



Good Morning!

As Florida completes its second week in Phase 1 of Recovery, the numbers continue to be on our side. The [Florida Department of Health](#) reports that 1 in every 38 people have been tested, and positive cases are continuing to show a downward trend.

Following Governor Ron DeSantis's Safe, Smart, Step-by-Step Plan for Recovery, Florida will enter "Full Phase 1" on Monday, May 18, 2020.

Full Phase 1 includes the following provisions:

- Gyms and Fitness Centers may operate up to 50% capacity.
- Museums and Libraries may operate at 50% capacity if permitted by local governments.
- Retail may operate up to 50% capacity indoors.
- Restaurants and Food Establishments may increase indoor capacity to 50% with proper social distancing.
- Elective surgeries may continue if a facility has adequate PPE, and hospital bed surge capacity.
- Barber shops, hair salons and nail salons may operate while adhering to safety protocols.
- Professional sports venues may open and operate for games, events and training.

Protecting our most vulnerable citizens remains the focus of this plan, as Governor DeSantis recently put forward Executive Orders and emergency rules to protect those in our long-term care communities.

This includes:

- Visitation in long-term care facilities will remain prohibited to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
- Hospitals are required to test all individuals before discharge to long-term care facilities, regardless of whether the individual is symptomatic.
- Nursing homes must now transfer out any COVID-19 patients, if the facility is unequipped with appropriate ventilation systems and is unable to properly isolate and care for them.
- Nursing homes and Assisted Living Facilities must allow entry to state workers for purposes of mandatory testing of residents and staff, including recalling staff who are not working that day to the facility for testing.
- The Florida Division of Emergency Management has deployed a first of its kind mobile testing lab to further assist the state's proactive testing efforts in long-term care facilities. The lab can support up to 500 tests per day with a 45-minute turnaround.

While necessary to protect residents from the spread of COVID-19, these restriction come at a cost to seniors, who are struggling with the isolation and missing their families. My heart goes out to them, as well as the nursing staff who are working tirelessly to provide the highest level of care for their residents. These caretakers have been on front lines of this public health emergency, and I am so grateful for their commitment and hard work. I look forward to protective procedures being available soon so that families can reconnect. We will get through this, together.

I consider it a great honor to represent District 17. Please share [this link](#) with your friends and family so that they too can sign up for the [Mayfield Minute](#).

If you or someone you know needs my assistance, please don't hesitate to contact my office. My staff and I are here to serve you!

Northern Everglades & Estuaries Rulemaking

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) will be hosting online workshops for the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Water Quality Rulemaking. In response to COVID-19, the workshops will be held via online Zoom Meetings, and the same meeting is being offered at three separate times for public participation:

- May 19, 2020 at 1:30 pm [Register here](#)
- May 21, 2020 at 5:30 pm [Register here](#)
- June 3, 2020 at 10:00 am [Register here](#)

The Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program directs the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the SFWMD to work together to reduce pollutants and achieve water quality standards in the Lake Okeechobee, St. Lucie River, and Caloosahatchee River watersheds through Basin Management Action Plans and the Total Maximum Daily Loads program.

Legislation adopted in 2016 directed the District to revise Rule 40E-61. The public and stakeholders are encouraged to participate in the public rulemaking workshops to update this rule. Draft rule text and other materials for the workshops are available online at SFWMD.gov/Rules (under the section "Amendments to Chapter 40E-61, F.A.C., Works of the District Basins").

State & Federal Reemployment Assistance Update

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) recently announced that they are continuing to make progress in paying reemployment assistance claims. As of May 13th, the [DEO Claims Dashboard](#) reports that the Department has paid 741,997 claimants, for a total of more than \$1.86 billion. Of these claimants, 40,425 have received Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.

In order to continue processing claims and making payments, DEO will be conducting nightly maintenance. CONNECT will only be available daily from 8:00 a.m. to 7:59 p.m. to current claimants. This schedule does not affect individuals that wish to file a new claim. Individuals that wish to file a new claim may do so 24 hours a day, seven days per week at FloridaJobs.org and select "File a Claim."

State benefits are retroactive to March 9, 2020. Those that have a pending application from March and applied after March 15, 2020, are encouraged to log in to CONNECT to make sure there isn't a request for more information in your CONNECT inbox.

For additional information regarding Reemployment Assistance benefit programs, please visit FloridaJobs.org/COVID-19 or call (833) 352-7759. As always, please contact me if I can assist you in anyway. My staff and I stand ready to help.

District 17 Highlights

Brevard Opens Drive-Through COVID-19 Testing Site

A drive-through COVID-19 testing site is now open from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. seven days a week at the Eastern Florida State College Palm Bay Campus. The Palm Bay Campus is located at 250 Community College Parkway, and cars should enter at San Filippo Drive SE at Manchester Circle.

No prescription or reservation is required to receive a test. The tests are available for Brevard County residents over the age of 18, as well as those who live outside Brevard County. Photo ID will be required for all who desire testing, to verify they are of legal age. The test site is drive-through only, and vehicles should be limited to no more than five people. Individuals being tested will not be permitted to exit their vehicle. The test will be a nasal swab. Once samples are collected, they will be sent to a commercial lab for testing and results will be provided as soon as they are available.

More information about what to expect when coming to the site can be found at [FloridaDisaster.org](https://www.floridadisaster.org).

Senior Resource Association Indian River County

This past week I joined the Senior Resource Association (SRA) to support their Meals on Wheels program in Indian River County. Thank you to all of the amazing volunteers that are working to fight senior hunger and isolation each day.

Meals on Wheels allows senior adults to live at home when they are no longer able to cook for themselves. Currently, trained volunteers are delivering one hot meal and six frozen meals to Indian River County seniors each Monday around noon. They provide meals, a friendly visit, and a safety check. Since pets provide an array of wellness benefits for older adults, SRA also provides Meals on Wheels for clients' pets when funding allows.

Meals on Wheels relies on dedicated volunteers to make this program possible. To learn more about the Meals on Wheels nutrition programs, including eligibility requirements or volunteer opportunities, please visit [SeniorResourceAssociation.org](https://www.seniorresourceassociation.org), email vskov@sramail.org or call (772) 569-0760.

St Johns Heritage Parkway Update

The City of Palm Bay and Brevard County have reached an agreement to finish the St. Johns Heritage Parkway (SJHP) connecting road to the I-95 Interchange.

The SJHP was developed to provide a 5-mile arterial roadway extending from the Palm Bay city limits north to Ellis Road. The goal of the Parkway was to reduce congestion on I-95, provide more efficient access for local motorists, and connect roadways that will serve as emergency evacuation routes. The City of Palm Bay entered into an agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in 2013, which outlined the construction schedule for the project. FDOT completed the \$27.8 million Interchange in summer 2019, however, the City has not completed the connection to the public roadway. Due to the delays by the City, FDOT has incurred more than \$475,000 in additional costs to keep the interchange closed until the connecting road is complete.

After months of negotiations, Brevard County has agreed to issue the road permit, and Palm Bay will fund, construct and maintain the intersection. Construction is anticipated to be completed by October.

Follow me on Facebook and Twitter, and visit my [Senate website](#)



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