



# Joint Information Center on COVID-19 for the State of Florida

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **The State of Florida Issues Updates on COVID-19**

The State of Florida is responding to COVID-19. In an effort to keep Florida residents and visitors safe and aware regarding the status of the virus, the Florida Department of Health will issue this update every day, seven days per week.

Today, Governor DeSantis announced that the State has ordered an additional 2,500 test kits to supplement the adequate resources already available to test for COVID-19. These additional test kits will enable the Department of Health, working with Florida health care providers, to test up to an additional 625,000 individuals. Governor DeSantis has also recommended that local authorities strongly consider canceling mass gatherings. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines a mass event or gathering as 1,000 individuals or more. Practically speaking, a mass gathering is a large enough assembly of individuals that will put a strain on local resources. The Governor also suspended non-essential in-state and all out-of-state travel for state employees for 30 days.

Yesterday, March 11, Governor DeSantis directed the Florida Division of Emergency Management and the Agency for Health Care Administration to take action to restrict access to vulnerable populations for those who may have been exposed to COVID-19. The Governor also directed the Florida Department of Corrections to suspend visitation at state prisons for 30 days.

On March 9, Governor DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-52, declaring a State of Emergency for COVID-19. By declaring a State of Emergency, Governor DeSantis is ensuring that state and local governments have the resources and flexibility they need to prepare and respond.

### **New Positive Cases**

Earlier today, the Florida Department of Health announced one new case of COVID-19 in Seminole County.

- A 68-year old male in Seminole County has tested positive for COVID-19. He is isolated and will continue to remain isolated until cleared by public health officials. This is a travel-related case and is associated with a Nile River cruise/tour in Egypt.

## COVID-19 Cases

Florida Residents Diagnosed in Florida				
	County	Age	Sex	Travel** Related
1	Manatee	63	Male	No
2	Hillsborough	29	Female	Yes
3	Santa Rosa	71	Male	Yes
4	Broward	75	Male	No
5	Broward	65	Male	No
6	Lee	77	Female	Yes
7	Lee	77	Male	Yes
8	Charlotte	54	Female	Yes
9	Okaloosa	61	Female	Yes
10	Volusia	66	Female	Yes
11	Manatee	81	Female	Yes
12	Broward	67	Male	No
13	Volusia	60	Female	Yes
14	Broward	69	Female	No
15	Nassau	68	Male	Yes
16	Collier	73	Male	Yes
17	Collier	68	Female	Yes
18	Collier	64	Female	Yes
19	Pinellas	67	Male	Yes
20	Pinellas	64	Male	Yes
21	Pasco	46	Male	Yes
22	Miami-Dade	56	Male	Yes
23	Broward	70	Male	Under Investigation
24	Lee	57	Male	Under Investigation
25	Broward	65	Male	Under Investigation
26	Broward	61	Male	Yes
27*	Seminole	68	Male	Yes

\* The Department of Health will confirm cases reported by commercial labs.

\*\* A known history of exposure to COVID-19 outside of the state.

As an update to the ongoing epidemiological investigation in St. Johns County, it was determined that the individual who traveled to Florida from New York to attend Bike

Week was isolated prior to attending the event. We are continuing to encourage Floridians to stay vigilant and advising Florida municipalities to consider limiting large gatherings.

### **Port Everglades Advisory**

On March 12, the Department announced a new positive case of COVID-19 in Broward County. The Department, through an extensive epidemiological investigation, identified this new case as the fourth positive case of COVID-19 associated with Port Everglades in Broward County, Florida. Three cases are connected to or employed by Metro Cruise Services – a company that operates at Port Everglades. The epidemiological investigation for the fourth person connected to Port Everglades is ongoing.

- The Florida Department of Health recommends that all individuals experiencing symptoms who have recently traveled through Port Everglades immediately contact their County Health Department or health care provider and self-isolate for 14 days.
- The Department also recommends employees of Metro Cruise Services at Port Everglades with any association to these cases self-isolate at home.
- The Department is working to connect with all employees at Metro Cruise Services who may have come into contact with the three individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 to provide the employees with the appropriate guidance and monitoring.
- The Department is working in close consultation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on this investigation.
- CDC recommends that individuals with recent travel history on a cruise monitor their health for 14 days and, if they develop symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact their County Health Department or health care provider.

### **International Travel and Cruises Advisory**

The Florida Department of Health is advising all individuals who have traveled internationally to follow **CDC guidelines**, summarized below:

- **Level 3 Travel Advisory:** CDC recommends 14-day self-isolation and social distancing upon return to the United States. Social distancing includes avoiding going out in public and close personal interactions. If you become symptomatic, immediately self-isolate and contact your County Health Department or health care provider.
- **Level 2 Travel Advisory and Cruises:** Travelers should monitor their health and limit interactions with others for 14 days after returning to the United States. If you become symptomatic, immediately self-isolate and they should call ahead to a health care professional or their county health department before seeking treatment.
  - According to CDC, a cruise ship is defined as a passenger vessel involving the movement of large numbers of people in closed and semi-closed settings.
- For more information regarding current CDC travel advisories related to COVID-19, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

A person that experiences a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as fever, cough or shortness of breath, within 14 days after travel from China, Italy, Iran, South Korea, Japan and any other destination under

their health care provider or local County Health Department (CHD) and mention their recent travel or close contact, unless they are experiencing an emergency.

If a person has had close contact with someone showing these symptoms who has recently traveled from areas or been in contact with a person with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19, they should call ahead to a health care professional and the County Health Department. The health care professional will work with the Department to determine if the person should be tested for COVID-19.

### **Nile Cruise Advisory**

The Florida Department of Health is advising all individuals who traveled to Egypt for a cruise on the Nile River or tour in February or March 2020 to self-isolate for 14 days following their date of return to the United States. Several passengers in the United States recently developed symptoms and have been confirmed to be infected with COVID-19, including 11 positive cases in Florida.

### **What you Should Know**

COVID-19 can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, including when an individual coughs or sneezes. These droplets may land on objects and surfaces. Other people may contract COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

Symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough and shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as many as 14 days following exposure. Most people recover from COVID-19 without needing special treatment. The elderly and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems and diabetes are more likely to develop serious illness.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. The Department recommends everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick;
- Staying home when you are sick and avoiding contact with persons in poor health;
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then disposing of the tissue;
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing;
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty; and
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

The CDC does not recommend that asymptomatic, healthy people wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. Facemasks should

be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for [health workers](#) and [people who are taking care of someone in close settings](#) (at home or in a health care facility).

A person that experiences a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as fever, cough or shortness of breath, within 14 days after travel from China, Italy, Iran, South Korea, Japan and any other destination under [CDC travel advisory](#) should call ahead to their health care provider and local CHD and mention their recent travel or close contact.

If a person has had close contact with someone showing these symptoms who has recently traveled from this area or been in contact with a person with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19, they should call ahead to a health care professional and the CHD. The health care provider will work with the Department to determine if the person should be tested for COVID-19.

## **Actions the State has Taken to Prepare for and Respond to COVID-19**

### **Department of Health**

- Governor Ron DeSantis issued [Executive Order 20-52](#) declaring a State of Emergency for COVID-19.
- Governor Ron DeSantis directed the Florida Division of Emergency Management to activate to Level II to coordinate the state's response to COVID-19.
- Governor Ron DeSantis issued [Executive Order 20-51](#) directing the State Surgeon General to declare a Public Health Emergency.
- State Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees declared a Public Health Emergency for COVID-19 in Florida.
- Established an Incident Management Team to coordinate response operations.
- Activated a dedicated incident command post for on-site response activities.
- Conducted public health and health care stakeholder conference calls to provide statewide updates on the current outbreak situation, response actions and guidance for pandemic planning. Over five hundred participants joined these calls.
- Participated with the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) on statewide conference calls with nursing homes, assisted living facilities and hospitals.
- Established a public call center for questions regarding COVID-19.
- Developed and distributed an updated COVID-19 presentation to CHDs for use at community meetings.
- Implemented protocols for investigation, surveillance and monitoring for COVID-19 to rapidly detect and contain cases.
- Established mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and coordination with the CDC regarding epidemiological activities.
- Distributed CDC Interim Guidance for public health personnel evaluating Persons Under Investigation (PUIs) and asymptomatic close contacts of confirmed cases at their home or non-home residential settings to CHDs.
- Distributed the updated Clinician Screening Tool for identifying PUIs for COVID-19 and a health care provider letter regarding Enhanced Surveillance and Preparedness for COVID-19 to associations, licensed providers, Health Care Coalitions and CHDs.
- Implemented testing at all three State Public Health Laboratories.

- Distributed updated CDC guidance for schools to CHDs and the Department of Education.
- Distributed updated Laboratory Guidance regarding implementation of testing at State Public Health Laboratories.

## **AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION**

- Secretary Mayhew participated in a press conference with Governor DeSantis, Lieutenant Governor Nunez, Miami-Dade leadership and health care leaders to provide COVID-19 updates, including information on the new screening requirements at nursing homes, assisted living facilities and other long-term care facilities per a recent emergency order.
- The Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA) opened an event on the Emergency Status System for hospitals to enter census information and emergency room status updates.
- AHCA expanded the event on the Emergency Status System to collect isolation beds for hospitals effective Saturday, March 7.
- AHCA shared key guidance including CDC and the Department information regarding the importance of screening visitors, infection control protocol and hygiene best practices with all licensed healthcare facilities regulated by the Agency. The Agency is continuing to provide updates on recommendations and best practices from the CDC and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services regarding COVID-19.
- AHCA, in coordination with the Florida Division of Emergency Management and the Department of Health, is hosting statewide calls for nursing homes, assisted living facilities, intermediate care facilities, and Agency for Persons with Disabilities group homes, and adult family care homes in conjunction with the Florida Health Care Association. Secretary Mayhew and Surgeon General Rivkees are continuing to address critical issues impacting these providers such as restricting and screening visitors and providing updates.
- AHCA, in coordination with the Florida Division of Emergency Management and the Department, is hosting statewide calls for hospitals in conjunction with the Florida Hospital Association. Secretary Mayhew and Surgeon General Rivkees to provide the most up-to-date information to hospital partners and residential facilities caring for aging and vulnerable populations.
- This week, AHCA Secretary Mary Mayhew visited nursing homes and hospital facilities in Tampa, Jacksonville and Orlando to discuss COVID-19 preparations and response and address to any concerns and questions from local partners.

## **AGENCY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

- Members of the APD Senior Leadership Team are holding daily meetings on actions, policies, procedures, and updates related to COVID-19
- The agency's three state-run centers in Marianna, Gainesville, and Chattahoochee are working very closely with their local health departments to enhance infection control measures.
- APD sent an updated visitor questionnaire for Adult Day Training facilities and Group Homes across the state to screen visitors prior to entering a facility. This visitor questionnaire will now be used for visitors to APD Regional Offices.

- APD continues to provide an up-to-date status on COVID-19, best practices, preventative tips, and CDC guidance to APD providers, Waiver Support Coordinators, Stakeholders, and APD employees.
- The Director of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), and members of the Senior Leadership Team participated in the conference call related to vulnerable populations hosted by the Surgeon General. The call provided the most up-to-date information to APD partners who are caring for vulnerable populations.
- APD implemented a visitor questionnaire at its two state centers in Gainesville and Marianna.
- APD continues to provide additional best practices, preventative tips and CDC guidance to APD providers, Waiver Support coordinators and APD employees.
- The APD Senior Leadership Team began hosting twice weekly COVID-19 conference calls with the Superintendents of the agency's facilities in Marianna, Gainesville, Chattahoochee and the Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program.

## **DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS**

- The Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) Secretary Richard Prudom stood with Governor Ron DeSantis and other agency heads during press conferences on Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup> to address Florida's recent actions regarding COVID-19.
- DOEA Secretary Richard Prudom and executive staff participated in a conference call with the Administration for Community Living (ACL) and ACL administrator Lance Robertson and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Other state units on aging also participated to discuss issues on the implementation of prevention protocols for prevention of spread of COVID-19.
- DOEA Program directors provided guidance to Area Agencies on Aging and statewide Comprehensive Assessment and Review for Long-term Care Services (CARES) offices on how to protect clients and staff during a conference call and provided follow-up information.
- DOEA participated in the Aging and Vulnerable Populations Call hosted by the Florida Department of Health (DOH). All of the state's Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) were on this call, and DOEA staff are following up with them on an individual basis for questions and answers for COVID-19.
- Through Departmental Leadership and the Area Agency on Aging contract managers, we are providing technical assistance to the entire Aging Network regarding allowable flexibilities within programs to ensure continuity of services and the safety of elders. For example, staff has provided specific technical assistance to all AAAs regarding completing assessments, safe delivery of home-delivered meals, and procurement of cleaning supplies.
- Arranged a conference call with a representative from the Area Agencies on Aging as well as the Florida Association of Aging Services Providers and GA Foods. Discussed the current messaging from ACL and the CDC as it relates to the Aging Network.
- Conducted a Florida Association of the Area Agencies on Aging (F4A) conference call with all contract managers and AAA Executive Directors March 11 at 2:00 p.m. to provide a daily update regarding COVID-19.
- The Department of Elder Affairs has distributed DOH website information as a resource for PACE providers to use and distribute to seniors. and provided the Executive Orders. DOEA has circulated additional information and long-term care provider conference call invitations with presentations by DOH and AHCA to the PACE providers.

## **DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

- The Department of Children and Families (DCF) Office of Child Welfare sent communication about COVID-19, to licensed child care providers, directing them to follow the CDC's Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Childcare Programs and K-12 Schools to Plan, Prepare and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019.
- DCF Secretary Chad Poppell sent thorough communication to all DCF staff, contracted partners, and licensed facilities (including child care providers) about COVID-19, including precautionary measures (as outlined by the CDC) and temporary policy updates.
- DCF is working with AHCA, DOEA, and APD to compile and develop guidance for agency staff and stakeholders who work directly with Florida's elderly population and have a higher risk of being exposed to COVID-19.
- DCF established strategies for COVID-19 prevention at all three state mental health treatment facilities, as well as the South Florida mental health facilities run by Wellpath Recovery Solutions, a contracted partner. They are reporting daily updates to ensure compliance with virus prevention and monitor potential outbreaks.
- DCF has established a visitation protocol for all state-owned and contracted mental health treatment facilities, as well as vendors and patient families, requiring all outside parties to complete a Visitors Viral Symptoms Screening prior to entering a facility.

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

- Effective March 11, 2020, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) is restricting visitor access to its State Veterans' Nursing Homes and Domiciliary until further notice, with the exception of essential visitors, such as family members of those residents undergoing end-of-life care.
- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has also temporarily restricted access to their nursing and community living center facilities to only essential visitors until further notice.
- All VA Medical Centers in Florida are implementing enhanced screening protocols at their facilities. VA Outpatient Clinics are also implementing enhanced screening protocols. Please plan to arrive at the facility well in advance of your appointment to allow additional time for the screening process.
- Veterans who are concerned they may have symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) are encouraged to contact the VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center at 1-877-741-3400 (toll free). Clinical staff provide 24/7 virtual care and support, including nurse advice and triage. The service is available at no cost to veterans enrolled for care in the VA Sunshine Healthcare Network (VISN 8).
- All FDVA and VA facilities remain fully operational.

## **VOLUNTEER FLORIDA**

- Volunteer Florida is coordinating with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs to see how the agency can assist with distributing information to seniors.
- Volunteer Florida's Emergency Management Department is having initial conversations with partners to determine what could be needed and what safety precautions need to be considered if volunteers are utilized.



- Volunteer Florida is preparing information to be shared with Supervisors of Elections about Volunteer Connect, Florida's official volunteer opportunities platform. Through the platform, offices can post/promote volunteer opportunities, including poll work.
- Volunteer Florida is coordinating with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs to see how the agency can assist with distributing information to seniors.
- Volunteer Florida's Emergency Management Department is having initial conversations with partners to determine what could be needed and what safety precautions need to be considered if volunteers are utilized.

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

- FDOE sent updated guidance to school districts and superintendents ahead of spring break. To view that memo, visit: [fldoe.org/em-response](https://fldoe.org/em-response).
- Out of an abundance of caution, two temporary school closures have been reported in Okaloosa and Hillsborough County for cleaning. At this time, no Florida student has contracted COVID-19. To stay up to date on school information, visit: [fldoe.org/em-response](https://fldoe.org/em-response).
- In an effort to be proactive, and only as a precautionary measure if COVID-19 evolves in Florida, Florida Virtual School (FLVS) has partnered with the Florida Department of Education to offer all school districts student support and teacher professional development tailored to the online learning environment. The Florida Department of Education in partnership with FLVS is training an additional 10,000 teachers statewide on the Virtual Teacher Training for COVID-19. Superintendents who are interested in offering their teachers the Virtual Teacher Training for COVID-19 should work with their County Virtual Principals to provide a list of teachers to FLVS through: <https://www.flvs.net/FLVSTeacherTraining>.
- Education Commissioner Corcoran is in constant communication with Florida Superintendents and districts to provide guidance on COVID-19 preparedness and response and will be holding weekly calls to update districts on preparation efforts.
- FDOE has sent weekly memos providing updates to school districts, superintendents, Florida Colleges, parents, teachers and stakeholders.
- FDOE launched a survey to school districts and public charter schools about their preparations, policies, their capacity to serve their students virtually to help meet and determine any preparedness needs.

## **STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

- Effective immediately, all universities will make plans to transition to remote instruction as soon as possible.
- State universities with students who have returned from spring break, which includes Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida International University, Florida Polytechnic University, and the University of Florida, should implement a process to transition to remote instruction immediately and encourage students to return home for at least 2 weeks. Each university will provide detailed information to their students, faculty, and staff at the earliest possible time regarding this transition.
- State universities with students who are currently on spring break or about to be on break should direct their students to NOT return to campus for at least 2 weeks following the conclusion of spring break. This includes students at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida State University, New College of Florida, the University of North Florida, the University of Central Florida, the University

of South Florida, and the University of West Florida. Each university will provide detailed information to their students, faculty, and staff at the earliest possible time regarding this transition.

- All universities will continue to provide essential services, such as dining, counseling, health services, library services, etc., potentially on a limited basis or remotely. Each university with clinical and other non-classroom based programs will communicate directly with those students.
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- RESIDENTIAL HOUSING While students are encouraged to remain off-campus, each university should develop a plan for providing residential accommodations for students who need assistance or must remain in place.
- For more information visit: <https://www.flbog.edu/2020/03/11/state-university-system-statement-on-covid-19/>

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**

- FDC has suspended visitation at all correctional institutions statewide through April 5, 2020. The decision to reinstate the normal visitation schedule will be evaluated in consultation with the Department of Health. Inmates will continue to have access to mail, phone calls and video visitation. Legal visits will not be impacted.
- Anyone entering a correctional institution will be screened, and entrance will be restricted if they:
  - Have traveled and returned from China, Iran, Italy or South Korea within the last 14 days
  - Have signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection such as fever, cough or shortness of breath
  - Have had contact with someone who has been or is under investigation for COVID-19
- Florida Department of Corrections (FDC) has no known or suspected cases of COVID-19 within its correctional institutions at this time.
- FDC's Office of Health Services coordinates with the department for guidance on any type of outbreak and is closely monitoring new information as it is disseminated from Florida Department of Health and the CDC.
- FDC has a plan in place and dedicated staff members trained in the prevention and containment of infectious diseases.
- FDC stood up its Incident Command System in response to COVID-19.
- Education has been provided to staff, inmates and visitors to prevent the spread of any infectious disease, including COVID-19.
- Precautions are in place at facilities to protect inmates and staff from exposure to flu, COVID-19 or any other respiratory illness and are being followed per CDC recommendations.

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

- The Florida Department of State (DOS) has been in contact with the Supervisors of Elections for Hillsborough, Lake, Leon, Manatee, Palm Beach and Sarasota Counties to determine their needs specifically as it relates to supplies. The supervisors have been encouraged to connect with their county emergency management department for meeting these resource needs.
- DOS is in constant communication with Supervisors of Elections regarding readiness for elections and any anticipated needs related to COVID-19.
- DOS is sharing information with the public regarding voting options for the upcoming election, including vote-by-mail and early voting options.
- DOS is actively wiping down public spaces including all DOS maintained properties, reception areas and restrooms with bleach or disinfectant wipes to mitigate the spread of germs.
- DOS has provided guidance to all 67 county Supervisors of Elections regarding assisted living facilities and poll worker staff matters. The message included guidance to screen poll workers and clerks beforehand to determine their recent travel status or if they are showing active symptoms of COVID-19 and reminding supervisors of the option to designate alternate polling locations for nursing homes, centers for independent living continuing care retirement living communities and assisted living facilities.
- DOS has identified stakeholders including libraries, museums, cultural facilities and are developing plans to communicate information and resources about COVID-19 to those stakeholders.

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

- At the direction of Governor DeSantis, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Secretary Kevin J. Thibault, along with Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees, hosted a conference call with all Florida ports and their governing bodies as well as all public use airports to discuss Florida's ongoing response to the COVID-19 virus.
- FDOT Secretary Thibault and staff from the department will host weekly conference calls with all passenger seaports and public use airports to provide updates related to COVID-19.
- COVID-19 educational materials are being posted in FDOT facilities, which include welcome centers, service plazas and rest areas across the state.
- COVID-19 materials are being posted at all FDOT work sites across the state to help educate contractors, vendors and stakeholders.
- FDOT toll collectors have been given additional training and are required to wear gloves as well as continue with enhanced cleansing.
- SunRail has posted COVID-19 educational materials inside all trains and on all platforms, focusing on areas near entrances and bathrooms.
- SunRail trains are being cleaned and sanitized daily and SunRail staff have been provided sanitizing towelettes and encouraged to wash their hands frequently throughout the day.
- FDOT is providing hand sanitizer and posting COVID-19 educational materials at its public meetings across the state.

## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAY SAFETY AND MOTOR VEHICLES

- FLHSMV is encouraging Floridians through social media and other channels to use convenient [online options](#), rather than visiting an office location, to renew or replace a driver license, ID card, motor vehicle or vessel registration, and more.

## DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

- The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) continues to encourage businesses to follow the "[Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)" issued by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This information is being provided to statewide business partners, local Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Councils throughout the state.
- The Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) and Florida Retail Federation and the Florida Chamber of Commerce, in coordination with DEO, are working to provide health safety information and coordination with partners, including how to address potential local supply issues.
- DEO is coordinating with CareerSource Florida, local workforce boards, and other public-private partners. DEO is also working closely with our local, state and federal partners to explore potential resources for employers, businesses and impacted workforce.

## VISIT FLORIDA

- VISIT FLORIDA ceased all Florida tourism marketing in China. VISIT FLORIDA redirected the savings from China and invested this funding into a domestic campaign that launched on March 2.
- VISIT FLORIDA has provided the state's three highway welcome centers with the latest information and resources on COVID-19 to help keep the traveling public informed.
- VISIT FLORIDA is tracking traveler sentiment across online platforms and social media to monitor how COVID-19 may impact travel and travel booking to Florida.
- VISIT FLORIDA is temporarily pausing all marketing efforts in Germany in accordance with federal travel restrictions. This is the only European country besides the United Kingdom where VISIT FLORIDA has active campaigns.
- VISIT FLORIDA employees at Florida's three highway welcome centers continue to be provided with the latest COVID-19 information and resources to help keep the traveling public informed.
- Preventive health resources and options have been communicated to all VISIT FLORIDA staff, with new updates and information relayed accordingly.
- VISIT FLORIDA remains in close contact with industry partners and travel organizations and is communicating all new information as it becomes available.
- VISIT FLORIDA continues to follow all direction from the Executive Office of the Governor and Florida Department of Health in the dissemination of alerts and safety information through social media and VISIT FLORIDA's network of Destination Marketing Organization and business partners.

## DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

- The Department of Revenue's Child Support Program is working to reduce when customers are required to visit a local child support office and is providing new connect/customer service options.
- Efforts include rescheduling genetic testing sample collection appointments and postponing other types of appointments. The Program will soon be implementing the ability for parents to enter into written agreements over the phone, and the Program will be providing new fax, email and form drop-off processes.
- The Department of Revenue's General Tax Administration (GTA) program is working with its tax processing vendor to ensure continuity in tax data and payment processing.
- GTA is closely monitoring any future guidance issued by the Internal Revenue Service for potential corporate income tax due date extensions.
- The Department has increased messaging on preventative measures through the deployment of DOH/CDC posters, ensured hand sanitizer is available, and increased cleaning of high-traffic areas in our public areas of our service centers.

## OFFICE OF INSURANCE REGULATION

- OIR has published a [resource page](#) on its website emphasizing its direction to insurers and will continuously update the page with important insurance resources.
- The Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) Insurance Commissioner David Altmaier is actively engaged with insurers and key partners at the state and national level regarding COVID-19. Commissioner Altmaier is collaborating with other state insurance commissioners and the National Association of Insurance Commissioners to share information and resources.
- OIR has issued [Informational Memorandum OIR-20-01M](#) to all health insurers and health maintenance organizations, directing them to:
  - Use every channel available to them to communicate with their policyholders and share official CDC and Department of Health information;
  - Devote resources to inform consumers of available benefits, quickly respond to inquiries, and avoid and dispel misinformation;
  - Work with public health officials to do everything possible to prepare and respond; and
  - Consider all practicable options to reduce the barriers of cost-sharing for testing and treatment of COVID-19.
- OIR is reaching out to insurers regarding their response to COVID-19 and working with insurers to make sure they are properly communicating to consumers.
- OIR has activated its incident management team and has met to review disaster response procedures.
- OIR has issued Informational Memorandum OIR-20-02M as a reminder to all health insurers, health maintenance organizations and other health entities to allow for early prescription refills following the Governor's Executive Order 20-52 declaring a state of emergency in Florida.
- OIR has spoken with multiple insurers who are voluntarily waiving cost-sharing for consumers in an effort to remove barriers to testing for COVID-19.

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**

- The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) is coordinating ESF-16 providing updates and securing staffing while FDLE Regional Operations Centers are working with Regional Domestic Security Task Forces to prepare for any responses needed.
- FDLE has reviewed its COOP and identified members who can work from home. FDLE has ordered an increase in bandwidth and additional VPN licenses creating additional capacity for members to work remotely.
- FDLE's Office of Mutual Aid prepared and distributed a law enforcement guide on COVID-19 for law enforcement partners and state agencies and FDLE's General Counsel prepared a law enforcement guide for protocols in a quarantine.
- FDLE Commissioner Rick Swearingen sent an email to all members outlining simple ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as well as links to the Florida Department of Health and CDC websites. Signs have been posted in all FDLE Regions and at Headquarters with prevention information.

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE**

- The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice's Office of Health Services developed COVID-19 guidance for all facilities serving DJJ youth. This guidance included Center for Disease Control criteria on how to assess and care for youth who are exhibiting fever and respiratory symptoms and environmental cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice has modified our screening protocols and procedures for youth taken into custody by law enforcement who are brought to our juvenile assessment centers and detention screening units to now include precautionary coronavirus screening questions and protocols. This modified screening protocol was shared with our law enforcement partners statewide.
- The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice has developed a visitor screening tool which is now mandatory to use inside of our juvenile detention centers and residential commitment programs to ensure both the safety of the youth and staff in these programs. The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice is in the process of sending a notice to parents and guardians of youth in programs regarding the new visitor screening requirements.
- The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice has sent a notice to the vendors, guests, volunteers and business partners that come into our juvenile detention centers and residential commitment programs asking that they limit visiting any of these facilities if they are exhibiting flu-like symptoms or have traveled outside of the U.S., including cruise ship travel. The department will work with these entities on alternatives to visiting programs to ensure critical services are not interrupted.

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### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The Florida Department of Health, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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