

**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

**05/20/2020 COVID-19 UPDATE:**

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

Here are the Franklin County testing numbers as of 3:00pm today:

Number of COVID-19 tests so far: 445  
Number of negative tests we have: 443  
Number of positive tests we have: 2

*Please note: The demand for the testing and designated laboratory, may cause a slight delay in reporting as reflected on the Florida COVID-19 Dashboard.*

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

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.

**PHASE 1: PLAN FOR FLORIDA'S RECOVERY**

On May 18, 2020 Gov. DeSantis launched Full Phase 1: Safe. Smart. Step-by-step. Plan for Florida's Recovery. To view this order, visit: [https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2020/EO\\_20-123.pdf](https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2020/EO_20-123.pdf). A closer look at all phases can be found using this link: <https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/covid19/Taskforce%20Report.pdf>

**FRANKLIN COUNTY PLAN FOR REOPENING SHORT-TERM VACATION RENTALS**

Short term rentals in Franklin County are reopening this week. Franklin County's plan for reopening includes a ban on renting to overseas travelers during the first phase, or to any person who lives in an area with substantial community spread of COVID-19. You can read the safety plan in its entirety online at [www.Floridasforgottencoast.com](http://www.Floridasforgottencoast.com).

We ask that you join in to help familiarize yourself with the guidelines for [Franklin County's Plan for Opening Short-term Rentals](#) along with the State of Florida and the CDC. Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/> to see which states have case rates higher than 500/100k.

**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

**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**

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

**FloridaHealth.gov**



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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.

### **COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT EXPANDED TESTING PLAN**

On Thursday, May 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2020 from 10am to 3pm Eastern, public drive-thru testing will be held at Vrooman Park located at 26 6<sup>th</sup> Street Eastpoint, Florida. Individuals must be 18 years or older to be tested. Please remain in your in vehicles. Symptoms are NOT required for testing. For more information, call 850-653-2111.

### **WEEMS TO OFFER ANTIBODY TESTING**

Weems Memorial Hospital is providing free COVID-19 antibody testing at both their East (Carrabelle) and West (Apalachicola) clinics. To make an appointment for testing, individuals should call the East Clinic at (850) 697-2345 or West Clinic at (850) 653-1525.

### **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.

### **ANTIBODY TESTING**

To learn about antibody testing, see [http://ww11.doh.state.fl.us/comm/\\_partners/action/antibody\\_testing.pdf](http://ww11.doh.state.fl.us/comm/_partners/action/antibody_testing.pdf) or see visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/serology-overview.html> for CDC information about antibody testing.

### **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.

## **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).

## **TRAVEL UPDATE**

Cases of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) have been reported in all states, and some areas are experiencing community spread of the disease. Travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. The CDC recommends you [stay home](#) as much as possible, especially if your trip is not essential, and [practice social distancing](#) especially if you are at [higher risk of severe illness](#). Don't travel if you are sick or travel with someone who is sick. Residents from Connecticut, New Jersey and New York are still advised to isolate or quarantine for a period of 14 days from the time of entry into Florida or the duration of the individual's presence in Florida, whichever is shorter. For more information, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html>

## **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.

### **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.

## **LOCAL UPDATES:**

### **BOCC UPDATE**

On Thursday, April 9, 2020 the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners held a special meeting and issued Emergency Ordinance #2020-11 prohibiting 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/>

### **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.

### **CITY GOVERNMENTS**

On May 18, 2020 the City of Carrabelle administrative staff will return to regular business hours at the City Hall however only the lobby will re-open to the public. All non-essential meetings will be conducted by phone until further notice. The public is encouraged to continue to use the Dropbox at the front of City Hall for water & sewer payments.

The Carrabelle City parks are now open however playgrounds and public restrooms will remain closed until further notice.

The City of Apalachicola will limit contact with the public until further notice. Use the dropbox for water & sewer bill payments. Call 850-653-9319 for more details and 850-653-6845 for after hours.

### **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.

## **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.

## **FOOD DISTRIBUTION**

For a list of youth feeding program sites near you dial 2-1-1 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 also a 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>.

**The Germ that Wears a Crown: A Story About the Coronavirus:** This is a story, coloring & activity book from FSU Center for Child Stress & Health to help children cope with COVID-19. The book teaches children about the virus, social distancing and how to express and manage strong emotions. Visit <http://fsustress.org/ebook.html> to download a free copy!

## **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 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)