

Government Actions-State of Virginia

The State of Virginia has taken the following steps to help those impacted by the Coronavirus:

No waiting for unemployment benefits

Governor Northam has directed the Commissioner of the Virginia Employment Commission to waive the one-week waiting period to ensure workers can receive benefits as soon as possible.

Enhanced eligibility for unemployment

Workers may be eligible to receive unemployment benefits if an employer needs to temporarily slow or cease operations due to COVID-19. If a worker has been issued a notice to self-quarantine by a medical or public health official and is not receiving paid sick or medical leave from their employer, they may be eligible to receive unemployment benefits. In addition, a worker may be eligible for unemployment benefits if they must stay home to care for an ill family member and are not receiving paid family medical leave from their employer.

Fewer restrictions

For individuals receiving unemployment insurance, Governor Northam is directing the Virginia Employment Commission to give affected workers special consideration on deadlines, mandatory re-employment appointments, and work search requirements.

The Office of the Governor is providing a [Frequently Asked Questions guide](#) for workers that have been temporarily laid off or discharged during this public health crisis.

Support for Impacted Employers

Regional workforce teams will be activated to support employers that slow or cease operations. Employers who do slow or cease operations will not be financially penalized for an increase in workers requesting unemployment benefits.

The Governor is authorizing rapid response funding, through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, for employers eligible to remain open during this emergency. Funds may be used to clean facilities and support emergency needs.

Governor Northam is directing all employers to follow [U.S. Department of Labor guidance on workplace safety](#).

Department of Motor Vehicle Office Closures

- Virginia's 75 DMV offices, as well as mobile units, will close to the public.
- Online services will remain available, and anyone needing to renew a license or vehicle registration is encouraged to do so online.
- For those who cannot renew online, or whose license or registration expires before May 15, DMV will grant a 60-day extension.

Courts

Governor Northam requested and the Supreme Court of Virginia [granted a judicial emergency](#) in response to COVID-19. From Monday, March 16 through Monday, April 6, non-essential, nonemergency court proceedings in all district and circuit courts are suspended absent a specific exemption.

This includes a prohibition on new eviction cases for tenants who are unable to pay rent as a result of COVID-19.

All non-exempted court deadlines are tolled and extended for a period of 21 days.

Utilities

The State Corporation Commission (SCC) issued an [order](#) directing utilities it regulates, such as electric, natural gas, and water companies in Virginia, **to suspend service disconnections for 60 days to provide immediate relief for any customer, residential and business, who may be financially impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak.**

For a comprehensive list of actions Governor Northam has announced to combat COVID-19 in Virginia, visit virginia.gov/coronavirus.

Government Actions-Federal

The Federal Government is currently in talks on how to best support workers and others impacted by the economic fall-out of the corona virus. This section will be updated daily as information becomes available.