



# All About Algonkian



Juli E. Briskman | Algonkian District Supervisor



## COVID-19 Update

### COVID 19 NUMBERS

VIRGINIA	LOUDOUN
 59,946	 3,739
 5,995	 261
 1,675	 85

### Governor's Update

In today's press briefing, Governor Ralph Northam provided COVID-19 data that shows Virginia remains on track to begin Phase Three of reopening on July 1. Governor Northam credited Virginia's progress to residents listening to social distancing guidelines, washing hands,

and wearing masks in public indoor spaces. It is vital that Virginians continue such behavior during Phase Three since recent increases in other states show that the virus is not going anywhere.

The percent positivity rate of COVID-19 tests continues to decline and now stands at 6 percent, which is well below Virginia's stated goal of having a maximum percent positivity rate of 10 percent throughout the state's health districts. While the number of occupied hospital beds has increased, there is still ample capacity in the event of Virginia's health system experiencing a surge in COVID-19 patients. Also, Virginia's infection rate is currently 0.727, meaning that a COVID-19 positive individual infects less than one person on average.

You can find detailed information about Phase Three guidelines by [clicking here](#).



## Libraries Reopen with Limited Services

Loudoun County Public Library (LCPL) reopened Wednesday, June 24, 2020, with limited services. All branches, with the exception of the Law Library, are open Monday-Thursday, 10:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m., and Friday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. The Law Library is open Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. Every location will operate at reduced capacity to help minimize the risk of spreading the virus that

causes COVID-19. What customers should know:

- Face masks are required for all customers 10 and older.
- Customers should follow directions on signs and floor markers to help ensure social distancing between both customers and staff.
- Computer stations are available by appointment. Customers should call their local branch for more information. Computers will be sanitized between uses.
- Printing and copying are available.
- Customers are encouraged to check out materials at the self-checkout stations.

For the safety of all customers, bins are available around the LCPL libraries where customers should place items that they have handled but decided not to check out. Those items will be quarantined before being placed back on shelves. In addition, Curbside Pickup service will continue during regular library hours at all branches except the Law Library. Meeting rooms, study rooms, teen centers and makerspaces will remain closed during Phase 2. Passport and notary services are also suspended during this time.



## George Mason Researchers Developing Antibody Test

A multidisciplinary team of George Mason University scientists is developing a saliva test to detect antibodies to COVID-19 and could begin screening student, faculty and staff volunteers as early as this summer. Mason will be one of the first universities to offer COVID-19 antibody research screening for students, faculty and staff. Screening for incoming

volunteers in the fall will be coordinated by the [College of Health and Human Services \(CHHS\)](#) along with the [College of Science \(COS\)](#).

The project is an extension of an ongoing international collaboration with Italian microbiologists directed by [Alessandra Luchini](#), the associate professor overseeing the CAPMM development of the laboratory antibody assay in the nanotechnology lab. [Emanuel Petricoin](#), co-director of CAPMM, said Mason infectious disease, clinical care, clinical diagnostics and molecular microbiology researchers are working together to develop and assess the test for COVID-19 exposure.

Public health experts say it's likely that there have been many undiagnosed cases in the United States. Recent blood-based COVID-19 antibody testing in New York has indicated that up to 20% of the population in some areas of that state could have been infected by the virus.

Oral fluid is much easier to sample for large-scale population and health worker testing, compared with blood used in other antibody tests to date. A simple brush in the mouth with a sponge can gather enough saliva to be analyzed in person using a rapid test or remotely by being plugged into a vial and put in a mailing envelope.

The new study takes advantage of several existing Mason-unique biobank collections that will be extremely critical for determining overall test accuracy and performance. They consist of oral fluid and blood collected by CHHS from its student cohort last year, from CAPMM's cancer patient trials, and from a novel salivary biobank collected over the past several years from youth and collegiate athletes developed from traumatic brain injury-concussion research collaboration between CAPMM and the [College of Education and Human Development](#). All samples were collected before the COVID-19 epidemic and are unique for specificity testing because they should all be negative.



## Staying Safe at the Beach

If you're craving summer sun, sand and relaxation, how can you enjoy time at the beach and still keep yourself and others healthy? COVID-19 "hot spots" are emerging at beach destinations in Delaware, Maryland, South Carolina and Virginia, as well as in vacationers' home communities, so it's important to keep your guard up for everyone's safety.

Parents of teens participating in senior beach week or other group gatherings should be particularly vigilant. This year, concerns about excessive partying and risky behavior are compounded by the additional risk of COVID-19. When young people from different households live in crowded group settings without physical distancing or wearing face coverings, they can put themselves and their families at greater risk of contracting the virus.

If you're planning a beach trip, there are steps you should take to keep your family safe and to prevent the spread of the virus from region to region:

- Stay home if you have COVID-19 symptoms, have been diagnosed with the virus or are waiting to get results. And you should stay home and monitor your health if you've been exposed to someone with the virus within the last 14 days.
- Know the rules: call ahead or visit the local government website for the area you plan to visit. Current rules differ in various states, and can vary even from county to county and beach to beach. States or localities may require face coverings, limit the number of people who can gather on the beach, restrict beach access during certain hours, or limit access to parking and amenities.
- At the beach, stay with your family group, and keep 6 feet away from others on the beach or in the water.
- Don't share food, equipment, toys or supplies with people you don't live with.
- Consider the type of beach you're visiting:
- If it's a remote, less populated beach, it will be easier to walk, swim and sunbathe while keeping your distance from others.
- If it's packed towel-to-towel, be sure to stay 6 feet apart, keep your visit short, and wear a face covering when you're not in the water.
- Be sure to wear a face covering while walking along the boardwalk, shopping, or dining, or anywhere it's difficult to keep 6 feet apart. Steer clear of crowded areas.
- There may be fewer lifeguards than usual, so be extra careful about water safety.
- Ask the hotel or property rental company about its cleaning procedures. Wash the sheets when you arrive, if possible, and bring some sanitizing spray or wipes to use on high-touch surfaces.
- Have food and groceries delivered. Avoid the potential exposure, save yourself the shopping time, and avoid potentially crowded restaurants and bars altogether.
- Take the stairs. If you are staying in a high-rise condo or hotel, understand that it's difficult to maintain a 6-foot distance in elevators. If you must take the elevator, be sure to wear your face covering.

The CDC has more information posted on its website regarding [visiting recreational facilities, including beaches](#). The Virginia Department of Health has published a [map of swimming advisories and monitored beaches in Virginia](#). You can also [view COVID-19 data in Virginia](#) before you travel.

In addition to these steps, continue to follow the same safety practices you would at home, including wearing a mask when you can't maintain social distance, washing your hands or using hand sanitizer often, covering your coughs and sneezes, avoid touching your face, and isolating anyone who shows possible COVID-19 symptoms, such as fever.

The CDC offers these [general considerations for travelers](#) if you're planning to venture away from home.

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Please share any messages of hope you see. Submissions may be sent to Zachary Harris at [zachary.harris@loudoun.gov](mailto:zachary.harris@loudoun.gov) and we'll share them in our updates and newsletter.

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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](http://www.loudoun.gov/CoronaVirus)

Call: (703) 737-8300

Email: [Health@Loudoun.gov](mailto:Health@Loudoun.gov)

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