

COVID-19

A message from Ballad Health Corporate
Emergency Operations Center (CEOC)



CEOC Weekly briefing

TO: Appalachian Highlands community and civic leaders

FROM: Ballad Health Corporate Emergency Operations Center

DATE: [May 27, 2020](#)

TITLE: Weekly COVID-19 briefing – May 27, 2020

ACTION: Please share with your communities. This is a review of the major activities that occurred this week related to the COVID-19 response.

Ballad Health lifts certain visitation restrictions

With current data showing sustained reductions in new coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases in the Appalachian Highlands, Ballad Health leadership has decided to ease some of its visitation restrictions.

Ballad Health's new visitation policy and patient guidelines allow:

- **One visitor at a time per inpatient, who has not tested positive for COVID-19. The visitor will be allowed during limited hours each day, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.**
- One designated visitor to accompany patients in the emergency department or pediatric emergency department
- One designated visitor or support person for each patient receiving an inpatient procedure or surgery
- One support person for laboring and obstetric patients
- Two parents or guardians will be permitted in the NICU, PICU and in rooms with a pediatric patient. Hours of visitation are not restricted in these areas.

Exceptions for extenuating circumstances must be made on a case-by-case basis. Patients identified as comfort care, hospice and/or at end of life will be permitted a maximum of four visitors in the patient room at any one time. These visitors should primarily be limited to immediate family members/significant individuals to the patient. Individual exceptions to the number of family members may be considered if approved by nursing leadership and based on the patient's care provision requirements at the time of the visit request.

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These updated visitation policies will remain in place until further notice; however, it is important to remember that an increased surge of COVID-19 patients in our community or hospitals may cause visitation restrictions to be reinstated. Ballad Health will issue communication when the restrictions are lifted or modified.

Face mask requirement for patients and visitors

Every patient and visitor presenting to Ballad Health facilities will be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 and required to bring and wear a face covering.

Various face coverings are acceptable. These include donated cloth face coverings, molded surgical masks or “dust masks,” bandana-style masks or surgical masks (dependent on availability).

Patients should be advised to wear their face covering throughout their stay, particularly any time they are being transported or interacting team members and physicians. The masks can be removed if patients are alone in their rooms, and the mask should be replaced if it becomes soiled or wet.

When patients make an appointment, they will be instructed to bring their own face covering for their visit.

Face masks and cloth face coverings should not be placed on children younger than 2, anyone who has trouble breathing or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Virginia issues mask mandate

Effective Friday, May 26, all Virginians must wear masks while in public indoor spaces.

Per Gov. Ralph Northam’s executive order, any person age 10 and older must wear a mask or face covering at all times while entering, exiting, traveling through and spending time in places such as:

- Personal care and grooming businesses
- Essential and non-essential brick and mortar retailers including grocery stores and pharmacies
- Food and beverage establishments
- Entertainment or public amusement establishments when permitted to open
- Train stations, bus stations, and on intrastate public transportation, including in waiting or congregating areas
- State and local government buildings and areas where the public accesses services

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- Any indoor space shared by groups of people who may congregate within six feet of one another or who are in close proximity to each other for more than ten minutes

Masks won't be required during exercise or for residents with health requirements that prevent them from covering their faces.

The mask order will be largely voluntary, as the governor said he's not going to allow any criminal prosecutions of anyone not complying.

Proper mask use

Face masks and cloth face coverings remain some of our most important infection prevention tools, but proper use is paramount. As mask use becomes more widespread in our communities, some tips for safe, effective mask use include:

- Comfort
 - Wash and moisturize your face before and after donning a mask. Drinking water can help your skin stay moisturized, too!
 - Avoid wearing makeup under the mask.
- Phone use
 - Turn the volume up, use speaker phone or wear earbuds, so you don't have to hold the phone to your ear.
- DO NOT
 - Pull your mask below your chin or nose.
 - Hang the mask around your neck.
 - Touch the front of your mask.
 - Reach under the mask.
 - Hang the mask from one ear.
 - Wear the mask on your forehead.
 - Leave mask straps hanging.
 - Cross the mask straps behind your head.
 - Leave hair on your face – including facial hair.
 - Remove the mask to cough or talk.
 - Pull the mask out to eat or drink.
 - Touch your phone to the mask.
 - Wear a wet mask.
 - Touch the nose bridge of a mask.

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Watch tomorrow's livestreamed press conference

We're hosting a Facebook LIVE at 11 a.m. tomorrow for local media and our communities. This is your chance to hear updated communication and information about COVID-19. Visit the [Ballad Health Facebook page](#) to tune in.

Additional points to note

- All vendors will be required to continue to access Ballad Health facilities through the limited entry points with screening stations. **Vendors must have a scheduled appointment and they will be required to wear a cloth face covering. They will not be permitted inside the facility without a previously scheduled appointment and a cloth face covering.**
- On Monday, June 1, group fitness classes at the Wellness Center will return on a limited basis. Group fitness participants will be expected to clean all equipment before and after class and maintain physical distancing during classes, and the rooms will be set up to promote physical distancing. Visit the [Wellness Center Facebook page](#) to learn more.
- Community members who would like to be tested for COVID-19 should call our Nurse Connect hotline at 833-822-5523.
- COVID-19 updates, testing information and news continues to be posted to www.balladhealth.org/COVID19.

Total positive COVID-19 case count

Tennessee – 21,306

- May 26: 20,965
- May 25: 20,607
- May 24: 20,145
- May 23: 19,789
- May 22: 19,394
- May 21: 18,961
- May 20: 18,532

Virginia – 40,249

- May 26: 39,342
- May 25: 37,727
- May 24: 36,244
- May 23: 35,749
- May 22: 34,950
- May 21: 34,137
- May 20: 32,908

Appalachian Highlands COVID-19 cases			
May 27			
Tennessee			
County	Total	New cases since May 20	Recovered

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Carter	19	-	17
Cocke	20	-	18
Greene	48	2	44
Hamblen	30	6	21
Hancock	1	1	-
Hawkins	31	-	29
Johnson	15	-	15
Sullivan	60	2	56
Unicoi	3	-	3
Washington	75	4	67
Tennessee totals	302	15	270
Virginia			
Buchanan	18	-	
City of Bristol	4	1	
Grayson	32	10	
Lee	9	-	
City of Norton	2	-	
Russell	8	-	
Scott	7	-	
Smyth	15	-	
Tazewell	6	-	
Washington	51	1	
Wise	24	-	
Wythe	21	5	
Virginia totals	197	17	-
Appalachian Highlands totals	499	32	270

COVID-19 case counts are provided by the states' health departments. Data on recovered COVID-19 patients is not available for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In case you missed it, follow the links below to learn more...

- [Ballad Health and Premier, Inc. execute on first partnership with Prestige Ameritech to expand domestic PPE production](#)

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