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**RAPPAHANNOCK COUNTY  
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**COVID-19 RELEASE No. 7  
Friday, May 15, 2020 – 2 p.m.**

**Eleven Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 in Rappahannock County  
Phase One of Governor's Safer-At-Home Directive Now in Effect  
Restriction on Short-Term Rentals Lifted  
Shenandoah National Park Remains Closed to All Visitors**

(Washington, VA) – The Virginia Department of Health is reporting eleven COVID-19 cases in Rappahannock County, with the first case identified in early April.

Today marks the start of Phase One of Governor Northam's Forward Virginia Blueprint (*i.e.*, "Phase One"). Phase One is a transitional step that allows for the partial opening of certain businesses and shifts from the previous "Stay at Home" order to an interim "Safer at Home" message. Details regarding Phase One of the Governor's Forward Virginia Blueprint can be found here: <https://www.virginia.gov/coronavirus/forwardvirginia/>

Because confirmed COVID-19 cases in our community and region continue to increase, we urge citizens to heed the Governor's "Safer at Home" message and protect themselves and those around them when leaving home for essential purposes. Follow the latest CDC guidance when leaving your home: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/essential-goods-services.html>

That Rappahannock County Board of Supervisors at its May 13 meeting lifted a previous restriction on short-term rentals. As a result, owners of tourist homes, inns, and bed and breakfasts may now accept short-term guests.

Shenandoah National Park remains closed, including Skyline Drive, trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, and other facilities. Federal officials are planning a phased reopening of Shenandoah National Park, with Skyline Drive likely to open first, followed later by local trailheads. We expect new information soon, with updates from the National Park Service available here: <https://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/alerts.htm>.

The Department of Social Services ("DSS") is seeking financial donations or donations of crossword/puzzle/word-search books to include in "Senior Sacks" that will be distributed to our

community senior citizens. Willing donors should send these items or monetary contributions to the Rappahannock County Department of Social Services, PO Box 87 (354 Gay Street), Washington, VA 22747. Alternatively, those interested in donating can call DSS to arrange an in-person drop-off (540) 675-3313. DSS is also alerting families with children who benefit from free and reduced school lunch that they are eligible for a Pandemic EBT card ("P-EBT"). DSS is working with Rappahannock County Public Schools to identify eligible children and automatically register them for this benefit. Eligible families already receiving SNAP benefits will see additional funding in the next two weeks; for others, P-EBT cards should arrive in 4-6 weeks. Families seeking confirmation of their eligibility for free or reduced lunch, or those who would like to apply, should call Rappahannock County Public Schools at (540) 671-0153.

The Rappahannock County Board of Supervisors and other local public bodies will continue to conduct all public meetings via the *Zoom* electronic-meeting platform, with agendas limited to "essential business" and business that is "statutorily required" until no earlier than the start of Phase Two of the Governor's "Forward Virginia Blueprint." The Board's next meeting is at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, June 1. Citizens are encouraged to listen to and participate in this meeting via *Zoom*, with instructions for public participation and dial-in credentials available here: <https://go.boarddocs.com/va/corva/Board.nsf/vpublic>.

The Rappahannock County Office of Emergency Management is monitoring closely the evolving COVID-19 situation in our community and will provide updates as developments warrant and additional information becomes available.

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