



COVID-19 Vinalhaven Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

Andrew Dorr
Town Manager

Marc Candage
EMA Director

Kerry McKee
EMS Director

Jen Desmond
Public Health Officer

Gabrian McPhail
Community Outreach
Coordinator

Tanya Robishaw
EOC Support Staff

Janica Barrows
EOC Support Staff

EOC Contact

VHEOC
@townofvinalhaven.org
207-863-2168

Town of Vinalhaven

19 Washington School Rd
Vinalhaven, Maine 04863
Phone: 207-863-2042
Cell: 207-266-7806
Fax: 207-863-4393
www.townofvinalhaven.org

Date: **5-9-20**
From: **Town of Vinalhaven**

To all of our friends from away,

During this very stressful time, the Vinalhaven Public Health Team and staff at ICMS are working very hard to ensure that our residents remain healthy and safe. While we feel that things are going as well as can be expected, we also know that the State of Maine, including our county, continues to see cases of the Coronavirus climb. It is imperative that we all work together to prevent further spread of Covid-19.

We know that many of you are eager to return to your summer homes. We already know that this summer will look very different from past summers we have all enjoyed on the Island. If we act now, we might be able to save part of the summer that we so cherish.

In my last letter, I reminded everyone that there is no hospital on Vinalhaven. There are no ICU beds, ventilators, pulmonologists, or respiratory therapists. What we do have, however, is a very high population of older adults who are at risk and vulnerable to Covid-19. We feel that it is our job to protect them, as well as all others, from the devastating effects the virus can have.

We are proud of the care our staff at the medical center and EMS team are able to provide, but in addition to being at the mercy of the weather and transport, we are also facing a lack of supplies and resources. We are being stretched thin. Unfortunately, we are not the only ones. The capabilities of our hard working grocery workers and their ability to keep us supplied are limited as well.

For the month of May, we strongly feel that the best thing to do is to stay at your primary residence. Our health care team will continue to work around the clock to keep everyone safe and we will do our very best to get people the care they need. However, I feel that I owe it to our community to be honest and to remind you that as an Island, our healthcare infrastructure is limited. There will be times, more likely now than ever before, when we may not be able to get our very sick patients off the island to a hospital that is able to accept them and provide the care they need.

Please know that we are looking forward to seeing you all when it is safe to return. Our plan is to reevaluate things at the end of the month, and send another letter out for the month of June. We want you to know that we appreciate your care and concern for our Island community and thank you for taking the time to read this letter as well as our town updates on the virus.

The virus doesn't move. We move the virus.

With continued concern for you and yours,

Jennifer Sargent Desmond, MSN, FNP-C, MFA
Public Health Officer, Town of Vinalhaven
Clinical Director, Islands Community Medical Center



Islands Community
Medical Services
Our Medical Center

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

from the Vinalhaven Public Health Team and Select Board

Vinalhaven in May – What We Know Today

We are all looking forward to Maine's safe and gradual "reopening" and a time when we can enjoy the happy days of summer. But Covid-19 has made summer-as-we-know-it a real uncertainty.

What will June, July, and August look like?

Will the quarries be open?

Will the Governor's plan change to lessen or increase current and future restrictions?

With our limited resources and the current restrictions, how will we manage the summer population increase?

Will our Medical Center and EMS be able to handle an outbreak of the virus on the island?

Will businesses be able to get the supplies they need, and will they be able to operate without being overwhelmed?

Will we be able to get over and back from the mainland for doctors appointments or other essential activities that can't be accomplished on Vinalhaven?

These are just a few of the questions that concern us and ones we don't have answers to. The best we can do is share what we know today and do our best to plan for a variety of future scenarios.

Taking things one day, one week, one month at a time, here's what we know today.

Governor Mills' Stay Safer at Home Executive Order is in effect until May 31.

Anyone not engaged in an essential activity **MUST STAY HOME**.

Anyone travelling from out of state must quarantine for 14 days.

Gatherings of more than 10 people are **NOT** permitted.

Face coverings **MUST BE WORN** while in public.

Social/Physical distancing **MUST** be practiced at all times.

Ferry, Town, and Community Services have altered.

Maine State Ferry Service is operating on a reduced schedule and with limited capacity on each trip—5 passengers/cabin on the M/V Charles Philbrook and 10/cabin on the M/V Frank Thompson.

Vinalhaven Town Office is closed to the public, but still provides most services via telephone or email.

Transfer Station is operating with normal business hours but has changed how payments are managed.

Vinalhaven Public Library is closed until further notice.

Eldercare has stopped taking "returnables" until further notice

Please use the Town website or Facebook page as a resource. Information is shared daily and Town Updates are posted M-W-F by 7 PM. Please contact the EOC with your questions and for assistance – VHEOC@townofvinalhaven.org 207-863-2168

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

from the Vinalhaven Public Health Team and Select Board

Vinalhaven businesses and organizations are working hard to adapt how they do business in order to keep staff and customers safe while still providing services to our community.

Carvers Harbor Market has limited hours to the public and are providing curbside pick-up.

Fishermen's Friend has restrictions for in-store shopping and is offering curbside pick-up.

Both Carvers Harbor Market and Fishermen's Friend are experiencing food shortages from suppliers.

Short-term rentals, hotel rooms, Air B&Bs and any other lodging options are only available to essential workers.

Some restaurants are providing curbside, take-out services.

Viking has limited the number of customers allowed in the store and are offering curbside pick-up.

Hair salons are open with some restrictions.

Most other businesses are closed until further restrictions are removed by the Governor.

Many summer events and activities have been cancelled or postponed.

The Memorial Day Parade has been cancelled. A virtual reading of the names of our veterans is being planned.

Flea Markets are not permitted at this time.

The Land Trust has cancelled all events for May and June. July and August events are on hold. The annual meeting has been tentatively scheduled for August 14th.

The 4th of July parade and celebration has been postponed.

The EMS Benefit Challenge, scheduled for the last weekend in July, has been cancelled.

Island Sail has been cancelled for this summer.

To automatically receive Town Updates in your inbox and Town Notifications via email, text, or phone:

Go to www.townofvinalhaven.org

Click **SUBSCRIBE** in the top navigation bar and subscribe to **CivicReady® Emergency Notifications** and (under "Latest News & Other Announcements") **Town Alerts**

This community is a special place and together we will get through this!

Please use the Town website or Facebook page as a resource. Information is shared daily and Town Updates are posted M-W-F by 7 PM. Please contact the EOC with your questions and for assistance – VHEOC@townofvinalhaven.org 207-863-2168

What to Expect if You Choose to Travel

We have asked that you wait to return to the island, but we know that some of you will still choose to come. If you do, it's important you understand what to expect and what has been mandated.

The Governor has ordered that anyone travelling from out of state must quarantine for 14 days.

This means you **MUST** stay in your house or on your property during the length of the quarantine. No going out to shop, to hike public trails, to meet someone at the ferry.

You should bring whatever you need to get by for 14 days—groceries, medications, toiletries, etc.

Delivery service may be available from the grocery store, but you should call ahead to confirm.

During your stay, if you have visitors who come from out of state, they will also be required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival, which, in turn, requires you, the host (if they are staying with you) to quarantine for 14 more days.

Be prepared!

Until after your 14 day quarantine, you may be on your own for home repairs or maintenance issues that arise at your residence. You should contact your caretaker or contractor to see what services they are willing to provide during your quarantine period.

Realize that right now, life on the island is not “normal” and unfortunately, will not be typical of any experience you’ve had here in the past.

Be considerate of the limited resources we have.

“Play by the rules.” Most of the community are following the directions and orders of our Governor and the Town. We expect no more or less of our summer residents and visitors.

— Thank you!