-date collections are up 1.4 percent as anticipated. COVID-19 and income tax payment extensions had a major impact. Such a decrease is \$7 million less compared to previous fiscal years and total losses are projected to be around \$1 billion by June. However, overall economic activity held steady as evidenced by a 4.2 percent increase in payroll tax revenue.



Loudoun County Initiates COVID-19 Impact Fund

The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors approved the COVID-19 Impact Fund program, which will provide funding for eligible nonprofit organizations to address the needs of low- to moderate-income households. The county will be distributing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to support projects or activities that help families and individuals prevent, prepare for and respond to COVID-19. The program will be funded using

approximately \$310,000 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act CDBG allocation through an online competitive application process.

To be eligible, organizations must be a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization and serve Loudoun residents or deliver service hours to Loudoun residents. When the applications are scored, points are awarded based on the percentage of client served who are Loudoun residents. Additionally, the nonprofit organization must have a physical presence in Loudoun County or be located within reasonable proximity to Loudoun County and must have been in business for at least two years.

Eligible organizations are those that serve families and individuals with incomes at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). In 2020, 80% of the AMI for a household of four is \$100,800.

The organization's proposed project or activity must:

- Occur within Loudoun County and/or directly serve Loudoun County residents
- Address one or more of the three U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development national objectives; such as providing a primary benefit to low- and moderate-income persons, aiding in the prevention or elimination of blight or addressing an urgent community development need
- Help prevent, prepare for and respond to COVID-19 through life-sustaining activities

Organizations that meet the criteria should review the [funding guidance and eligibility document \(PDF\)](#)



Red Cross to Host Blood Drives at Loudoun High Schools

Loudoun County Public Schools continues to respond to the nationwide plea for blood donations by hosting American Red Cross Blood Drives. LCPS facilities are among the few that are large enough

to host blood drives with adequate physical separation to comply with Centers for Disease Control guidelines.

Upcoming blood drives will be held:
May 12 and May 28, Stone Bridge High School;
May 19, John Champe High School; and
May 29, Freedom High School.

Appointments are now necessary in order to comply with social distancing during blood drives. No drop-in donations are allowed. To schedule an appointment, please visit <https://www.redcross.org/give-blood.html>



WMATA to Require Face Coverings on Trains, Buses, and in Stations

Metro General Manager Paul J. Wiedefeld accepted a recommendation of the transit authority's Pandemic Task Force that face coverings or masks be required when traveling on Metro effective Monday, May 18. The move strengthens Metro's position on the matter, which has "strongly recommended" the use of face coverings since early April, in accordance with CDC guidance. While the overwhelming majority of riders already comply voluntarily, the requirement is viewed as a necessary

step as Metro plans for an eventual recovery with more riders using the system.

Metro continues to emphasize that the policy will be applied to emphasize compliance while minimizing conflict. The requirement to wear face coverings applies in all Metro stations, trains, buses, and MetroAccess vehicles. Per the CDC, face coverings may include bandanas, scarves, neck gaiters or homemade coverings easily made from t-shirts or other materials at minimal cost. Medical-grade masks should be prioritized for first responders and hospitals and should not be used for this purpose. [Click here](#) for guidance on how to make and wear cloth face coverings.

As a reminder, Metro is open for "essential travel only," and the public is encouraged to stay at home whenever possible, in accordance with current executive orders and guidance in effect throughout the region. For essential travelers, the Metrorail system is open from 5 a.m. until 9 p.m. on weekdays, and 8 a.m. until 9 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Bus service on selected routes is provided daily until 11 p.m. Metro is performing enhanced cleaning and disinfecting in all trains, buses and stations, distributed hand sanitizer to all frontline employees without access to wash rooms, implemented rear-door boarding and waived fares on buses to protect bus operators, closed the first and last railcars to create a protective buffer for train operators and closed 19 stations to conserve limited cleaning supplies.



Learn how to get help with the basic things you need.

loudoun.gov/needsassistance

LOUDOUN
COUNTY
VIRGINIA

How to Get Basic Needs Assistance

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been widespread and is likely to continue for some time. The financial fallout from the pandemic is

affecting many Loudoun families, who find themselves in need of help. Loudoun County can provide assistance in many areas and can also connect residents to health and human services resources.

If you or someone you know needs help, make the [Loudoun County Information and Referral Program](#) your first call. The I&R program is designed to quickly and effectively get Loudoun County residents connected to the critical services they need, when they need them. The program connects individuals to health and human services information and resources within Loudoun. You can call 703-777-0420 or submit an [online form](#).

In addition, at loudoun.gov/NeedsAssistance, you'll find links to information and services that are most likely to be needed during the COVID-19 pandemic, including how to apply for unemployment benefits, health insurance or rent assistance.

Enjoy these inspirational scenes spotted in Algonkian. Please share any messages of hope you see. Submissions may be sent to Zachary Harris at zachary.harris@loudoun.gov and we'll share them in our updates and newsletter.



If you are having trouble paying your utilities because of COVID-19, visit the County's webpage on [COVID-19 Utilities](#). You will find program information on:

Columbia Gas

Dominion Power
Loudoun Water
NOVEC
Washington Gas
Wi-fi Connectivity

For More Current COVID-19 Information

Visit: www.loudoun.gov/CoronaVirus

Call: (703) 737-8300

Email: Health@Loudoun.gov

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Have an interesting comment you'd like to share? Want to see someone you know from Algonkian featured? [Email Rey Cheatham-Banks](#)

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