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**COVID-19 RELEASE No. 9
Wednesday, July 8, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.**

**Rappahannock County Government Urges Citizens to Remain Vigilant
Drive-Through COVID-19 Testing Event Scheduled for July 18**

(Washington, VA) – Although Governor Ralph Northam announced Wednesday, July 1, 2020 the start of Phase Three of the *Forward Virginia Blueprint*, the Rappahannock County government urges citizen to remain vigilant by following active executive orders. In Executive Order 63, the Governor emphasized the need for vigilance: “I strongly urge all Virginians to wear face coverings when leaving their homes. But as to indoor settings to which the public has access, mere encouragement is not enough to protect the health and safety of Virginians.” His Executive Order further describes specific situations in which the wearing of masks is required. Executive Order 63 can be accessed here: <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/executive-actions/>

The Board of Supervisors supports Executive Order 63 and asks citizens to exercise caution, especially when attending gatherings. Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District (RRHD) Health Director, Dr. Kartchner, conveyed this succinct message regarding the continuing threat of increased COVID-19 infections: “As states have begun to reopen, the location of clusters has changed. The first few months of the pandemic brought clusters in nursing homes, prisons, and meat packing plants. The current phase has identified spread linked to crowded bars, casinos, family events and churches. Rappahannock County is no different. It is still very important for people to continue to be careful and follow the guidelines concerning physical distancing, personal hygiene, and the wearing of cloth face coverings when appropriate distancing can't be maintained.”

Required protective measures are particularly important now that the VDH is reporting thirty-one confirmed COVID-19 cases in Rappahannock County, which is an increase of eleven cases in the last five days. Citizens who believe they might have been exposed to the coronavirus can be tested, at no cost, next Saturday, July 18, 2020, from 9 a.m. – 12 noon at the Madison County High School. This free drive-through testing site is jointly sponsored by the RRHD and Rappahannock, Madison, and Orange Counties. The Madison County High School is located at

68 Mountaineer Drive, in Madison. The high school parking lot will open at 8 a.m. and the first 500 individuals will be tested.

Local government meetings have transitioned from a fully electronic format to in-person meetings to allow for the review and consideration of a backlog of items that previously could not be considered while meetings were relegated to the *Zoom* electronic-meeting platform. Through a partnership with the Rappahannock County Public Schools, public meetings will be held until further notice in the Rappahannock County Elementary School gymnasium, which will allow for sufficient social distancing. Upcoming meetings include:

- School Board, Tuesday, July 14, 6:30 p.m.
- Planning Commission, Wednesday, July 15, 7:00 p.m.
- Board of Supervisors Work Session, Monday, July 20, 7:00 p.m.
- Board of Zoning Appeals, Wednesday, July 22, 7:00 p.m.
- Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting, Monday, August 3, 2:00 pm & 7:00 p.m.

The Rappahannock County Office of Emergency Management continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation and will provide updates as developments warrant and additional information becomes available.

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