# Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.

## PLAN FOR FLORIDA'S RECOVERY

*Report to Governor DeSantis from the Re-Open Florida Task Force*

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# Message From Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez

Governor DeSantis:

As you know, the onset of this pandemic has truly tested the fiber of the state of Florida. We have, indeed, been living in uncertain times, fighting a faceless opponent, but rising to the occasion thanks to selfless medical professionals, health administrators, first responders, our National Guard, and your unwavering leadership.

During this unprecedented health crisis, your actions have been thoughtful, measured and critical to minimizing the spread of COVID-19. When you delivered your inaugural address, you pledged to Floridians that you would use your best judgment and courage of your convictions, and during this crisis, you have done just that.

Early on and throughout this pandemic, our Administration's focus has been on flattening the curve, protecting our most vulnerable residents, and ensuring access to testing and hospital capacity. With a strategic and preventive approach in our nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and long-term care facilities, our elderly were prioritized to curtail the spread of the virus and ensure their well-being.

Your prompt and unrelenting emphasis on testing capabilities aided us in pinpointing the areas of our state with the highest infection rates. Your swift action to allow recently retired law enforcement, first responders and healthcare personnel to return to the workforce emphasized an all-hands-on-deck approach to combating this silent disease.

These are just a few examples of the mitigation measures that saved lives in Florida, however, we have not yet turned the page on this virus and the health and economic impact it has left behind. I have all the faith in our Administration, our healthcare professionals, our economic and industry leaders and our community to emerge even stronger.

The Task Force demonstrated a commitment to a safe, incremental, and comprehensive approach. With input from public and private sector leaders, business executives and residents from the Florida Keys to the Emerald Coast, we are vested in initiatives that support our workforce, while renewing and restoring our economy. Attached herein is a report based on presentations, discussions, and public commentary.

Thank you for entrusting me to lead our Re-Open Florida Task Force Executive Committee. I am honored to have moderated comprehensive discussions that explored the best way to open up the Sunshine State with public health-driven data at the forefront.

God Bless,

Jeanette M. Nuñez

Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez

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# The COVID-19 Pandemic in Florida

## HISTORY

In late 2019, a novel infectious disease was detected in Wuhan, China. This virus, eventually named Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), rapidly spread throughout China and eventually the world, leading the World Health Organization to declare a Public Health Emergency of International Concern and a global pandemic.

The virus reached the West Coast of the United States in January of 2020. When two Florida residents tested positive the first week of March, Governor Ron DeSantis responded by issuing Executive Order 20-51, directing the Florida Department of Health to declare a Public Health Emergency. Eight days later, Governor DeSantis declared a State of Emergency.

As of the date of this report, over 3 million cases of COVID-19 have been reported across 185 countries and territories, resulting in over 200,000 deaths. Over 32,000 Floridians have tested positive, and over 1,200 have lost their lives.

## STATE RESPONSE

Since the introduction of COVID-19 into the State of Florida, the state has taken a strategic and methodical approach to combat the spread of this deadly virus. On March 1, Governor DeSantis instructed the State Surgeon General to declare a Public Health Emergency. On March 9, Governor DeSantis placed Florida in a State of Emergency, which provided the Governor and his team of experts with the needed flexibility to take decisive actions to prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in Florida. Governor DeSantis worked to ensure that our most high-risk and vulnerable populations were protected. As a result, Governor DeSantis prohibited visitors to our state's nursing homes, assisted living facilities and long-term care facilities statewide and directed our State Surgeon General to issue a public health advisory urging all persons over the age of 65—as well as all persons with serious underlying medical conditions—to stay home.

Governor DeSantis did not take a "one size fits all" approach to mitigating the threat of COVID-19 in our large and diverse state. The plan was measured and mitigation efforts were targeted. Governor DeSantis worked with local governments where the spread of COVID-19 proliferated—primarily in Southeast Florida—to limit physical movement and mitigate the further spread of COVID-19 in these areas.

When Governor DeSantis implemented statewide mitigation efforts, he did so carefully. Governor DeSantis took actions designed to limit movement and interaction across industries that posed a higher risk for transmitting the virus, like restaurants, bars, nightclubs and gyms, while preserving the capacity of our health care system. Any medically unnecessary surgical procedures were prohibited—freeing up imperative hospital bed capacity. Additionally, Governor DeSantis took important steps to limit the entry of COVID-19 into our state by requiring those traveling into our state from areas with substantial community spread to isolate for a period of 14-days upon entry into Florida.

# The COVID-19 Pandemic in Florida
**(continued)**

As the curve is flattening statewide and our health care system's capacity remains steady, Governor DeSantis is leading the charge to safely re-open the state's economy.

## COVID-19 IN FLORIDA

At the close of April 2020, the state of Florida has achieved several critical benchmarks relating to syndromic surveillance, epidemiology and outbreak decline, and health care capability indicating successful management of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the final weeks of April, the state saw a downward trajectory of emergency department visits for influenza-like and COVID-19-like illness (Figures 1-3).

**Figure 1**

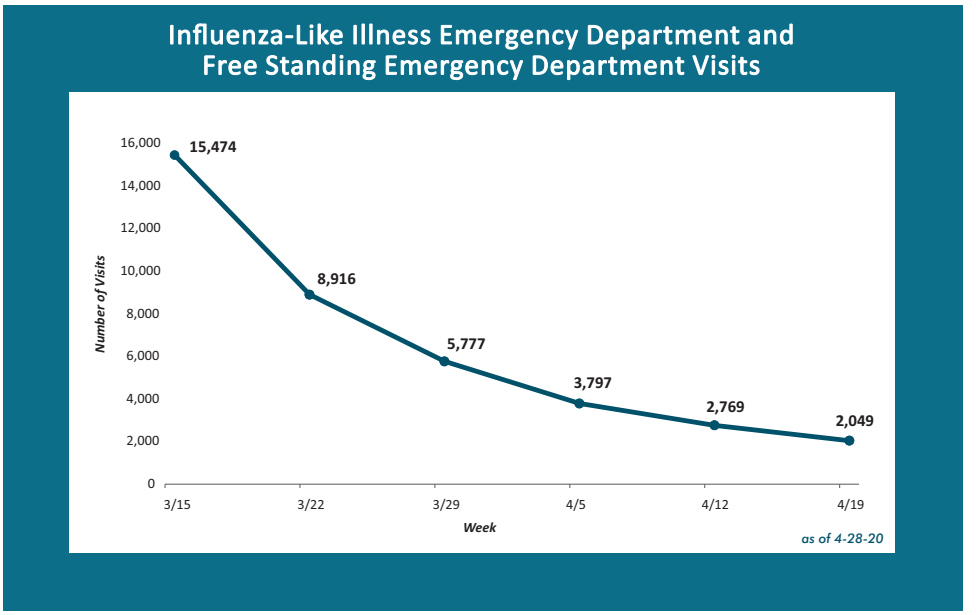
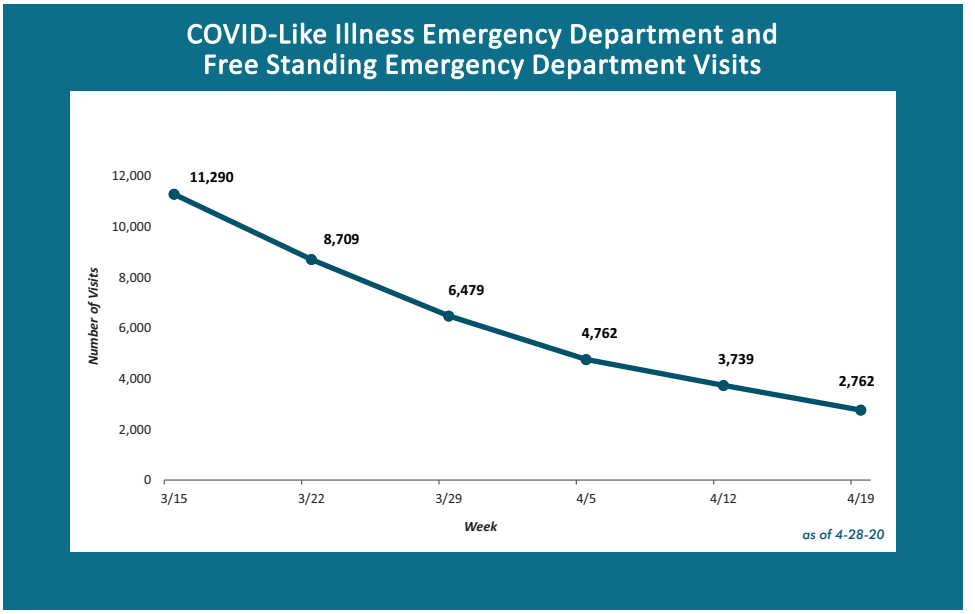
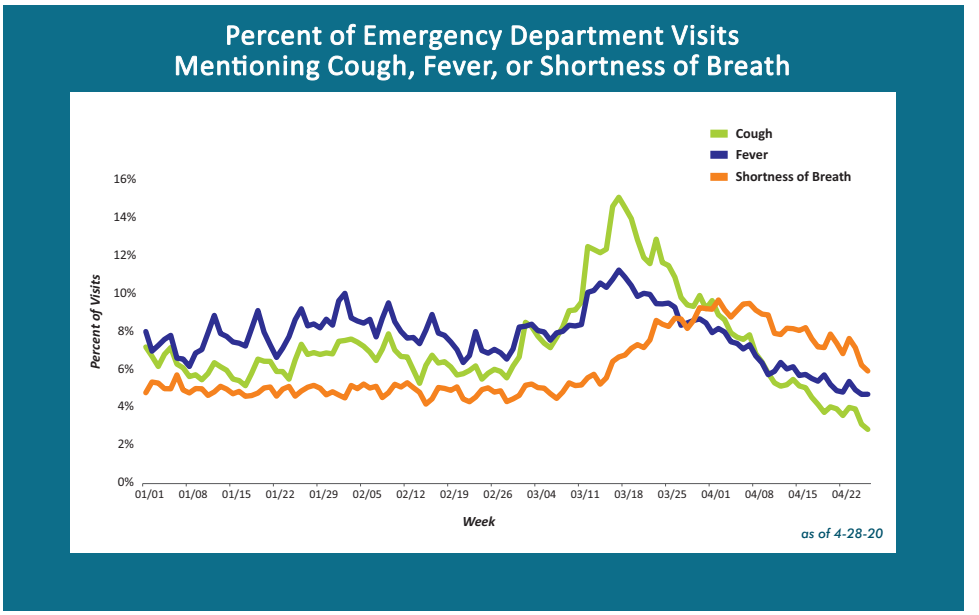



**Figure 2**



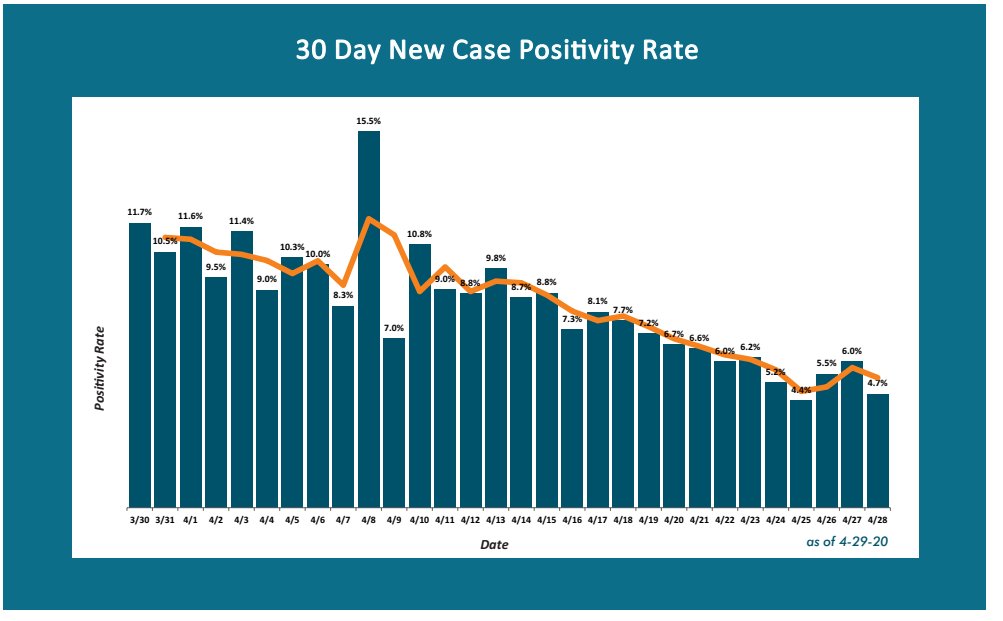
# The COVID-19 Pandemic in Florida
## (continued)

**Figure 3**




Statewide, Florida has seen the percent of new positive cases steadily decrease (Figure 4).

**Figure 4**



# The COVID-19 Pandemic in Florida
## (continued)

Finally, Florida continued to expand its testing program for first responders, at-risk health care workers, and vulnerable populations. The state deployed Mobile Testing Teams in conjunction with the National Guard to obtain samples in nursing homes, and pharmacies began offering on-site testing for eligible individuals. In addition, the state's hospital system demonstrated the ability to treat patients without resorting to surge capacity models (Figure 5).

**Figure 5**

**Florida Hospital Bed Availability**

| | FLORIDA | MIAMI-DADE | BROWARD | PALM BEACH | HILLSBOROUGH | ORANGE | DUVAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Licensed Beds | 68,735 | 9,455 | 6,816 | 4,332 | 4,378 | 4,751 | 3,927 |
| Total Staffed Beds | 58,742 | 8,102 | 5,403 | 4,044 | 3,982 | 3,743 | 3,794 |
| Total Available Beds | 22,060 | 2,991 | 1,739 | 1,815 | 1,470 | 1,204 | 1,684 |
| Available Capacity | 37.55% | 32.19% | 32.19% | 44.88% | 36.92% | 32.17% | 44.39% |
| | | | | | | | |
| Hospitalizations Change in Last 24 Hours | 30 | 38 | -12 | 7 | 4 | -1 | -3 |
| Hospitalizations | 2,131 | 767 | 324 | 230 | 41 | 52 | 58 |

*as of 4-29-20*

With these critical benchmarks achieved and a flattening of the curve, the state stands ready to begin Phase 1 of a multi-phase path toward the gradual elimination of restrictions on movement, congregation, and participation in society. As we recommend lifting these restrictions, it is important to continue implementing measures that mitigate and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Florida while prioritizing the protection of individuals over the age of 65 and those who have serious underlying medical conditions.

# The COVID-19 Pandemic in Florida
**(continued)**

## AGENCY RESOURCES

For additional information on COVID-19 in Florida, several of Florida's agencies provide updated, detailed reports of COVID-19-related information.

The Department of Health maintains a dashboard providing daily updates regarding positive cases, sources of exposure, hospitalizations, and deaths. These data are available to the public at https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/.

The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration maintains a publicly accessible database of up-to-date information regarding hospital capacity, including bed availability and intensive care unit bed availability by hospital and county. The information is accessible at http://ahca.myflorida.com/covid-19_alerts.shtml

In addition to making information available, Florida has deployed novel tools to gather data and predict needs. Florida partnered with Google to launch a survey that collects information regarding symptom prevalence, travel history, mitigation behaviors, and exposure to COVID-19. The survey is available to Floridians and non-Floridians alike and can be accessed at https://strongerthanc19.com.

Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.
PLAN FOR FLORIDA'S RECOVERY

# Guiding Principles
## for Re-Opening

### PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

The first priority in re-opening is maintaining the health and safety of all Floridians. Every measure taken by state and local governments, businesses, and individuals should consider the general health and safety of the public.

### PROTECTION OF THE VULNERABLE

Targeted measures should focus on Floridians over the age of 65 and those who have serious underlying medical conditions to prevent exposure to COVID-19.

### HEALTH CARE SYSTEM READINESS

Health facilities should be able to return to normal operations through a prudent approach that ensures available capacity to treat COVID-19 patients in the event of a medical surge. Health care systems also need to develop models for the sustainability of medical supplies and preservation of medical resources without the need for public augmentation of medical supplies.

### ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan to re-open Florida should support the highest practicable level of business operation while maintaining public health and safety, so that all Floridians can return to work and the economy can recover.

### PROTECTION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES & MAINTAINING INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

Measures taken by the government must not impair the fundamental rights of Floridians, and when restrictive measures are imposed they should be the least restrictive measures feasible to accomplish a specific medically necessary objective.

### PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

The **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan to re-open Florida must be rooted in sound medical judgement and driven by health metrics so that every Floridian feels safe as they return to work and their daily activities. An effective communications strategy is critical to ensuring public confidence in the COVID-19 mitigation strategies.

### PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Local communities are partners with the state as the **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan to re-open Florida is implemented. Florida is a geographically large and diverse state and each of our local communities has unique insight into their individual circumstances. Local communities will play an important role in the plan to re-open Florida.

Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.
PLAN FOR FLORIDA'S RECOVERY

# Roadmap
## for Re-Opening

Florida's **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan to re-open is grounded in up-to-date data measuring COVID-19 spread, risk, and readiness. This plan is designed to mitigate the risk of resurgence and to protect the most vulnerable, while allowing for a phased path to economic recovery.

This plan should occur in four phases: Phase 0, which is the current phase we are in today; Phase 1; Phase 2; and Phase 3. Entry into each phase will be consistently evaluated in close consultation with public health experts and local government officials.

Current Phase | Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 3

## BENCHMARKS

Florida should track critical benchmarks on a statewide basis, the most important of which is hospital capacity to respond in the event of an unexpected surge of COVID-19. If the state shows consistent success, these guidelines contemplate advancement to the next phase. If, however, COVID-19 data suggests increased spread, the state should remain in the current phase. The state should continually review any sudden, unexplained spikes in the number of COVID-19 cases, while factoring in increases in testing and monitor any increases in hospitalizations. In extreme situations, the Governor may deploy a geographically targeted response in consultation with public health officials.

# Benchmarks for Re-Opening

Using the *White House Guidelines for Opening up America Again* as a baseline, the Florida Department of Health has identified three data components that should be considered.

## SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE

Syndromic surveillance methods look at individual and population health indicators (such as characteristic symptoms of a particular disease). The objective of this surveillance system is to provide the data and analytic tools needed to identify outbreaks or unusual trends more rapidly, leading to timely public health responses.

### Metric

a. Downward trajectory of influenza-like illnesses (ILI)

**AND**

b. Downward trajectory of COVID-19-like illnesses (fever, cough, shortness of breath)

*Data Source: Early Notification of Community-Based Epidemics (ESSENCE): Florida's syndromic surveillance system.*

**AND**

## EPIDEMIOLOGY & OUTBREAK DECLINE

Outbreak data captures actual reports of positive cases and traces the causes of health outcomes and diseases. It includes the study of the distribution (frequency, pattern) and determinants (causes, risk factors) of diseases.

The objective of monitoring these data is to ensure the state is managing the spread of COVID-19 and employing effective mitigation measures.

### Metric

a. Downward trajectory of documented COVID-19 cases

**OR**

b. Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests (flat or increasing volume of tests)

*Data Source: Merlin, Florida's reportable disease data base.*

**AND**

## HEALTH CARE CAPABILITY

Data about hospital capacity and readiness shows whether the health care system is ready to respond in the event of an unexpected surge of COVID-19 illness. The ideal situation is for the system to be able to treat all patients without needing to use emergency surge plans and to have a robust COVID-19 testing program in place.

### Metric

a. Capability to treat all patients without triggering surge capacity

**AND**

b. Robust testing program in place for at-risk healthcare workers, including emerging antibody testing

*Data Source: Emergency Status System (ESS) for bed availability data.*

# Roadmap
**(continued)**

## HEALTH CARE CAPABILITY ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Hospitals satisfy the benchmark for health care capability if they:

1. Have the capacity to immediately convert additional facility-identified surgical and intensive care beds for treatment of COVID-19 patients in a surge capacity situation; and,
2. Have adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) available.
    - Hospitals must have a well-established supply chain management structure and controls to maintain appropriate levels of PPE and report regularly both PPE levels and bed capacity to the Agency for Health Care Administration.
    - The adequacy of supplies must take into consideration universal masking of all staff and patients and other guidelines per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Florida Department of Health.
    - Hospitals should maintain, an adequate supply of N95 masks, surgical masks, gloves, surgical gowns, and other critical resources for current needs with sufficient supply remaining in the event of a surge.
    - Hospitals must confirm the reliability of their commercial supply chains to ensure timely and adequate supplies of PPE.
    - Hospitals should not be seeking any additional federal or state assistance requesting PPE supplies upon resuming elective procedures.
    - Protocols to conserve PPE should be well established and hospitals must provide effective training in PPE conservation including appropriate donning and doffing of PPE.

## TESTING

Testing for COVID-19 is a critical component to Florida's plan to re-open in a **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** approach. As the state re-opens, the amount of testing should be further expanded so state and local health officials can adequately monitor the prevalence of the virus within communities.

The state, in coordination with local governments, healthcare providers, private laboratories, and educational institutions, should have the capacity to reach the following average amount of tests per day over a 7-day period:

- 30,000 average tests per day by May 15;
- 40,000 average tests per day by June 15.

Importantly, Florida has more testing capacity than actual demand. We must work to encourage the expansion of testing up to our capacity.

## Roadmap
**(continued)**

The state should pursue an aggressive strategy to further expand testing. Strategies should include:

- Optimizing existing state data dashboards by leveraging the current reporting process for the Department of Health and Agency for Health Care Administration.
- Leveraging private sector partners to scale up testing by partnering with health systems throughout the state.

Local governments should develop testing strategies that expand their rate of testing in the population and reduce the need for state and federal supported testing locations. This plan should provide law enforcement agencies, health care professionals and first responders with priority access to rapid testing, either at point-of-care, when available, or when tests are sent to laboratories.

Local governments should coordinate with health care facilities within their jurisdiction in the development of their testing strategy. The rate of testing within a county should not decline as the state progresses through the phases of re-opening and each community should maintain a minimum level of testing with the goal of achieving and maintaining recommended testing capabilities.

## CONTACT TRACING

To enhance the state and local health system's contact tracing process, collaboration methods should be pursued for state-wide expansion of rigorous contact tracing. These methods should prioritize adoption of digital applications, increased work force and use of technological innovations. Specific objectives for an expanded contract tracing program:

- Scale and implement contact tracing programs throughout the state using a phased-in approach targeting geographic regions to contain new outbreaks of COVID-19.
- Leverage private sector and university partners to scale up contact tracing throughout the state.

# General Mitigation
## Guidance

There is currently no vaccine to prevent contraction of COVID-19. We must bear in mind that, as Floridians, we are all in this together and we have a responsibility to continue practicing mitigation measures.

These general mitigation guidelines are minimum recommended health protocols and are designed to be utilized at every phase of re-opening. Individuals and employers should continue to adhere to federal, state and local guidance, including information from the CDC.

### INDIVIDUALS

Individuals are encouraged to practice good hygiene and engage in healthy activities, including outdoor activities, while practicing social distancing.

The following general guidance is recommended for all individuals throughout each phase of re-opening:

- Practice social distancing, as the virus is most transmissible indoors under close, sustained contact. If you are around other people, try to maintain 6 feet of separation.
- Avoid hugs, handshakes, large gatherings and close quarters.
- Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least a 60 percent alcohol base if soap and water are not available.
- Consider wearing a face mask or cloth face cover when entering a business, or within close proximity to members of the public.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow or a tissue and dispose of the tissue.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched items and surfaces as much as possible.
- Monitor your symptoms carefully. If you feel sick, stay home.
- If you believe you are infected with COVID-19, contact your health care provider immediately.
- If you are older than 65 years of age or have a serious underlying medical condition, avoid large crowds.

### EMPLOYERS

Employers should prepare their workplaces and consider how to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and lower the impact in their workplace.

## General Mitigation
**(continued)**

The following general guidance is recommended for all employers throughout each phase of re-opening:

- Practice social distancing, as the virus is most transmissible indoors under close, sustained contact. If you are around other people, try to maintain 6 feet of separation.
- Avoid hugs, handshakes, large gatherings and close quarters.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch, high-traffic surface areas.
- Develop and implement policies and procedures to train employees on personal hygiene expectations, including increased frequency of hand washing, the use of hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent alcohol and, clear instruction to avoid touching hands to face.
- For businesses that are close contact or have a high potential for exposure to COVID-19, require employees to wear masks, cloth face coverings or other PPE while inside or within close proximity to members of the public.
- Make hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar disinfectant readily available to employees and customers.
- Encourage employees who feel sick to stay home and monitor employees for COVID-19 symptoms.
- Do not allow symptomatic people to physically return to work until they meet CDC criteria to do so and are cleared by a medical provider.
- Develop and implement policies and procedures for workforce tracing following a positive COVID-19 test by an employee or an employee who has come into contact with an individual testing positive for COVID-19.

# General Protocols

These general protocols are applicable statewide and at every phase of re-opening.

## VISITS TO LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES & CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Visits to nursing homes, assisted living facilities, adult family-care homes, long-term care facilities, adult group homes and correctional facilities should remain prohibited. Those who interact with residents and patients must adhere to strict hygiene protocols. These restrictions may be lifted by order of the Governor in consultation with state health officials and should not be a component of the phased-in the **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan.

## HOSPITAL REGIONAL COLLABORATION WITH SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES, ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES & OTHER RESIDENTIAL PROVIDERS

- To support safe and effective infection prevention and control strategies at long-term care facilities, hospitals should proactively engage and collaborate with skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and other long-term care residential providers to share best practices on infection control.
    - If a resident at a skilled nursing facility, assisted living facility, or other long-term care residential facility is admitted to a hospital, the hospital should only discharge those residents for return to their skilled nursing facility, assisted living facility, or other long-term care residential facility only after a negative COVID-19 test result.
- If available, hospitals should provide timely access to testing for residents and staff.
- An alert system in hospital electronic medical record systems should be established to identify emerging COVID-19 cases at local facilities.
- Additionally, hospitals should provide other identified and important resources to support the care of frail elderly and others with underlying medical conditions in these residential facilities to:
    - Prevent the introduction of the virus into the facility;
    - Appropriately care for those with COVID-19; and
    - Prevent the spread of the virus in these facilities.

## ELECTIVE PROCEDURES AT HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Upon the expiration of Executive Order 20-72 on May 8, 2020, healthcare practitioners should resume all inpatient and outpatient elective procedures at hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, office surgery centers, dental, orthodontic and endodontic offices, and other health care practitioners' offices. The Governor should authorize the Agency for Health Care Administration and the Florida Department of Health to take actions necessary to limit elective procedures if:

## General Protocols
**(continued)**

- Hospitals do not have the capacity to immediately convert additional facility-identified surgical and intensive care beds for treatment of COVID-19 patients in a surge capacity situation;
- Hospitals do not have adequate PPE available to complete all medical procedures and respond to COVID-19 treatments needs;
- Hospitals seek any additional federal, state, or local assistance regarding PPE supplies once resuming elective procedures; and
- Hospitals fail to provide support to and proactively engage with skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and other long-term care residential providers.

## CHILDCARE FACILITIES (i.e. Daycares and Summer Camps)

Childcare facilities, including daycares and voluntary pre-kindergarten programs, should continue to operate throughout each phase of the **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan and follow general mitigation protocols as outlined in this report. Childcare facilities should consider implementing the following mitigation techniques:

- Require all staff to wear masks or cloth face coverings and other PPE while on premises.
- Limit class size to maximize social distancing, where feasible, as the virus is most transmissible indoors under close, sustained contact.
- Institute handwashing at regular intervals (i.e. every hour).
- Conduct temperature checks daily.

# The Plan:
## Phases For Re-Opening
## PHASE 0: CURRENT PHASE

Floridians are operating under the Current Phase as of the date of this report. Executive Order 20-91, which permitted only essential services and activities, expires on April 30, 2020.

## INDIVIDUALS

**Vulnerable Populations**
Individuals older than 65 years of age with a serious underlying medical condition (such as chronic lung disease, moderate-to-severe asthma, serious heart conditions, immune-compromised status, cancer, diabetes, severe obesity, renal failure and liver disease) are urged to stay at home and only leave their homes when necessary to obtain or provide essential services or conduct essential activities.

**Social Gatherings**
All individuals are urged to continue to maximize physical distance from others in public, particularly in enclosed environments. Individuals are urged to avoid socializing in groups of more than 10 people.

**Travel**
Individuals are urged to avoid all non-essential travel and cruises, including to U.S. states and cities outside of Florida with community spread of COVID-19. Individuals coming to Florida from an area with substantial community spread, including the New York Tri-State Area (Connecticut, New Jersey and New York) and Louisiana, should isolate for 14 days upon arrival in Florida.

## EMPLOYERS

**Telework**
Employers are encouraging teleworking, where practical.

**Employee Screening**
All employers are urged to screen employees before entering the premises for symptoms of COVID-19 or influenza like illness and, where practical, take the temperature of each employee.

**Travel**
Employers are urged to avoid non-essential travel and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel.

**Local Government Meetings**
Requirements for in-person quorum for a local government body to meet are suspended and the use of technology and video conferencing for local government meetings is authorized.

## The Plan: Phase 0, Current Phase
**(continued)**

### OTHER

**Bars, Pubs and Nightclubs**
Bars, pubs, and nightclubs that derive at least 50 percent of sales from alcohol are currently closed.

**Restaurants**
Currently, all restaurants and food establishments are limited to take-out service only.

**Gyms and Fitness Centers**
Gyms and fitness centers are closed unless they are:

- Amenities of hotels which have a capacity of 10 persons or less,
- Amenities of a residential building,
- Interior to any fire or police stations, or
- Located inside any single-occupant office building.

**Recreation**

- **Public Beaches:** Beach access is limited to parties of 10 or less with 6-feet distance required between groups. Beach closures remain a local government decision.
- **Large Venues:** (i.e. movie theaters, concert halls, auditoriums, bowling alleys, arcades, playhouses, casinos) These facilities are not deemed essential activities.

**Large Sporting Event and Theme Parks**
These facilities are currently operating under restricted business measures or have closed.

**Vacation Rentals**
Vacation Rentals are currently suspended if:

- Rented for periods of less than 30 days or one calendar month, whichever is less;
- Advertised or held out to the public as a place regularly rented to guests; or
- Otherwise regulated by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation as a vacation rental pursuant to section 509.241, Florida Statutes.
- This prohibition does NOT include:
    - Hotels, motels, inns, resorts, non-transient public lodging establishments, or time share projects;
    - Long-term rentals; or
    - Rentals to persons performing military, emergency, governmental, health or infrastructure response, or travelers engaged in non-vacation commercial activities.

## The Plan: Phase 0, Current Phase
**(continued)**

### Personal Services Businesses

Currently, personal services businesses such as cosmetology salons, barber shops and nail salons are operating under restricted business measures or have closed.

### Retail Businesses

Currently, many retail establishments are operating under restricted business measures or have closed.

# The Plan:
## Phases For Re-Opening
## PHASE 1

**Phase 1** should begin based on the benchmarks provided for in the Roadmap for Re-Opening which includes a downward trajectory of the syndromic and epidemiology criteria while maintaining adequate health care capacity.

The **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan sets forth minimum recommended health protocols. Individuals and businesses should adhere to all public guidance by federal, state and local officials, including state regulatory agencies.

## INDIVIDUALS

**Vulnerable Populations**
Individuals older than 65 years of age and individuals with a serious underlying medical condition (such as chronic lung disease, moderate-to-severe asthma, serious heart conditions, immune-compromised status, cancer, diabetes, severe obesity, renal failure and liver disease) should continue to stay at home. When leaving home, these individuals should follow social distancing and other general mitigation guidance. Those living with vulnerable individuals should be aware of the exposure risk that they could carry the virus back home after returning to work or other environments where distancing is not practical. Vulnerable populations should affirmatively inform their employer that they are a member of the vulnerable population so that their employer can plan accordingly.

**Social Gatherings**
All individuals should continue to maximize physical distance from others in public, particularly in enclosed environments. Individuals should avoid socializing in groups of more than 10 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate social distancing of at least 6 feet.

**Travel**
Individuals should avoid all non-essential travel and cruises, including to U.S. states and cities outside of Florida with substantial community spread of COVID-19. Individuals coming to Florida from an area with substantial community spread, such as the New York Tri-State Area, should adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation for 14 days upon arrival in Florida.

## EMPLOYERS

**Telework**
All employers should encourage teleworking, where practical. Employers should develop plans for employees to return to work in phases, which should be implemented in subsequent phases of the **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan.

**Employee Screening**
All employers should screen employees before entering the premises for symptoms of COVID-19 or influenza like illness and, where practical, take the temperature of each employee.

## The Plan: Phase 1
**(continued)**

**Travel**
Employers should avoid non-essential travel and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel.

**Local Government Meetings**
The in-person quorum for a local government body to meet should remain suspended and the use of technology and video conferencing for local government meetings should be encouraged.

## OTHER

**Bars, Pubs and Nightclubs**
Bars, pubs, and nightclubs that derive at least 50 percent of sales from alcohol should remain closed.

**Restaurants**
Restaurants and food establishments should operate at no more than 50 percent capacity, with appropriate social distancing and a minimum of 6 feet separating parties, as the virus is most transmissible indoors under close sustained contact.

- Parties should not exceed 10 people. Businesses should limit inside waiting areas for patrons waiting to be seated.
- Businesses should thoroughly clean and disinfect all surfaces after each use.
- Businesses should consider a reservations-only business model or call-ahead seating to manage spacing in restaurant.
- Outdoor dining areas should be prioritized.
- Businesses should consider posting signs to remind staff and patrons of safety and sanitization protocols.
- Businesses should screen employees before work and should consider requiring employees to wear face masks or cloth face coverings while inside or within close proximity to members of the public.
- Bar areas should remain closed.
- Menus, if laminated, should be cleaned after each usage. Paper menus should be designed for single use and then disposed of immediately after use.
- Businesses should avoid cafeteria-style dining arrangements. If salad bars or buffets are permitted efforts to mitigate risk should include barriers to block virus spread from sneezes and coughs and service utensils should be handled by staff and/or washed frequently.

**Gyms and Fitness Centers**
Gyms and fitness centers may re-open but should at a minimum:

- Operate at no more than 50 percent of building capacity.
- Adhere to strict social distancing and sanitation protocols, including cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces.
- Separate patrons by at least 6 feet.

## The Plan: Phase 1
**(continued)**

- Encourage appointment only or scheduled use of equipment.
- Prohibit indoor group sessions or classes.

**Recreation**

- **State Parks:** A limited number of state parks should open for daytime use only. During this phase, visitors will not have access to certain amenities, such as pavilions, picnic areas and campsites, due to sections of the park being closed or staff and visitor safety considerations.
- **Public Beaches:** Beach access should be limited to parties of 10 or less with 6-feet distance between groups. Beach closures should remain a local government decision.
- **Large Venues:** (i.e. movie theaters, concert halls, auditoriums, bowling alleys, arcades, playhouses, casinos) These venues should utilize strict social distancing protocols and should operate at no more than 50 percent capacity, with a minimum of 6 feet separating parties. Additional guidance includes:
    - Parties should not exceed 10 people.
    - Operators should clean and disinfect all surfaces after each use.
    - Businesses should consider screening employees before work and require workers to wear face masks or cloth face coverings while inside or within close proximity to members of the public.

**Large Sporting Events and Theme Parks**

- Large spectator sporting events should use strict social distancing guidelines and limit occupancy of venues to 25 percent of building capacity.
- Theme parks should remain closed.

**Vacation Rentals**

Vacation rentals should remain suspended.

**Personal Services Businesses**

Personal Services Businesses, such as cosmetology salons, barber shops and nail salons, should limit occupancy to 50 percent of building capacity and should consider the following mitigation measures:

- Welcome patrons by appointment only and avoid group appointments that increase occupancy during the same time periods.
- Regularly sanitize working stations and equipment between interactions with customers to the greatest frequency feasible.
- Require all employees to wear face masks, cloth face coverings and other PPE while inside or within close proximity of members of the public.
- Encourage customers to wear face masks or cloth face coverings when entering the premises and provide face masks or cloth face coverings upon request, if available.
- Post signage to direct customers against congregating outside of the premises.
- Remove all unnecessary, frequent-touch items such as magazines, newspapers, service menus, any other unnecessary paper products and décor from customer service areas.

## The Plan: Phase 1
**(continued)**

**Retail Businesses**

These types of businesses should consider the following mitigation measures:

- Operate at no more than 50 percent of building capacity.
- Post signage to direct the flow of customers within the premises to promote social distancing, as the virus is most transmissible indoors under close, sustained contact.
- Regularly sanitize work stations and frequently touched surfaces.
- Develop and implement policies and procedures to train employees on personal hygiene expectations, including increased frequency of hand washing, the use of hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent alcohol and, clear instruction to avoid touching hands to face.
- Consider dedicating a certain time each day for vulnerable populations.

# The Plan:
## Phases For Re-Opening
## PHASE 2

**Phase 2** will begin after the successful conclusion of Phase 1, which includes a downward trajectory of the syndromic and epidemiology criteria while maintaining adequate health care capacity. This will occur when there is no evidence of a rebound or resurgence of COVID-19 cases and satisfies the benchmarks outlined in this **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan.

The **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan sets forth minimum recommended health protocols. Individuals and businesses should adhere to all public guidance by federal, state and local officials, including state regulatory agencies.

## INDIVIDUALS

### Vulnerable Populations

Individuals older than 65 years of age and individuals with a serious underlying medical condition (such as chronic lung disease, moderate-to-severe asthma, serious heart conditions, immune-compromised status, cancer, diabetes, severe obesity, renal failure and liver disease) should continue to stay at home. When leaving the home, these individuals should follow social distancing and other general mitigation guidance. Those living with vulnerable individuals should be aware of the exposure risk that they could carry the virus back home after returning to work or other environments where distancing is not practical. Vulnerable populations should affirmatively inform their employer that they are a member of the vulnerable population so that their employer can plan accordingly.

### Social Gatherings

All individuals should continue to maximize physical distance from others in public, particularly in enclosed environments.

- Individuals should avoid socializing in groups of more than 50 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate social distancing of at least 6 feet.

### Travel

Individuals may resume non-essential travel.

## EMPLOYERS

### Telework

All employers should continue to encourage teleworking where practical. Employers should begin implementing plans for employees to return to work in phases.

### Employee Screening

All employers should screen employees before entering the premises for symptoms of COVID-19 or influenza like illness and, where practical, take the temperature of each employee.

# The Plan: Phase 2
## (continued)

**Travel**
Employers should minimize non-essential travel and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel.

**Local Government Meetings**
In-person quorum for local government bodies should resume, allowing no more than 50 people in attendance, as long as social distancing guidelines can still be maintained. Continue to allow authorized technology and video conferencing for public participation at local government meetings.

## OTHER

**Bars, Pubs and Nightclubs**
Bars, pubs, and nightclubs that derive more than 50 percent of sales from alcohol should operate at 50 percent of building capacity with an emphasis on diminished standing room capacity and prioritizing outdoor service. Owners should consider:

- Spacing tables at least six feet apart and reducing and spreading the arrangement of seating at the bar to incorporate appropriate social distancing between patrons as well as between patrons and the bar staff.
- Restricting coupling of tables or table groups to 10 or fewer patrons.
- Encouraging beverage orders to be taken at the table by bar or wait staff rather than at the bar counter.
- Incorporating intentional and manageable traffic flows to enable responsible social distancing for patrons waiting on service when accepting orders directly at the bar.
- Cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces after each use.
- Menus, if laminated, should be cleaned after each usage. Paper menus should be designed for single use and then disposed of immediately after use.

**Restaurants**
Restaurants and food establishments should operate at no more than 75 percent of building capacity, with appropriate social distancing and a minimum of 6 feet separating parties, as the virus is most transmissible indoors under close, sustained contact.

- Parties should not exceed 10 people. Businesses should limit inside waiting areas for patrons waiting to be seated.
- Allow walk-ins but continue to emphasize a reservations-only business model or call-ahead seating to manage spacing effectively in restaurant.
- Outdoor dining areas should continue to be prioritized.
- Operators should clean and disinfect all surfaces after every use.
- Businesses should consider posting signs to remind staff and patrons of safety and sanitization protocols.
- Businesses should continue to screen employees before work and consider requiring employees to wear face masks or face coverings while inside or within close proximity to members of the public.

## The Plan: Phase 2
**(continued)**

- Menus, if laminated, should be cleaned after each usage. Paper menus should be designed for single use and then disposed of immediately after use.
- Businesses should avoid cafeteria-style dining arrangements. If salad bars or buffets are utilized, efforts to mitigate risk should include barriers to block virus spread from sneezes and coughs and service utensils should be handled by staff and/or washed frequently.

### Gyms and Fitness Centers

Gyms and fitness centers should:

- Operate at no more than 75 percent of building capacity.
- Adhere to strict social distancing and sanitation protocols, including cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces after each use.
- Separate patrons by at least 6 feet.
- Resume indoor group sessions and classes with restricted capacity to promote social distancing, as the virus is most transmissible indoors under close, sustained contact.

### Recreation

- **State Parks:** All state parks should be opened for daytime use. Some facilities within state parks—including overnight accommodations, pavilions, interpretive programs, any large group activities or events—will remain closed.
- **Public Beaches:** Beaches should be fully open.
- **Large Venues:** (i.e. movie theaters, concert halls, auditoriums, bowling alleys, arcades, playhouses, casinos) These venues should utilize strict social distancing protocols and should operate at no more than 75 percent capacity, with a minimum of 6 feet separating parties. Additional guidance includes:
    - Parties should not exceed 10 people.
    - Operators should clean and disinfect all surfaces after each use.
    - Businesses should considering screening employees before work and requiring workers to wear face masks or cloth face coverings while inside or within close proximity to members of the public.

### Large Sporting Events and Theme Parks

- Large spectator sporting events should limit occupancy of venues to 50 percent of building capacity and use strict social distancing.
- Theme parks may consider re-opening with capacity limits, strict social distancing and proper measures to clean and disinfect.

### Vacation Rentals

Vacation rentals should consider the following:

- Vacation rentals should open and operate for in-state reservations only (i.e. only Florida residents).
- Prohibit rentals to persons traveling internationally or from a state or locality with a substantial community spread of COVID-19.

- Maintain 72 hours between guest check-ins to allow for effective cleaning and disinfecting of the rental unit.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect the property between rentals and post signage in all units detailing cleaning and sanitation procedures.

**Personal Services Businesses**
Personal Services Businesses, such as cosmetology salons, barber shops and nail salons, should limit occupancy to 75 percent of building capacity and should consider the following mitigation measures:

- Allow service for walk-in patrons at the discretion of the business owner, so long as patron waiting areas can accommodate proper social distancing protocols, as the virus is most transmissible indoors under close, sustained contact.
- Regularly clean and disinfect working stations and equipment between interactions with customers to the greatest frequency feasible.
- Suggest all employees wear face masks, cloth face coverings and other PPE while inside or within close proximity to members of the public.
- Encourage customers to wear face masks or cloth face coverings when entering the premises and provide face masks or cloth face coverings upon request, if available.
- Post signage to discourage customers against congregating outside of the premises.
- Remove all unnecessary, frequent-touch items such as magazines, newspapers, service menus, any other unnecessary paper products and décor from customer service areas.

**Retail Businesses**
Retail businesses should consider the following mitigation measures:

- Operate at no more than 75 percent of building capacity.
- Post signage to direct the flow of customers within the premises to promote social distancing.
- Regularly clean and disinfect working stations and commonly touched surfaces at the greatest frequency feasible.

# The Plan:
## Phases For Re-Opening
## PHASE 3

**Phase 3** will begin after the successful conclusion of Phase 2, which includes a downward trajectory of the syndromic and epidemiology criteria while maintaining adequate health care capacity. This will occur when there is no evidence of a rebound or resurgence of COVID-19 cases and satisfies the benchmarks outlined in this **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan.

The **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan sets forth minimum recommended health protocols. Individuals and businesses should adhere to all public guidance by federal, state and local officials, including state regulatory agencies.

## INDIVIDUALS

**Vulnerable Populations**

Individuals older than 65 years of age and individuals with a serious underlying medical condition (such as chronic lung disease, moderate-to-severe asthma, serious heart conditions, immune-compromised status, cancer, diabetes, severe obesity, renal failure and liver disease) can resume public interactions, but should practice social distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed. Vulnerable populations should affirmatively inform their employer that they are a member of the vulnerable population so that their employer can plan accordingly.

**Social Gatherings**

Non-vulnerable populations should consider minimizing time spent in crowded environments.

**Travel**

Non-essential travel may continue.

## EMPLOYERS

**Telework**

Employees should resume unrestricted staffing of worksites and implement the final phasing in of employees returning to work. For vulnerable populations, teleworking can be considered.

**Employee Screening**

Employers should take prudent and practical measures to ensure employees do not enter the premises if they believe they are infected with COVID-19 or show symptoms of influenza like illness.

## The Plan: Phase 3
**(continued)**

**Travel**
Employees should resume non-essential travel and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel.

**Local Government Meetings**
These meetings should return to in-person quorum and public participation for local government bodies.

## OTHER

**Bars, Pubs and Nightclubs**
Bars, pubs, and nightclubs that derive more than 50 percent of sales from alcohol should operate at full capacity with limited social distancing protocols. Businesses should maintain adequate sanitation practices among employees and patrons during all hours of operation. Menus, if laminated, should be cleaned after each usage. Paper menus should be designed for single use and then disposed of immediately after use.

**Restaurants**
Restaurants and food service establishments may operate at full capacity with limited social distancing protocols. Businesses should maintain adequate sanitation practices among employees and patrons during all hours of operation. Menus, if laminated, should continue to be cleaned after each usage. Paper menus shall be designed for single use and then disposed of immediately after use.

**Gyms and Fitness Centers**
Gyms and fitness centers should open to full capacity but should maintain adequate sanitation practices among employees and patrons during all hours of operation.

**Recreation**

- **State Parks:** State parks should be fully opened, including overnight accommodations.
- **Public Beaches:** Beaches should remain fully opened.
- **Large Venues:** (i.e. movie theaters, concert halls, auditoriums, bowling alleys, arcades, playhouses, casinos) These venues should re-open fully with limited social distancing protocols.

**Large Sporting Events and Theme Parks**

- Large spectator sporting events should consider reducing capacity with limited social distancing protocols.
- Theme parks may return to normal operations with limited social distancing protocols.

## The Plan: Phase 3
**(continued)**

**Vacation Rentals**
Vacation Rentals should resume normal operating procedures but should continue to thoroughly clean and disinfect the property between rentals.

**Personal Services Businesses**
Personal Services Businesses, such as cosmetology salons, barber shops and nail salons, should operate under full capacity but should consider the following mitigation measures:

- Continue to maintain adequate sanitation practices for employees and patrons.
- Regularly clean and disinfect working stations and equipment between interactions with customers to the greatest frequency feasible.
- Remove all unnecessary, frequent-touch items such as magazines, newspapers, service menus, any other unnecessary paper products and décor from customer service areas.

**Retail Businesses**
Operators of retail businesses should operate at full capacity but should continue to maintain adequate sanitation practices for employees and patrons.

# Ongoing Considerations

## EDUCATION

The Department of Education and the State University System, in consultation with state health officials, should monitor the re-opening phases as set by this report. However, plans should be developed to resume on-campus learning, full-time, for the 2020-2021 school year.

- The Department of Education should develop a plan to phase-in education, safely, during the summer months to provide supplemental education for closing achievement gaps for early learning through K-12 students who may need additional supports due to COVID-19 school closures.
- Florida's postsecondary institutions should continue to implement distance learning measures to the extent possible and develop a plan for return to on-campus instruction.

## SMALL AND RURAL BUSINESSES

Small businesses are the backbone of the Florida economy. Getting them up and working again is critically important for Florida's economic recovery. The guidance contained in Florida's **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan is not a condition for a small business to operate, but the deployment of these recommended measures should occur to the greatest extent feasible to promote economic recovery while ensuring the public health and safety of all Floridians.

Businesses that frequently interact with customers should institute mitigation measures outlined in the guidance within specific phases to ensure that they can conduct their operations in a safe manner and prevent the spread of COVID-19. While these measures should be universally deployed, many small businesses will be unable to afford PPE and need assistance to provide PPE or other protective equipment.

As the state moves forward with the **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan, resources should be provided to aid small businesses to acquire the protective materials needed to restart operations. These measures can include:

- Direct grant assistance to local governments focused on small business programs to acquire PPE and other protective infrastructure such as sneeze guards, thermometers, and sanitation supplies.
- Coordinated support from the Division of Emergency Management to local governments to provide protective health supplies when deficiencies exist that severely impair small business operations.

Additionally, rural communities have experienced the COVID-19 pandemic differently than urban areas. Florida's agriculture industry has felt significant economic strain through the supply chain from mitigation measures taken by restaurants and retail businesses.

## Ongoing Considerations
**(continued)**

Through all stages of economic recovery, Florida's rural communities should be a focus of efforts to restore stability to the state's diverse economic base. Some examples of measures include:

- Policies developed by Florida's social services programs for food assistance should prioritize buying from Florida growers and producers, and state vendors should prioritize Florida businesses as a condition of all procurement.
- Florida economic development planning should develop marketing and branding strategies to further promote rural communities and products and food produced in Florida to Floridians.

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, through its emergency operation function, should continue to partner with local governments and small businesses to communicate successful mitigation strategies for businesses.

## TOURISM

Tourism is vital to Florida's economic well-being. Tourism marketing by VISIT FLORIDA should be reintroduced in phases that acknowledge the progression the state makes through the **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan. Currently, VISIT FLORIDA is engaged in limited marketing. During the initial phases of the **Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.** plan, VISIT FLORIDA should focus on promoting in-state travel when businesses are ready.

## HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS: BUSINESS DISASTER PLANNING

### Before a Disaster Strikes

A disaster of any size could have an impact on business. All businesses should build a disaster continuity plan and encourage employees to create a family emergency plan. It is important to consider how a disaster could affect employees, customers and workplaces. Important considerations include: how to manage a business if access to the workplace is limited by road closures, streets are impassable, or communication is limited.

Additionally, businesses should similarly plan for the unique challenges of a hurricane during a pandemic and set aside disaster supplies. This may include warehousing or storage of emergency masks, cloth face coverings or other PPE along with generators and other equipment.

### During a Disaster

During a disaster, safety is the main concern. Businesses are encouraged to review their Business Continuity Plan to ensure the information is up to date and employees are aware of the plan and their responsibilities. It is important to monitor relevant emergency management news for weather and safety updates. In case an evacuation is ordered, business owners should secure their businesses and follow instructions by local emergency management on evacuation orders. If local emergency management officials order an evacuation and a business owner makes the decision to remain at their business, emergency responders will not be able to respond during the disaster.

## Ongoing Considerations
**(continued)**

Regarding COVID-19, the unique issues of this public health crisis may require emergency management officials to consider stay-at-home orders instead of evacuating people in a storm's path. If evacuations are required, transportation network companies, such as Uber and Lyft, may be considered in addition to buses to assist in evacuations. Further, utilizing additional school locations to add capacity to allow for greater social distancing as well as hotels may be considered in addition to current evacuation centers.