

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **DRIVE-THRU COVID-19 TESTING CONTINUES NEXT WEEK IN PEARISBURG AND BLACKSBURG**

*-- Services are by appointment only --*

(CHRISTIANSBURG, Virginia) – The New River Valley Public Health Task Force will hold ongoing drive-thru COVID-19 testing on Tuesday, June 9 at Giles High School, 1825 Wenonah Ave. in Pearisburg, and on Thursday, June 11 at Blacksburg High School, 3401 Bruin Lane in Blacksburg. Both sites will operate from noon to 2 p.m. These sites are closed to the public. ONLY those individuals with a letter of authorization from the Virginia Department of Health’s New River Health District will be allowed access to the sites, and only by appointment.

“We have administered more than 3,500 COVID-19 tests since broad community testing began nearly two months ago,” said Noelle Bissell, M.D., director of the New River Health District. “Testing is important to monitor cases as we enter phases of re-opening, so we can investigate, trace the contacts of those infected and mitigate the spread of illness. Remember that the best protection for each of us comes from personal precautions, including hygiene and social distancing. That’s how you protect yourself and those around you.”

If you have questions about COVID-19 or wish to request an appointment for testing, call the New River Health District’s COVID-19 public health call center at 540-267-8240. Hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon and Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. After hours, leave a message.

“The task force has created a mobile, flexible and scalable testing engine that can be deployed across the New River Valley, and it has helped us prevent COVID-19 from overloading our hospitals or compromising our public safety systems and services,” said Blacksburg Police Chief Anthony Wilson.

To lower the risk of spreading respiratory infections, including COVID-19, the Virginia Department of Health encourages everyone to:

- Stay home as much as possible, especially if you are at higher risk of serious illness. If you must go out in public, wear a cloth face covering;
- Stay home when you are sick;
- Avoid contact with sick people;
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing;
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces;
- If you are experiencing symptoms, call your doctor;
- Practice social distancing. Maintain at least six feet of space between yourself and other individuals when out in public; and
- Avoid close contact with crowds of any size, and avoid any crowd of more than 10 people.

*(More)*

For the most accurate and up-to-date information online, visit [www.vdh.virginia.gov/new-river](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/new-river), [www.nrvroadtowellness.com](http://www.nrvroadtowellness.com), [www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus) and [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

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**MEDIA NOTES:**

News media access is not available at Giles High School on Tuesday.

News media access to Blacksburg High School on Thursday is available ONLY by advance request and appointment. Access will be escorted, for the purposes of photography and videography from a distance. These measures are necessary to ensure patient privacy and operational security.

For more information and to request news media access, contact Robert Parker, public information officer, Virginia Department of Health, Western Region, [robert.parker@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:robert.parker@vdh.virginia.gov).