



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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Contact: Joint Information Center on COVID-19 for the State of Florida**  
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## **Florida Department of Health Announces New Positive COVID-19 Cases in Florida**

**TALLAHASSEE** — The Florida Department of Health has announced three new positive cases of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Florida. To keep Florida residents and visitors safe and aware about the status of the virus, the Department is issuing regular updates as information becomes available.

### **New Positive Cases**

- A 57-year old male in Lee County has tested positive for COVID-19. He is isolated and will continue to remain isolated until cleared by public health officials. It is currently unclear whether this was a travel-related case; the epidemiological investigation is ongoing.
- A 65-year old male in Broward County has tested positive for COVID-19. He is isolated and will continue to remain isolated until cleared by public health officials. It is currently unclear whether this was a travel-related case; the epidemiological investigation is ongoing.
- A 61-year old male in Broward County 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 Port Everglades.

### **Port Everglades Advisory**

The Department, through an extensive epidemiological investigation, has identified four positive COVID-19 cases associated with Port Everglades in Broward County, Florida. All three cases are connected to or employed by Metro Cruise Services – a company that operates at Port Everglades.

- The Department recommends all individuals experiencing symptoms who have recently traveled through Port Everglades to immediately contact their CHD 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 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 CHD or health care provider.

### **EMS Conference and Daytona Bike Week Advisories**

The Department, through an extensive, ongoing epidemiological investigation, has identified a positive COVID-19 case that may have been associated with Daytona Bike Week 2020, which is currently underway and scheduled from March 6-15, 2020, in Daytona, Florida.

The Department, through an extensive, ongoing epidemiological investigation, has identified a positive COVID-19 case that may have been associated with an EMS Conference held from March 4-6, 2020, in Tampa, Florida.

The Department recommends all individuals experiencing symptoms who attended either of these events immediately contact their County Health Department or health care provider and self-isolate for 14 Days.

### **COVID-19 Cases**

<b>Florida Residents Diagnosed in Florida</b>				
	<b>County</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Travel Related*</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Manatee</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Hillsborough</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Santa Rosa</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Broward</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Broward</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Lee</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Yes</b>

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

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

### **International Travel Advisory**

The Department is advising all individuals who have traveled internationally to follow the **new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines**, summarized below:

- **Level 3:** 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 (CHD) or health care provider.
- **Level 2 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 contact your CHD or health care provider.
- For more information regarding current CDC travel advisories related to COVID-19, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

### **Nile Cruise Advisory**

The Florida Department of Health is advising all individuals who traveled on a river cruise on the Nile River in Egypt in February 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 two positive cases in Florida.

### **COVID-19 Public Website and Call Center**

Please visit the Department's dedicated [COVID-19 webpage](#) for information and guidance regarding COVID-19 in Florida.

For any other questions related to COVID-19 in Florida, please contact the Department's dedicated COVID-19 Call Center by calling **1-(866) 779-6121**. **The Call Center is available 24 hours a day**. Inquiries may also be emailed to [COVID-19@flhealth.gov](mailto:COVID-19@flhealth.gov).

### **Department Activities**

- 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 the novel coronavirus in Florida.
- Established an Incident Management Team to coordinate response operations.
- Activated a dedicated incident command post for on-site response activities.

- Conducted three 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. Calls are scheduled for each Wednesday at 2:00 EST.
- 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.
- Developed and 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.

### **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.

### **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.

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#). For more information please visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](#).

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