

March 17, 2020

Frequently Asked Questions

What is COVID-19 (coronavirus)?

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV). COVID-19 is a “novel” coronavirus (nCoV) – – that basically means it’s a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is usually transmitted by droplets from one infected individual to another – for example, when someone sneezes or coughs within six feet of another person. If someone with COVID-19 touches a surface or object, the virus can linger on that surface. After a person is initially infected, it may take up to 14 days before they test positive or develop the symptoms of COVID-19.

What are the symptoms of a COVID-19 infection?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough and shortness of breath. Some people who are infected might also have aches and pains, nasal congestion, a runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms tend to start off mild and begin gradually.

Keep in mind, some people who become infected with COVID-19 don’t show symptoms or feel unwell. Most people recover without needing special treatment.

Much of the concern lies with the elderly or people with underlying health problems, such as chronic lung disease. In severe cases, it may cause pneumonia or acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS). COVID-19 does not appear to be as virulent as other coronaviruses, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS).

What is Health First doing about the virus?

Health First has been in constant contact with our local health department, as well as monitoring directions from the Florida Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC). We are screening all visitors and vendors who enter our facilities. We are evaluating our employees to ensure they are healthy and able to work. We are enforcing infection prevention measures. We are well-trained and knowledgeable in managing patients with infectious respiratory illnesses and will continue to follow our established protocols. It’s important to stay calm and remember that we’re prepared – and regularly train for situations like this.

Is there a vaccine or treatment for COVID-19?

Since COVID-19 is so new, there is no vaccine at the moment. There is also no specific treatment for the virus. Treatment is supportive, particularly when people with other health conditions find their conditions are made worse by the infection.

What can I do to avoid respiratory illnesses of all types?

Respiratory etiquette is critical to stay healthy. It's important to stick to the basics, such as:

- Avoiding contact with others if you are sick or they are
- Covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing (or sneezing into the crook of your elbow)
- Throwing away used tissues immediately
- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds. If you don't have access to soap and water, use hand sanitizer that is 60% alcohol-based.
- Air-dry your hands or use a clean towel to dry your hands
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Clean and disinfect "high-touch" areas and objects often. This means regularly disinfecting counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tables and bedside tables – places where COVID-19 could possibly linger.
- Clean any surfaces that have blood, stool or any bodily fluids on them
- Avoid sharing food or drinks with others
- Take care of yourself – get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals
- Call your doctor before visiting

Will a surgical mask prevent me from being infected with COVID-19?

No. A surgical mask won't filter aerosols once they've been transmitted by an infected individual.

What is involved with testing someone for COVID-19?

If you have returned from a cruise or international within the last 14 days and are sick (fever, cough, shortness of breath) – or if you've been in close contact with someone who is sick and has recently returned from these countries – you should call your primary care provider or the Brevard County Health Department. If you fall under these parameters and have possibly been exposed, you'll be tested – oral, nasal and saliva specimens will all be taken. Samples will be given to the county health department and sent to the closest lab, which is in Jacksonville. Test results are available within 24 to 48 hours. The CDC is continually updating the travel areas of concern. Check the [CDC travel page](#) for the latest updates.

What if I test positive for COVID-19?

If you do test positive, it's important to do the following:

- Stay home except to get medical care
- Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home
- Call ahead before visiting your doctor – this is crucial, so the office can properly prepare for your arrival and safeguard the well-being of others
- Wear a facemask when around others
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Wash your hands frequently
- Don't share personal household items
- Clean all "high-touch" surfaces

STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 20-68 (Emergency Management - COVID-19)

WHEREAS, Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe acute respiratory illness that can spread among humans through respiratory transmission and presents with symptoms similar to those of influenza; and

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2020, I issued Executive Order number 20-51 directing the Florida Department of Health to issue a Public Health Emergency; and

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2020, the State Surgeon General and State Health Officer declared a Public Health Emergency exists in the State of Florida as a result of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, I issued Executive Order 20-52 declaring a state of emergency for the entire State of Florida as a result of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, President Donald J. Trump and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") issued the 15 Days to Slow the Spread guidance advising individuals to adopt far-reaching social distancing measures, such as working from home and avoiding gatherings of more than 10 people; and

WHEREAS, as Governor, I am responsible for meeting the dangers presented to this state and its people by this emergency.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RON DESANTIS, as Governor of Florida, by virtue of the authority vested in me by Article IV, Section (1)(a) of the Florida Constitution, Chapter 252, Florida Statutes, and all other applicable laws, promulgate the following Executive Order to take immediate effect:

Section 1. Bars, Pubs and Nightclubs

A. Pursuant to sections 252.36(5)(g)-(h), Florida Statutes, any licensee authorized to sell alcoholic beverages for consumption on premises that derive more than 50% of its gross revenue from the sale of alcoholic beverages shall suspended all sale of alcoholic beverages for thirty days from the date iuof this order, effective at 5 p.m. today, March 17, 2020.

B. The Department of Business and Professional Regulation shall utilize its authorities under Florida law to further implement and enforce the provisions of this Section and shall take additional measures with respect to bars, pubs and nightclubs as necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

Section 2. Beaches

Pursuant to section 252.36(5)(k), Florida Statutes, I direct parties accessing public beaches in the State of Florida to follow the CDC guidance by limiting their gatherings to no more than 10 persons, distance themselves from other parties by 6 feet, and support beach closures at the discretion of local authorities.

Section 3. Restaurants

A. Pursuant to section 252.36(5)(g), Florida Statutes, a restaurant shall immediately limit its occupancy to 50% of its current building occupancy.

B. Pursuant to section 252.36(5)(g), Florida Statutes, a restaurant shall follow the CDC guidance by ensuring, at minimum, a 6-foot distance between any group of patrons and limiting parties to no more than 10 individuals.

C. The Department of Business and Professional Regulation shall ensure all restaurants implement employee screening and prohibit any employee from entering the restaurant premises if they meet any of the criteria listed below:

- 1) Any person infected with COVID-19 who has not had two consecutive negative test results separated by 24 hours;
- 2) Any person showing, presenting signs or symptoms of, or disclosing the presence of a respiratory infection, including cough, fever, shortness of breath or sore throat;
- 3) Any person who has been in contact with any person(s) known to be infected with COVID-19, who has not yet tested negative for COVID-19 within the past 14 days;
- 4) Any person who traveled through any airport within the past 14 days; or
- 5) Any person who traveled on a cruise ship within the past 14 days.

D. The Department of Business and Professional Regulation shall utilize its authorities under Florida law to further implement and enforce the provisions of this Section and shall take additional measures with respect to bars, pubs and nightclubs as necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

For purposes of this section, "restaurant" shall include any Food Service Establishment, licensed under Chapter 500, Florida Statutes, and Public Food Service Establishment, licensed under Chapter 509, Florida Statutes.

Section 4. This Executive Order shall expire thirty days from this date unless extended.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed, at Tallahassee, this 17th day of March, 2020.

[Handwritten Signature]

 RON DESANTIS, GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

[Handwritten Signature]

 SECRETARY OF STATE

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 TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

Hepatitis A is on the rise in Florida counties

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Environmental Health Services

A safe and healthy environment is one form of preventive medicine that you cannot buy at the drug store or get from your doctor's office, yet it is crucial to the well being of you, your family and the community where you live.

Environmental Health programs are an essential part of Florida's public health system. These services are administered by the Florida Department of Health in Brevard County Environmental Health Services and are aimed at preventing or reducing health risks that may occur in your daily surroundings.

Detecting and correcting environmental dangers that can cause disease or injury is the job of Environmental Health Specialists. They are an important part of a public health team.

You may not be aware of the wide range of services provided by these specialists through Environmental Health Services (EHS). Almost every day you and your family receive benefits directly or indirectly from work performed by Environmental Health Professionals.

Through public education, routine inspections, investigation of complaints and enforcement of laws relating to safety and sanitation, your EHS staff help to make your neighborhood and community a healthier place to live.

For emergency notifications of public health hazards, please visit the [Emergency Management](http://www.brevardcounty.us/EmergencyManagement) website.

Water Transmission and COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

- Can the COVID-19 virus spread through drinking water?** The COVID-19 virus has not been detected in drinking water. Conventional water treatment methods that use filtration and disinfection, such as those in most municipal drinking water systems, should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Is the COVID-19 virus found in feces?** The virus that causes COVID-19 has been detected in the feces of some patients diagnosed with COVID-19. The amount of virus released from the body (shed) in stool, how long the virus is shed, and whether the virus in stool is infectious are not known. The risk of transmission of COVID-19 from the feces of an infected person is also unknown. However, the risk is expected to be low based on data from previous outbreaks of related coronaviruses, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). There have been no reports of fecal-oral transmission of COVID-19 to date.
- Can the COVID-19 virus spread through pools and hot tubs?** There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the use of pools and hot tubs. Proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (e.g., with chlorine and bromine) of pools and hot tubs should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Can the COVID-19 virus spread through sewerage systems?** CDC is reviewing all data on COVID-19 transmission as information becomes available. At this time, the risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19 through sewerage systems is thought to be low. Although transmission of COVID-19 through sewage may be possible, there is no evidence to date that this has occurred. This guidance will be updated as necessary as new evidence is assessed. SARS, a similar coronavirus, has been detected in untreated sewage for up to 2 to 14 days. In the 2003 SARS outbreak, there was documented transmission associated with sewage aerosols. Data suggest that standard municipal wastewater system chlorination practices may be sufficient to inactivate coronaviruses, as long as utilities monitor free available chlorine during treatment to ensure it has not been depleted. Wastewater and sewage workers should use standard practices, practice basic hygiene precautions, and wear personal protective equipment (PPE (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html>)) as prescribed for current work tasks.
- Should wastewater workers take extra precautions to protect themselves from the COVID-19 virus?** Wastewater

Environmental Health Services

Brevard.EHS@flhealth.gov (mailto:Brevard.EHS@flhealth.gov)
321-633-2100 (tel:321-633-2100)

Fax 321-633-2163 (tel:321-633-2163) (OSTDS)

Fax 321-633-2151 (tel:321-633-2151) (Water and Facilities)

Mailing Location
2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way,
Suite A116
Viera, FL 32940-6605

Restaurant Complaints

(https://www.myfloridallicense.com/complaintwizard_cont_SID)

To file a Foodborne Illness or General Complaint about a restaurant, please visit **DBPR – Division of Hotels and Restaurants** (https://www.myfloridallicense.com/complaintwizard_cont_SID).

To request mosquito prevention call 321-264-5032

Location Information
(</locations/environmental-health.html>)

EH Fee Schedule
([documents/brevard-environmental-health-fee-schedule.pdf](/documents/brevard-environmental-health-fee-schedule.pdf))

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