

COVID-19 Update Press Conference

Friday, April 24, 2020

Kevin Captain – Interim Director of Community Information of Volusia County

George Recktenwald – Volusia County Manager

Ed Kelley – Volusia County Council, County Chair

Patricia Boswell – Administrator of the Florida Department of Health

Kevin Captain – Interim Director of Community Information of Volusia County

This is an update of the COVID-19 pandemic situation. We are assessing and evaluating the re-opening of Volusia County with input from

- Cluster of cases in Volusia County at the prison
 - There are no cases with inmates or staff at the Volusia County Branch Jail.
 - Daily screening is being performed.
 - 1,191 total inmates and staff with no reported or documented cases.
- All correctional facilities with cases were at Tomoka Correctional Institution, which is a State facility located in Volusia County. Information on this prison can be obtained by calling them directly at (386) 323-1070.

COVID-19 Testing:

- Antibody testing in Volusia County is being performed by Advent Health and Concentric (?) at the Volusia County Fairgrounds, and on the East and West sides.
- Testing is by appointment.
- Information can be obtained by going to Volusia.org/COVID-19

Employment Benefits Information:

- Information can be found at Volusia.org/COVID-19 under Reemployment Resource Assistance Guide
 - This site contains important links for stimulus FAQ's and information.
 - Additional information can be found at Vousia.org under Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

Chair, Ed Kelley, stated that he speaks with 16 mayors and County Manager, George Recktenwald, speaks with all city managers on a weekly basis to stay informed and gather information. Ed thanked everyone for their patience and participation.

George Recktenwald, Volusia County Manager:

- We would be following a phased opening approach.
 - Hot Topic has been beaches:

- As of Saturday, April 28, 2020, the following ramps will be open to handicapped placard vehicles only:
 - 3rd Avenue – New Smyrna Beach
 - Dunlawton – Daytona Beach Shores
 - Williams – Daytona Beach
 - With the stipulations that beach visitors must remain within 100 yards from the ramp.
 - Beach parks remain closed
 - Beach usage is still limited to exercising only
- Once the Governor’s re-opening of Florida begins, we will be following a phased opening with modifications where necessary.
 - One change will be the parking of campers and RV’s in driveways in unincorporated areas only, for the use of self-isolation and quarantine.

Patricia Boswell, Administrator with the Florida Department of Health:

- Stated that as of 12:00 Noon Friday, April 27th, there were 417 reported cases of COVID-19 in Volusia County with 70 being hospitalized and 15 deaths.
- A combined total of 48 COVID-19 cases (workers and residents) and 7 deaths, were associated with long term care facilities.
- The peak in Volusia County cases was due to contained cases within the Tomoka Correctional Institution.
- For a case to be counted as “recovered” two criteria are used: COVID-19 free for 14 days or hospital discharge data. Neither of these criteria cover completely the full COVID-19 population.
- Florida Department of Health (FDOH) updates their data twice per day.

Patricia Boswell, Administrator of the Florida Department of Health:

1. Why are COVID-19 cases spiking in Volusia County?
 - a. While Florida is plateauing statewide, a cluster of cases are showing due to the Florida Department of Corrections facility (Tomoka Correctional Institution).
2. With a spike in cases, should we be looking at opening or re-opening?
 - a. Counties and County Managers with health care expert input, will be determining how to proceed.
3. It has been said that precautions are not being taken to provide for staff safety at residential care facilities, especially the OPIS Coquino Center.
 - a. As of March and April, all long term care facilities were being checked by strike teams.
 - b. Facilities are being called twice per week to check on facility status.
 - c. Each case of COVID-19 is investigated.
 - d. Resources were made available to these facilities.
 - e. Facility management is up to each facility to establish and follow safety standards.
4. Is there a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) in Volusia County?
 - a. There have been shortages.

- b. In the last 72 hours, the County has received more PPE and testing supplies.
- c. A coordinated approach in obtaining supplies has been in place with the Emergency Management response teams.

Kevin Captain, Interim Director of Community Information of Volusia County

- Opening of the beaches and ADA access, etc.
 - This will be done based on the governor's guidelines and our data.
 - Our timing and areas to be opened will be different based on discussions with Halifax and Advent Health hospitals and business leaders on areas to be opened.
- Regarding the spike in COVID-19 cases in Volusia County, these were due to the cases discovered at the Tomoka Correctional Institution, operated by the State, in a contained facility, which is different than cases in the community at large.
- With regard to PPE availability; we have the same contacts as the Department of Health.
 - We have been able to supply PPE's when requested.
 - In fact, we have received another shipment of PPE from the State today.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, April 27th at 2:00 p.m.