

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

**Scott A. Rivkees, MD**  
State Surgeon General

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**4/24/2020 COVID-19 UPDATE:**

Your local health department is here to assist you with questions related to COVID-19 (new coronavirus).

Here are the Franklin County testing numbers as of 3:00pm on 4/24/2020:

Number of COVID-19 tests so far: **81**

Number of negative tests we have: **79**

Number of positive tests we have: **2**

For daily Franklin County COVID-19 updates straight to your phone: text FranklinCV19 to 888777.

Florida Department of Health in Franklin County: 850-653-2111

Florida Department of Health in Gulf County: 850-227-1276

There is also a hotline available at 866-779-6121 or email [COVID-19@flhealth.gov](mailto:COVID-19@flhealth.gov).

Follow the CDC.gov website for the latest guidance on COVID-19 and check out Floridahealth.gov to keep up with state-specific updates.

**SAFER AT HOME**

On April 1, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-91 requiring all persons in Florida to limit their movements and personal interactions outside of their home to only those necessary to obtain or provide essential services or conduct essential activities for 30 days. Senior citizens and individuals with a significant underlying medical condition (such as chronic lung disease, moderate-to-severe asthma, serious heart conditions, immunocompromised status, cancer, diabetes, severe obesity, renal failure and liver disease) are advised to stay at home and take all measures to limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

To view the complete order, visit: [https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2020/EO\\_20-91.pdf](https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2020/EO_20-91.pdf)

For a more extensive list of essential services visit [https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2020/EO\\_20-89.pdf](https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2020/EO_20-89.pdf).

To view frequently asked questions about Executive Order 20-91 visit <https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/covid19/Exec%20Order%2020-91%20FAQs.pdf>.

**AIM FOR THE A!**

Social Distancing is currently the most effective way to slow the spread of COVID-19. Check out this interactive [Social Distancing Scoreboard](#), updated daily, to measure and understand social distancing initiatives at the local level. Franklin is currently a B-. Let's keep aiming for the A!

**Florida Department of Health in Gulf County**

2475 Garrison Avenue • Port St. Joe, Florida 32456  
PHONE: 850-227-1276 • FAX 850-227-7587

**Florida Department of Health in Franklin County**

139-12th Street • Apalachicola, Florida 32320  
PHONE: 850-653-2111 • FAX 850-653-1727

**FloridaHealth.gov**



**Accredited Health Department**  
Public Health Accreditation Board

## **NEW TESTING SITE IN EASTPOINT**

PanCare Health has lifted COVID-19 testing restrictions and is now offering testing to both symptomatic and asymptomatic (showing no symptoms) persons. Beginning Thursday, April 23rd PanCare will test anyone in the following categories whether they display symptoms or have no symptoms:

- Healthcare facility workers
- Residents in long-term care facilities
- Persons 65 years of age and older
- Persons with underlying conditions
- First responders

People who do not meet the above requirements must have symptoms (cough, fever  $\geq 100.4$ , or shortness of breath) in order to be tested. Testing will be provided at no cost to the person being tested. If a person has insurance, they will bill the insurance for testing and write off any portion not covered. PanCare Health's COVID-19 response line team is available at (850) 215-4181 Monday-Friday 9:00a – 4:00p to conduct phone screenings.

To be scheduled at a testing site, you must complete all of the 3 following steps.

**Step 1:** Call the PanCare COVID-19 response line at (850) 215-4181.

**Step 2:** Conduct an over the phone screening.

**Step 3:** Upon qualifying for testing, you will be assigned a unique ID number and given an appointment date, time, and location. You must present your ID number at your appointment along with your photo ID when you arrive at the off-site testing location.

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

COVID-19 have you feeling...STRESSED/ANXIOUS/DEPRESSED/UNSURE? NEED SUPPORT? CALL 850-270-8911, available 9-5pm EST. If you are in need of immediate mental health services call one of the agencies below available 24/7:

- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- SAMSA Disaster Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 or the Crisis Text Line: Text "HOME" to 741-741
- Florida Blue, in partnership with New Directions Behavioral Health, is providing a free emotional support resource for all Floridians even if not covered by Florida Blue insurance. Any Floridian – even if uninsured or insured by another plan – can call 833-848-1762 for support in managing feelings of stress, anxiety, grief or fear related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **CLOTH FACE COVERS/MASK**

The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. It is important to note that these face coverings:

1. Are not surgical or N-95 respirators, which continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and medical first responders, and
2. The use of cloth face coverings does not mean we can remove previously set social distancing measures.

For information on how you can make a facemask at home, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html> and watch this video <https://youtu.be/tPx1yqvJgf4>.

The Franklin County Emergency Management is collecting fabric for mask. If you would like to help our community by sewing face mask or donating fabric, please call the Franklin County Emergency Management office at (850) 653-4206.

## TESTING

Call your health care provider first or if you are symptomatic to determine the need for testing. If a person thinks they have COVID-19, they should call their health care provider before going to their office so the provider can take precautions to prevent exposing other people. In some cases, they are going to meet you in the parking lot. It's just a precaution. We are really trying to keep our healthcare workers safe. Other patients safe. Review your signs, symptoms and travel history with your physician. Your provider is going to evaluate you for possible causes and rule out other respiratory illnesses (ex. Flu) before testing for COVID-19. If testing is required, the provider will contact the county health department to coordinate COVID-19 testing. If you do not have a provider, the health department can help you coordinate this care.

- To be prioritized for testing, patients must meet the **state's criteria**, which evaluates a combination of symptoms and risk factors. Their samples will be sent to the closest laboratory.
- If you don't meet priority criteria, you can discuss with your provider about possibly getting tested at a commercial laboratory (e.g. LabCorp or Quest).
- State lab results are generally available within 24-48 hours. Commercial labs can take 5 – 6 days. Turnaround time for testing may be affected by demand.
- A person who thinks they were exposed and has no symptoms can self-isolate in their home for 14 days. Follow the CDC steps to help protect other people in your home and community:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

There are several resources available for rural residents and business coping with the impact of COVID-19. Please visit the Rural Development Coronavirus Response page: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/coronavirus>

## REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

We encourage any Floridian whose employment has been negatively impacted as a result of COVID-19 to visit FloridaJobs.org and click on Reemployment Assistance Service Center to learn more about the program and watch a short video on how to apply. Click [here](#) for a direct link to instructions on how to apply for Reemployment Assistance. Select the hyperlink to download and view the [Reemployment Assistant Resource Guide](#).

If you can't apply by email you can pick up a paper application and submit it by mail. Below are the following pick up locations for paper applications in Franklin County. For more information you can contact: Career Source Gulf Coast at 850-653-4981. The application will be located in a box outside each building.

Apalachicola – CareerSource #1 Bay Ave Apalachicola, Fl  
Eastpoint – Ard's Service Station – 407 US Highway 98 Eastpoint, Fl  
Carrabelle City Hall – 206 Highway 98 E Carrabelle, Fl

## FRANKLIN/GULF/BAY COUNTIES:

Catholic Charities Financial Emergency/Hardship: 850-763-0475

1. Call First Monday of each month after 9am for screenings
2. An initial screening will take place on the phone to complete the application process and receive an appointment. a. Proof of need will be required: past due utility bill, proof of check stub from place of employment (before and after date affected).

## **LOCAL & STATE ISSUED ORDERS:**

### **~~LOCAL ORDINANCES~~**

#### **BOCC UPDATE**

On Thursday, April 9, 2020 the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners held a special meeting and issued the following ordinances for Franklin County, Fl: Emergency Ordinance #2020-09, temporarily limiting the use of all public boat ramps owned and operated by Franklin County resident, Emergency Ordinance #2020-10, temporarily closing all beaches and public beach accesses in Franklin County, Emergency Ordinance #2020-11 prohibits camping or living at any time in public parks, fishing piers and boat ramps in unincorporated Franklin County. For more information visit: <https://www.franklincountyflorida.com/2020/03/22/ordinance-temporarily-closing-all-beaches-and-public-beach-access/>

#### **CITY OF APALACHICOLA**

The City of Apalachicola issued a State of Emergency Proclamation for public boat ramps. Ramps will only be open for use by Franklin County residents or property owners, any vehicle or trailer with out-of-county or out-of-state license plates shall be forbidden from using City of Apalachicola Public Boat ramps, unless they can show proof that they have been in the city for more than two weeks, at either a long-term rental or temporary residence with family or friend. This order does not apply to those engaged in formal business or government business in Apalachicola or Franklin County are exempt from this rule.

#### **CITY OF CARRABELLE**

During a Special Meeting of the Carrabelle City Commission, held on April 9, 2020, the Carrabelle City Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt an emergency ordinance closing City public boat ramps to all non-residents and non-property owners of Franklin County. All public boat ramps and associated parking lots owned by the City of Carrabelle are limited to use by residents and non-resident property owners of Franklin County and to those Franklin County residents holding commercial fishing licenses. Those authorized to use the City of Carrabelle public boat ramps will be asked to provide proper identification such as drivers license with Franklin County address for residents and tax bill, deed to property, signed lease or utility bill as well as drivers license for non-resident property owners.

It will be unlawful for members of the public who are not either residents of or non-resident property owners of Franklin County or those non-residents holding commercial fishing licenses, to use or recreate for traditional purposes all public boat ramps and associated parking lots owned by the City of Carrabelle, Florida. Violators will be charged with second degree misdemeanor.

This ordinance will take effect immediately on the 10th day of April 2020 at 12:00 AM.

This ordinance shall sunset automatically upon the expiration of the state of emergency declared by the State of Florida and Franklin County due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

#### **HOTELS & OTHER RENTAL UNITS**

The City of Apalachicola has issued State of Emergency Proclamation stating the city is closing lodging to all tourist and leisure visitors, effective Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at noon. For more information, visit <http://www.cityofapalachicola.com/uploads/pdf/Apalach%20-%20Emergency%20Procla%20%203-24-20.pdf> to read the proclamation, or call the City of Apalachicola at (850) 653-9319.

## ~~STATE ISSUED ORDERS~~

To see all of Gov. DeSantis Executive Orders regarding COVID-19, visit: <https://www.flgov.com/covid-19/>

### **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**

On, Thursday, April 16, 2020 Governor DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-104 which suspends the requirement that Floridians must recertify reemployment assistance status every two weeks.

### **VACATION RENTAL CLOSURES-EXTENDED**

On April 10, the Governor issued [Executive Order 20-103](#), extending [Executive Order 20-87](#) until April 30, 2020.

### **FORECLOSURES & EVICTION RELIEF**

On April 2, the Governor also issued Executive Order 20-94, providing targeted, temporary relief from certain mortgage foreclosures and evictions for 45 days, without relieving an individual's obligation to make mortgage payments and rent payments.

### **REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

On April 2, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-93, directing the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and other executive agencies to take necessary actions to improve DEO's Reemployment Assistance Program.

### **TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS**

On March 27<sup>th</sup>, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-87, ordering all parties engaged in rental of vacation rental properties to suspend vacation rental operations. Vacation rentals are prohibited from making new reservations or bookings and shall not accept new guests for check-in for the duration of this order.

On March 27<sup>th</sup>, Governor DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-86, directing all persons who enter the State of Florida from an area with substantial community spread, to include the State of Louisiana, inclusive of those entering the State of Florida by roadways, to isolate or quarantine for a period of 14 days from the time of entry into the State of Florida or the duration of the person's presence in the State of Florida, whichever is shorter.

### **RESTAURANTS**

On March 20, Governor DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-71, directing all restaurants and food establishments to suspend on-premises food and alcohol consumption for customers. Apalachicola Bay Chamber of Commerce resource list: <http://www.apalachicolabay.org/take-out-and-delivery-options/>

### **SMALL BUSINESS LOANS**

On March 17, Governor DeSantis activated the Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program to support small businesses impacted by COVID-19. The bridge loan program provides short-term, interest-free loans to small businesses that experienced economic injury from COVID-19. The application period is open and runs through May 8, 2020. Interested businesses should visit [FloridaDisasterLoan.org](http://FloridaDisasterLoan.org) for more information.

### **STIMULUS PAYMENTS**

Eligible taxpayers who filed tax returns for either 2019 or 2018 and chose direct deposit for their refund will automatically receive a stimulus payment of up to \$1,200 for individuals or \$2,400 for married couples and \$500 for each qualifying child, the IRS said Friday.

## **CLOSURES & RESTRICTIONS:**

### **CITY GOVERNMENTS**

The City of Carrabelle will be closed to the public until further notice. Use our Dropbox for Water & Sewer bill payments. Call 850-697-2727 for more details. All Carrabelle parks, playgrounds, and public restrooms are closed until further notice.

The City of Apalachicola will limit contact with the public until further notice. Use our Dropbox for Water & Sewer bill payments. Call 850-653-9319 for more details and 850-653-6845 for after hours Water & Sewer information.

### **COUNTY CLERK & COURTHOUSE OFFICES**

Franklin County will restrict public access to all county offices and buildings in order to promote and protect the common good. Visit [www.franklincountyflorida.com](http://www.franklincountyflorida.com) or call the Planning and Building office at (850) 653-9783 for more details. Offices within the main courthouse will remain open to the public for critical, essential services only. Call 850-653-8861 before you visit the courthouse to see how they may help you remotely.

### **SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

The Sheriff's office is no longer allowing visitors in the lobby. Office staff will remain at work and will be accessible by telephone and email. If you must meet with a staff member, please call to make an appointment. Call (850) 670-8519 for more information.

### **HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

In order to promote social distancing and discourage gatherings of 10 or more people, the health department is asking all clients to call the front desk at (850) 653-2111, before entering the lobby. We're here for you! Give us a call to discuss curbside pickup for birth control, medications, or emergency contraception.

### **PHARMACY**

Buy-Rite Drugs lobby will be closed to customers until further notice. Customers will need to call in medication refills and pay over the telephone. Call (850) 653-8825 for more information.

### **LIBRARIES**

All libraries are closed until further notice. The Wi-Fi services for both the Eastpoint and Carrabelle branches will remain on 24/7 and is accessible from the parking lot.

### **ASCENSION SACRED HEART**

Online urgent care is available through Ascension Online Care at a discounted \$20 with the code HOME. You can have a video visit with a doctor without leaving your home. No insurance required.

Visit <http://ascension.org/onlinecare> to start your visit.

### **SCHOOLS**

Governor DeSantis announced on Saturday, April 18, that all K-12 schools will continue distance learning for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. For the full release: <http://www.fldoe.org/newsroom/latest-news/florida-extends-distance-learning-through-remainder-of-academic-year.stml>. For a list of feeding program sites near you dial 2-1-1 and a representative will assist you or visit <https://www.franklincountyschools.org/cms/lib/FL01803254/Centricity/Domain/36/03.18.2020%20Press%20Release%20UPDATED%20MEAL%20PICK%20UP%20LOCATIONS.pdf> for more details. **UPDATE: The Lanark Market, located at 2348 Hwy 98, Carrabelle, FL is a recently added food distribution site.**

## **SUPPORTING CHILDREN THROUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

COVID-19 has upended children's daily lives, resulting in added stress and uncertainty. Studies show that adversity during childhood, including adversity stemming from natural disasters, can have lasting impacts on children's social emotional health. Fortunately, families can take steps to support and protect children's emotional well-being during the COVID-19 crisis. For more information visit the Nat'l Institute for Children's Health Quality site at <https://bit.ly/2JFXCM6>.

## **ABOUT COVID-19**

COVID-19 transmission is more commonly spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, including when an individual coughs or sneezes. This is why social distancing and keeping at least 6 feet between you and other people is so important. A person can get COVID-19 by touching droplets that can land on objects and surfaces and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth, although, this is a less common mode of transmission. The vast majority of cases have come from close, sustained contact with an individual with COVID-19.

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 the COVID-19 without needing special treatment. The elderly and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems and diabetes, and those with compromised immune systems 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 this virus. As a reminder, the Department always recommends everyday preventive actions to help impede 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;
- 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.

## **CLEANING DISINFECTING SAFETY**

The daily number of calls to poison centers increased sharply at the beginning of March 2020 for exposures to both cleaners and disinfectants. To reduce improper use and prevent unnecessary chemical exposures, users should always read and follow directions on the label, don't mix chemicals, wear protective gear, use in a well-ventilated area and store chemicals out of the reach of children. For more information you can contact the Poison Control hotline at 1-800-222-1222.

[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6916e1.htm?s\\_cid=mm6916e1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6916e1.htm?s_cid=mm6916e1_w)

## **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I RECENTLY TRAVELED TO AN AREA WITH AN OUTBREAK OF COVID-19?**

If you are returning from an area with an outbreak of COVID-19, the CDC is recommending you self-isolate for 14 days immediately upon returning from your travels, even if asymptomatic (no symptoms). Follow the CDC steps to help protect other people in your home and community: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

If you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath during those 14 days, contact your health care professional and mention your recent travel. Your provider will work with the health department to determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19. If you have had close contact with someone showing these symptoms who has recently traveled from an impacted area, you should call a health care professional and mention your close contact and their recent travel.

#### **HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO RECOVER FROM COVID-19?**

Most individuals who test positive for COVID-19 are able to recover at home. Individuals will be asked to remain at home, except to get medical care. Stay in touch with your doctor if you feel worse or you think it is an emergency. People with COVID-19 who have stayed home can stop home isolation after meeting ALL of the following conditions:

- You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers)
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved)
- At least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared

A test-based strategy is preferred for discontinuation of transmission-based precautions for patients who are hospitalized or severely immunocompromised or being transferred to a long-term care or assisted living facility.

#### **STAYING INFORMED:**

To get the latest information, visit [FloridaHealth.gov](https://www.floridahealth.gov) and follow on Social Media:

Florida Department of Health: [Twitter @HealthyFla](https://twitter.com/HealthyFla) -or- [Facebook Florida Department of Health \(DOH\)](https://www.facebook.com/FloridaDepartmentofHealth)

Franklin County Florida Emergency Management: [Facebook Franklin County Florida Emergency Management](https://www.facebook.com/franklincountyfloridaemergencymanagement)

Gulf/Franklin County Community Health Improvement Partners: [Facebook Gulf/Franklin County Community Health Improvement Partners](https://www.facebook.com/gulffranklincountycommunityhealthimprovementpartners)