

Town of Middlebury  
Emergency Management Bulletin  
August 21, 2020

**It Just Goes To Show You**

An outbreak in rural Central Maine counties of Piscataquis and Penobscot has raised these counties to 'orange' status- if you're headed to Milo or Brownville Jct. or Dover-Foxcroft, or bear hunting at Sebec Corners or fishing at Schoodic Lake, you'll need to quarantine 2 weeks before returning to Vermont. The outbreak is attributed to a large wedding where Maine rules on gathering were exceeded, and masking and social distancing were ignored. The attendees were infected and ventured forth spreading more than joy, apparently. So be warned- school is opening in 2 weeks – folly at this stage of the game could impact community health at schools and homes.

**COVID Case at Helen Porter- Statement By Helen Porter**

A resident of Helen Porter Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center has tested positive for COVID-19. The facility has notified residents, family members of residents and staff of the case, which was discovered as a result of a facility-wide Phase 1 testing initiative as prescribed by the Vermont Department of Health. The resident is asymptomatic at this time and is in quarantine, as are employees who came in contact with the resident.

Helen Porter and all of Porter Medical Center have instituted policies to stop the spread of COVID-19, including restricting visitors, canceling communal dining, and asking staff to wear masks and gowns as appropriate.

“Resident and staff safety is our top priority,” said Helen Porter administrator Mary Jane Nottonson. “We are continuing to work hard to prevent the spread of the virus, including staying in very close communication with local and state health officials to ensure we are taking all the appropriate steps.”

No additional information can be shared about this resident to protect their privacy, but we will continue to update our community with any information that we can appropriately share. Visitors are not permitted at Helen Porter at this time, with very limited exceptions. Family members are encouraged to connect with their loved ones through video chat, calling, texting, or other social media formats.

**Midd College Testing- How Is It Going?**

The college is proceeding with testing of incoming students. Want to see how that's going? Here's a link: <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/midd2021/covid-reporting-dashboard>  
With nearly 400 COVID test up to today, there have been NO COVID positive results.

**A Program for Landlords and Tenants – Fair Housing Issues During COVID**

Virtual Town Hall: Fair Housing Protections (Join online or by phone)

Vermont Legal Aid is hosting a series of virtual town halls on legal issues during the coronavirus crisis. You can attend **online or by telephone**.

Wednesday, August 26, at 10 a.m.: **Fair housing protections.** Vermont Legal Aid attorney Erika Johnson and special guests United States Attorney Christina Nolan and Civil Rights Coordinator Jules Torti from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Vermont will talk about topics in housing discrimination. Topics include sexual harassment in housing, emotional support animals, discrimination based on receipt of public assistance or disability, and more. Jules, Erika and Christina will also answer your questions live.

How to join the town hall:

- Attend and ask questions online at <https://zoom.us/j/92311866366>.
- Listen by phone at 1-888-788-0099 (toll-free). Use this meeting ID when prompted: 923-1186-6366.
- Attend and ask questions on Facebook Live at <https://www.facebook.com/VermontLegalAid/>.

### **Close Encounters of the COVID Kind**

This does not involve an alien spaceship landing on the Devil's Tower. It does involve an alien bug hitching a ride on an unwelcoming, yet accommodating host. We'll define the concept of "Close Contact" here, especially when it comes to contact tracing should you find yourself ill with COVID or otherwise testing positive. When we talk about containing the spread of COVID-19, we often refer to reaching out to the "close contacts" of a person who tested positive. But what does that mean? The following is from VDH:

Both time and distance matter. Close contact generally means being within six feet for 15 minutes or more, of the person who tested positive while they are contagious (infectious). Examples of close contacts include someone you live with, rode in the car with, or had dinner with.

What close contact *does not* mean: being more than six feet away in the same indoor environment for a short period of time, walking by, or briefly being in the same room. Examples of contacts that aren't "close" include a cashier or someone you passed by at a store, or a coworker you briefly passed to ask a question.

The infectious period starts two days before any symptoms began, or for people who didn't have symptoms, two days before they got tested, and continues until they are recovered. The average number of close contacts per person who tests positive for COVID-19 in Vermont is three.

Close contacts get a call from the Health Department with guidance to stay home and away from others for a certain amount of time, and are asked to watch themselves for symptoms. Learn more at:

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19/about-coronavirus-disease-covid-19#contacttracing>

### **A Downturn in COVID Cases**

There have been 61 cases of COVID reported in Vermont in the past week. This is due primarily to a dramatic increase in testing and several positives on returning students at UVM and a couple of other

colleges (not Middlebury). In spite of that, Middlebury case growth and prevalence of COVID remains the lowest in the nation.

Case growth in the south has slowed to levels of 7 weeks ago. Case growth in the region, generally, including Quebec and Mass, has also slowed. The Cross State Travel map again resembles a traffic light, with counties changing color from green to orange, orange to green. It bodes well to pay attention to multi-week trends before planning travel. <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>