



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

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The State of Florida Issues Updates on COVID-19

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — 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.

Governor Ron DeSantis is in constant communication with Florida Division of Emergency Management Director Jared Moskowitz and State Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees as the State of Florida continues to monitor and respond to the threat of COVID-19.

Today, in a briefing at the State Emergency Operations Center, Governor DeSantis announced the following:

- Governor DeSantis announced he is going to supplement federal Small Business Administration (SBA) loans. The Governor activated the Florida Small Business Emergency Loan Program. Up to \$50 million has been allocated for the program.
- Governor Ron DeSantis directed the Department of Revenue to provide flexibility on the deadlines of taxes due such as corporate income tax and sales tax to assist businesses that are adversely impacted from COVID-19 mitigation measures.
- Floridians throughout the state are lending a hand to stop the spread of COVID-19:
 - Members of the Florida House of Representatives have been activated to their National Guard units,
 - The Players Championship donated thousands of pounds of food to Feeding Northeast Florida,
 - Miami-Dade County school administrators are handing out computers and mobile devices, and
 - Comcast agreed to provide free WiFi for the next 60 days to kids who do not have it.
- The Miami Dolphins, Jacksonville Jaguars and the Orange County Convention Center have agreed to open their parking lots to stage supplies and locate testing sites.
- Restaurants throughout the state including Jimmy John's in Tallahassee and Toasted Restaurant in Orange County are providing children with free lunch throughout the week.

- Drive through testing sites are expected to open, throughout the state, in addition to the first proposed state site at Memorial Healthcare System in Broward. So far, sites are being developed in in Myers, Pensacola, West Palm Beach and Tallahassee.
- The Floridians who were at held at the Dobbins Air Reserve Base are on their way back to Florida; 15 Floridians have elected to stay at the base to care for their family members.
- 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.

More Information on COVID-19

To find the most up-to-date information and guidance on COVID-19, please visit the Department of Health's dedicated [COVID-19 webpage](#). For information and advisories from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), please visit the [CDC COVID-19 website](#). For more information about current travel advisories issued by the U.S. Department of State, please visit the [travel advisory website](#).

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

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 sneezing into 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 any other destination with community transmission 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, he or she 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

- At the direction of Governor DeSantis, State Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees declared a Public Health Emergency for COVID-19 in Florida.
- Governor DeSantis announced that the State 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. The Governor also suspended non-essential in state and all out-of-state travel for state employees for 30 days.
- Established an Incident Management Team to coordinate response operations.
- Defined a high-level phased response strategy for COVID-19.
- 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 the calls.
- Established a public call center for questions regarding COVID-19. The call center launched Monday, March 2.
- Developed and distributed COVID-19 presentation materials to County Health Departments (CHD) for use at community meetings.
- Activated the Joint Information Center in coordination with the Division of Emergency Management.
- Developed and implemented protocols for investigation, surveillance and monitoring for COVID-19 to rapidly detect and contain cases.

- Established mechanisms for monitoring and coordination with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding epidemiological activities.
- Distributed CDC Interim Guidance for public health personnel evaluating Persons Under Investigation (PUI) and asymptomatic close contacts of confirmed cases at their home or non-home residential settings to CHDs.
- Approved and disseminated an updated Clinician Screening Tool for identifying COVID-19 PUIs.
- Distributed 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.
- Developing a laboratory surge plan.
- Developing a clinician-level briefing for medical audiences.
- Identifying and monitoring close contacts of presumptive cases. Any close contacts with symptoms will be tested.
- Implemented private lab testing.
- Developed and disseminated pandemic planning guidance.
- Advised CHDs and HCCs to retain expired personal protective equipment until further notice.
- Continued development of public information resources.
- Developing infographics for first responders (fire, law enforcement and EMS) regarding infection control and personal protection for COVID-19.
- At the Governor's direction, a public-private partnership has been put in place between Memorial Healthcare in Broward and the National Guard to set up a mobile testing unit.
- At the direction of Governor DeSantis hiring additional epidemiologists from university health programs to help with workload.
- Governor DeSantis directed the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) to extend all existing nursing home and assisted living facility licenses for 90 days to remove distraction from patient care.

AGENCY FOR HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION

- AHCA distributed a provider alert to licensed health care providers regarding the Division of Emergency Management's new Emergency Order tightening visitation restrictions at residential and long-term care facilities.
- AHCA, in coordination with the DEM and the Department, is hosting ongoing statewide calls for nursing homes, assisted living facilities, intermediate care facilities, the 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 visitors and providing updates.
- AHCA, in coordination with DEM and the Department, is hosting ongoing 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.

- After previously opening an event on the Emergency Status System (ESS) for hospitals to enter census information, emergency room status updates and isolation beds, AHCA expanded the ESS event to track nursing homes and assisted living facility bed capacity, effective March 15.
- The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) will be granting a 90-day extension to all licenses for health care providers and regulated facilities.
- AHCA is distributing information regarding regulatory flexibilities created by waivers from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) related to skilled nursing facilities, critical access hospitals, home health agencies, durable medical equipment, provider enrollment, etc.
- AHCA participated in a collaborative call with the Florida Health Care Association, Florida Hospital Association and LeadingAge Florida to discuss patient transfer arrangements between health care facilities such as nursing homes and hospitals.
- The Florida Medicaid Program announced coverage of commercial testing for COVID-19 for dates of service back to February 4.
- AHCA submitted requests to CMS for flexibility for Florida's program under the federal declaration of a state of emergency.

AGENCY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

- The agency's three state-run centers in Marianna, Gainesville and Chattahoochee, as well as APD-licensed group homes, are restricting visitors in compliance with the Executive Order to protect the health and safety of our customers.
- APD Adult Day Training programs across the state are screening visitors for possible exposure to COVID-19 using a visitor questionnaire. The questionnaire is also being used to screen visitors coming into 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.

DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS

- The Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA), in coordination with the Administration for Community Living (ACL), facilitated a virtual Town Hall meeting at the request of Hallandale Beach Mayor Joy Cooper. More than 2,700 seniors were online for the meeting. Charlotte Mather Taylor, Executive Director of the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Broward County, led the discussion with participation from ACL Representative Constantino Miskos, Chen Senior Medical Center, and representatives from Emergency Medical Services. Their primary topics of conversation centered on the work being done, specifically by the Area Agency on Aging, to continue to provide people resources and services to maximize support during COVID-19.
- Through Departmental Leadership and the Area Agency on Aging contract managers, DOEA provided ongoing technical assistance to the entire Aging Network regarding allowable flexibilities within programs to ensure continuity of services and the safety of

elders. For example, we provided guidance to all Executive Directors regarding the safe delivery of home-delivered meals to prevent spread of respiratory infection.

- DOEA continues to provide updated information on current closures and possible future temporary closures of specific services at Congregate Meal Sites, Senior Centers and Adult Day Care Centers on our website homepage and all corresponding program pages. Clients are guided to contact the specific location for alternative services, they are provided the Area Agency on Aging helpline, and directed to the DOH website with any additional questions on COVID-19.
- “The Vision 2020: Looking Towards Your Age-Friendly Future Tour” to five communities across Florida originally planned for April 20th - April 24th and co-hosted by the Department and AARP has been postponed to protect the health and wellness of seniors, volunteers and staff.
- All Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE) participation in scheduled outreach events, presentations, and in-person SHINE/Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) counseling has been suspended until further notice. SHINE volunteers and staff will continue to provide counseling services, but the services will be conducted over-the-phone with future considerations for the use of webinars and Facebook LIVE.
- DOEA Secretary Prudom held a conference call with The Comprehensive Assessment and Review for Long-term Care Services (CARES) supervisors to discuss the suspension of face-to-face assessments. CARES assessors will provide reviews through phone or tele-technology to reduce client/staff exposure and reduce spread.
- Through Departmental Leadership and the Area Agency on Aging contract managers, we provided ongoing technical assistance to the entire Aging Network regarding allowable flexibilities within programs to ensure continuity of services and the safety of elders. For example, we provided guidance to all Executive Directors regarding the provision on completing assessments for multiple program types, specifically for clients who have chosen to self-isolate.
- DOEA provided updated information on current closures and possible future temporary closures of specific services at Congregate Meal Sites, Senior Centers, and Adult Day Care Centers on our website homepage and all corresponding program pages. Clients are guided to contact the specific location for alternative services, provided the Area Agency on Aging helpline, and directed to the DOH website with any additional questions on COVID-19.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- The Department of Children and Families’ (DCF) Office of Child Welfare is sending regular communication about COVID-19 specifically 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 (COVID-19). An FAQ document for providers was also posted prominently on DCF’s Child Care webpage.
- DCF’s Office of Child Welfare is disseminating a survey to licensed child care providers to assess closures throughout the state. Currently, the decision to close is at the discretion of each individual facility.
- 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 is leading status update calls with both internal leadership and leadership from external contracted partners. For the time being, these calls will take place twice weekly, every Tuesday and Friday.
- DCF General Services staff throughout the state are working with lessors and janitorial contractors to increase sanitizing measures in office buildings, especially restrooms and common areas. They also began taking inventory of sanitizing supplies (disinfecting wipes, Lysol spray, hand-sanitizer, etc.) and are ordering more as needed.
- 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. At this time, there are no cases of patients or facility staff testing positive for COVID-19.
- DCF's Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency is communicating with DEO regarding work requirements and CareerSource operations and availability.
- DCF's Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency implemented screening procedures, including a set of questions that must be asked prior to entry, at all economic self-sufficiency storefronts.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

- Effective March 11, 2020, 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.

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

- There have been over 200 Florida National Guardsmen placed on state active duty in support of COVID-19.

- The Florida National Guard is activating all of their medical professionals (Army Combat medic specialists and Air Force medical technicians) to support Florida Department of Health's drive-through screening operations. Guardsmen have reported in and formed Task Force Medical already.
- The Florida National Guard has activated soldiers to augment the State Logistics Readiness Center in Central Florida.

VOLUNTEER FLORIDA

- Volunteer Florida is working with state counterparts and FEMA to develop volunteer plans.
- Volunteer Florida's National Service Department has discussed using AmeriCorps members in food banks as feeding needs increase.
- Volunteer Florida is having conversations with Mass Care on the anticipated needs of volunteers. Together, we are working on a plan for volunteers with volunteer safety guidelines to ensure that we are protecting our service providers (volunteers and clients).
- Volunteer Florida has asked all Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) partners to review their continuity of operations so that there is no service delivery disruption.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- Commissioner of the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) Richard Corcoran provided strong recommendations for extending spring break following [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) issuing guidance specific to COVID-19 in Florida](#). As all Florida school districts and public charter schools have different schedules, please click [here](#) to see the recommended spring break changes for each district. In addition, the department also announced that the start of state testing will be delayed by a minimum of two weeks. To stay up to date on school closure information, visit: [org/em-response](#).
- FDOE sent updated guidance to school districts and superintendents ahead of spring break. To view that memo, visit: [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, and their capacity to serve their students virtually to help meet and determine any preparedness needs.

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

- The State University System will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of remote learning and the need to teach remotely in order to protect our students and the university community.
- The State University System will continue to work with the Florida Department of Health and the Emergency Operations Center to determine if the initial two weeks of remote learning is sufficient.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- All state universities have implemented campus-wide critical incident or emergency management teams that are meeting regularly to prepare for the impacts of the COVID-19 virus.
- All universities are preparing to transition to remote instructional delivery for a two-week period during March and early April, depending on each institution's Spring Break, and are informing students not to return to campus during this period.
- The Board of Governors will be conducting its March meeting via conference call and will not have a face-to-face meeting at USF as was originally scheduled.
- For more information visit: <https://www.flbog.edu/2020/03/11/state-university-system-statement-on-covid-19/>.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

- Florida Department of Corrections (FDC) has no known or suspected cases of COVID-19 within its correctional institutions at this time.
- FDC Community Corrections officers are working with offenders on supervision to adjust reporting schedules to minimize congregating at probation offices and prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- 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 the Department and the CDC.
- 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.
 - Inmates will continue to have access to mail, email, phone calls and video visitation.
 - Legal visits will not be impacted.
 - FDC has partnered with vendors to provide some complimentary phone and video visitation services.
- Anyone entering a correctional institution will be screened, and entrance will be restricted if they:
 - Have traveled internationally or on a cruise 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.
- All non-critical inmate transfers have been suspended.
- FDC has a plan in place and dedicated staff members trained in the prevention and containment of infectious diseases.
- FDC initiated 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; preventative measures are being followed per CDC recommendations.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE

- The Division of Elections offers a toll-free Voter Assistance Hotline, 1.866.308.6739 (in English and Español), available Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm ET, with extended hours during statewide elections. For hearing or speech impaired, please contact the Division using the Florida Relay Service, 1.800.955.8771 (TDD), 1.800.955.8770 (Voice), or 1.877.955.8773 (Español). Voters can also contact their local [Supervisor of Elections](#)
- The Florida Department of State is in constant communication with Supervisors of Elections regarding Tuesday's Presidential Preference Primary Election and is providing guidance and information to voters through traditional and social media messages:

- The Florida Department of State been informing voters of the various options Florida provides in order to cast their ballot ahead of Tuesday’s election and on Election Day. Further, we have assured Florida’s voters that otherwise healthy poll workers can work on Election Day. DOS has notified voters who have been ordered to self-isolate or who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and who have not yet voted, of the option to have someone pick up their ballot for them.
 - As with any election, before a voter goes to the polls on Tuesday, they should check with their local Supervisor of Elections. Now more than ever, it is critical that we continue to provide voters with clear and consistent information regarding polling place locations. The most current and up-to-date polling place information (per [71, Florida Statutes](#)) is going to be on the voter’s respective **Supervisor of Elections website**.
 - The Division of Elections website provides prominent placement of the Voter Information Lookup where voters can check their voter status and find their polling place information. This polling place information is linked to the voters’ respective Supervisor of Elections database. The most current and up-to-date polling place information (per [71, Florida Statutes](#)) is going to be from the voter’s respective **Supervisor of Elections**.
- The Florida Department of State continues to support and work with local Supervisors of Elections and Emergency Management officials to ensure the Supervisors needs are met regarding sanitization and cleaning needs for the Presidential Preference Primary Election on Tuesday.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

- FDOT is coordinating with other state and local agencies to help ensure mobility around the temporary testing site in Broward County. Once the site is open, FDOT plans to publicize testing site information on highway advisory radio.
- FDOT completed a request to provide necessary supplies to harbor pilots working at seaports.
- 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.
- FDOT is monitoring temporary lane closures near hospitals and Department of Health facilities. If congestion near these facilities and lane closures occur, FDOT will remove lane restrictions to help ensure mobility within the area.
- Pursuant to Executive Order 20-52 issued by Governor DeSantis, FDOT Secretary Thibault has suspended size and weight restrictions for divisible loads on any vehicles transporting emergency equipment, services, supplies, and necessary agricultural commodities on state roads.
- COVID-19 educational materials have been posted in FDOT facilities, which include welcome centers, service plazas and rest areas across the state.
- COVID-19 materials have been 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.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAY SAFETY AND MOTOR VEHICLES

- At the direction of Governor Ron DeSantis, Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles Executive Director Terry L. Rhodes has issued an [Emergency Order](#) extending all Florida driver licenses and identification cards that will expire in the next 30 days.
- Pursuant to Executive Order 20-52, FLHSMV Executive Director Rhodes waived commercial truck hours of service regulations and other related regulations so that emergency supplies, equipment, commodities and resources can be moved more quickly and efficiently throughout the state.
- FLHSMV continues to encourage Floridians through social media and other channels to use convenient [online options](#), rather than visiting an office location, to complete transactions for driver licenses, ID cards, motor vehicle or vessel registrations, and more.
- FLHSMV has been in regular communication with the Florida Tax Collectors Association as well as Tax Collectors across the state to provide the latest COVID-19 information and guidance from the Florida Department of Health and other state partners.

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

- Governor DeSantis has requested the federal Small Business Administration (SBA) make the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program available for Florida's small businesses impacted by COVID-19. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) stands ready to assist Florida's small businesses in accessing this funding when available.
- Governor Ron DeSantis has activated the Business Damage Assessment survey to assess the impact of COVID-19 on Florida's local business operations. The survey, managed by DEO, will evaluate businesses affected by COVID-19 and the impacts the virus has had on the local economy so actions to implement appropriate relief programs can begin. The survey can be taken online at <https://floridadisaster.biz/>.

VISIT FLORIDA

- VISIT FLORIDA is wholly focused on providing health and safety information to travelers and Floridians. This includes the activation of Florida Now, which includes the latest updates from state emergency response professionals hosted on VisitFlorida.com.
- VISIT FLORIDA is planning for future marketing campaigns to ensure that Florida's tourism industry has a strong, unified voice following COVID-19
- To protect the health and safety of the traveling public and staff, VISIT FLORIDA's four welcome centers will be closed until further notice.
- 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 remains in close contact with industry partners and travel organizations and is communicating all new information as it becomes available.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

- The Department of Revenue is advising child support customers who are scheduled for court hearings related to their child support cases to check with the local courts where the hearings are scheduled in case the courts have new requirements, such as appearing telephonically.
- 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

- 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

- Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) is working with state and local agencies and the Florida National Guard to set up testing collection sites in multiple locations across Florida.
- The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Regional Operations Centers are working with Regional Domestic Security Task Forces to prepare for any responses needed.
- 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 screening protocols and procedures for youth taken into custody by law enforcement who are brought to juvenile assessment centers and detention screening units to now include precautionary coronavirus screening questions and protocols. This modified screening protocol was shared with 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 has sent a notice to parents and guardians of youth in programs regarding the new visitor screening requirements.
- The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice has instituted additional screening measures for outside vendors who work within juvenile facilities and non-essential travel of staff members has been stopped. Visitors are limited to business-related visitors only (i.e., vendors, no personal visitors, no volunteers at this time). The department will work with these entities on alternatives to visiting programs to ensure critical services are not interrupted. Clinical personnel, however, are still permitted to

visit youth for treatment purposes, and attorneys are still permitted to conduct legal visits with youth.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

- Governor DeSantis directed all agencies to suspend for 30 days licensing and registration renewal requirements for existing professional licenses (e.g. realtors).
- Governor DeSantis has directed the Department of Business and Professional Regulation Secretary Halsey Beshears, in coordination with the Florida Department of Health, to issue social distancing guidance to restaurants and bars.
- Governor DeSantis sent a letter to the federal Small Business Administration to turn on the SBA loan program for small businesses.
- The Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) has suspended all official business visits, including inspections, that involve licenses located at a facility covered under the visitation restrictions implemented pursuant to FDEM Emergency Order 20-002.
- DBPR is incorporating informational comments on all on-site inspection reports issued to public lodging, public food service, and alcohol and tobacco license holders that will promote situational awareness of the current public health emergency and will direct parties to the FDOH COVID-19 webpage for guidance and resources related to prevention best practices. Copies of informational flyers from the FDOH COVID-19 toolkit will also be available for inspectors to distribute when interacting with managers of these premises.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES

- Governor DeSantis directed the Department of Management Services Secretary Jonathan Satter to allow state employees to donate and transfer their available leave time to other state employees to mitigate the impacts of school closures.
- The Florida Department of Management Services' (DMS) Emergency Support Function-7 (ESF-7) Logistics team continues to coordinate with the Department of Health and the Division of Emergency Management on identifying the equipment or supplies that may be necessary for a mass response to COVID-19.
- DMS' Division of Human Resource Management has provided guidance to agencies on implementing preventive actions in the workplace, reporting symptoms, using leave, utilizing health insurance benefits, and applying travel restrictions and telework policies.
- DMS' Division of State Group Insurance continues to coordinate with health plan providers to ensure that state employee health plan members receive the health benefits that can assist them and their dependents if needed.
- DMS' Division of Real Estate Development and Management (REDM) continues to provide guidance to agency facility managers across the state on steps to take to prevent workplace contamination and to pre-position environmental vendors to mobilize in the event a viricidal cleaning is needed.
- DMS' Division of Real Estate Development and Management continues to identify, purchase, and distribute additional hand sanitizing gel and cleaning supplies to state-maintained facilities.

- DMS' Division of State Technology-Public Safety Unit continues to coordinate with users and vendor of the Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS) vendors to ensure the continuation of mission critical services if a reduction of staffing resources occurs.
- DMS' Division of State Technology-Public Safety Unit continues to coordinate with statewide public safety communications personnel on their plans to ensure emergency communications systems are not impacted by potential reductions in staffing resources.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- All State Parks have adjusted their operating hours to 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The Department continues to monitor new developments closely and will make further adjustments as necessary based on any new Department of Health or CDC guidance received to ensure protection of our staff and visitors. For the latest information on park operating hours and operational status, please visit floridastateparks.org.
- Currently all Florida State Parks and campgrounds, and Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection facilities (aquatic preserves and National Estuarine Research Reserves), remain open to the public. However, in an abundance of caution and consistent with Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, DEP announced on March 13 that it is cancelling all events and activities at these facilities effective immediately and until further notice.
 - This includes DEP events and includes activities such as tours and visitor centers that involve large groups and/or or people in close proximity to others. People with questions regarding any privately scheduled event should check with the host of the event or the facility directly. For the latest closure and cancellation information, please visit floridastateparks.org.
- If your travel plans have changed and you need to modify camping or cabin reservations, please visit ReserveAmerica.com, call Reserve America at [1-800-326-3521](tel:1-800-326-3521) or TDD [888-433-0287](tel:888-433-0287) or text to [904-204-3216](tel:904-204-3216).

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