

## COVID-19 Update Press Conference

Friday, May 1, 2020

Kevin Captain – Interim Director of Community Information of Volusia County

Chief Judge Raul Zambrano, 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit

DJ Lebo, CEO, Early Learning Coalition of Flagler & Volusia

Patricia Boswell - Administrator, Florida Department of Health in Volusia County

Dr. Scott Klioze - Radiology Associates Imaging

### **Kevin Captain – Interim Director of Community Information of Volusia County**

Good afternoon. Thank you for joining us today. I'm Kevin Captain, interim director of community information for Volusia County Government. Today's lineup includes:

- Dr. Scott Klioze - Radiology Associates Imaging and Halifax Health
- DJ Lebo - CEO of the Early Learning Coalition of Flagler & Volusia
- Patricia Boswell - Administrator with The Florida Department of Health in Volusia County
- And the Seventh Judicial Circuit Court

At yesterday's conference, we made some announcements regarding the beach. As a reminder, beginning tomorrow, the physical activity requirement will be lifted. This means that whether or not you want to walk, sunbath or build a sandcastle, you can! But, beachgoers must maintain social distancing.

Groups must be limited to six or less and remain 10 feet from all other groups. Off-beach parking will also reopen, but spots will be limited. Social distancing is imperative to maintain safety, and the best means to ensure that is by limiting parking. We know there are some core areas that get crowded on our beaches. Expect parking in these areas to be more limited. If you can access the beach in a less populated area, we ask that you please do so. And when you get to the beach, spread out from other groups.

Lighthouse Point Park and Smyrna Dunes Park will also open Saturday at partial capacity. Again, parking will be limited to make sure social distancing guidelines can be maintained. Restrooms, splash pads, playgrounds and showers will all remained closed at all of these facilities.

Earlier today, Governor DeSantis announced that state parks will reopen on Monday, May 4th. Volusia County parks have remained open, but playgrounds and campsites will remain closed. As we've mentioned before, we are finalizing a plan for reopening of county services and facilities, so we'll have more on openings in the near future.

Lastly, regarding testing, AdventHealth has advised that, beginning next week, and testing days and times at the Daytona International Speedway will change; details will be available shortly and posted at [Volusia dot org forward slash coronavirus](http://Volusia.org/forward/slash/coronavirus). An appointment will still be required.

Family Health Source will close their testing sites at Daytona Beach Racing and Card Club and Deltona Plaza at 5 p.m. today.

The site at 1205 S Woodland Boulevard in DeLand will remain open and tests Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This Monday, May 4, Family Health Source will provide antibody testing at the Hester Building at the Volusia County Fairgrounds. Testing is available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. An appointment is not needed.

We continue to post testing information, and all other COVID-19 information, at [Volusia dot org forward slash coronavirus](http://Volusia.org/forward/slash/coronavirus). You can also call the Citizens Information Center between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at 866-345-0345. And now, I'd like to introduce Patricia Boswell, Administrator with The Florida Department of Health in Volusia County.

### **Patricia Boswell - Administrator, Florida Department of Health in Volusia County**

Good afternoon, for today the Florida Department of Health has updated our statistics for Volusia County. We now have 500 cases of Corona virus, 83 hospitalizations, 21 deaths, ten of these deaths are residents in long term care facilities, and these numbers are cumulative. As we begin to open it is really important to remember the message around social distancing. As you know the social distancing messages were implemented in March in an effort to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. These measures are working and we need to continue. As we begin to re-open remember the general guidance frequent handwashing, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, cover your cough, clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces as often as possible. And, remember, if you are sick, stay home. We continue to identify, test and isolate people at high risk of infection. This is done by

identifying potential cases through contact tracing and monitoring of positive cases and close contacts of positive cases. We focus on finding the cases, tracing and then warning known contacts and then isolating the cases. Long-term care facilities are especially vulnerable to COVID-19, and we are a part of a multi-agency response to prevent outbreaks. Information is updated once a day at [www.FloridaHealthCOVID19.gov](http://www.FloridaHealthCOVID19.gov).

**Kevin Captain – Interim Director of Community Information of Volusia County**

Thank you Ms. Boswell. At this time I would like to introduce Dr. Scott Klioze with Radiology Associates Imaging. He also serves as an interventional radiologist with Halifax Health and is an esteemed medical educator. Dr. Klioze.

**Dr. Scott Klioze - Radiology Associates Imaging**

Thank you all. This is my first time addressing you guys so here is a quick introduction. I have been in the community for about 18 years now with Radiology Associates. Radiology Associates has been serving the community for 60 years. I am also a proud member of Halifax Medical Center, and we have been in the community for over 90 years. I have been asked to address the issue of returning to some semblance of normalcy.

I know that there is a lot of fear associated with reducing the restrictions of social interaction, and I want to assure you guys that what we've done to date has been extremely effective. Remember the goal of social distancing was to mitigate the impact on the healthcare system. This is a virus and we're learning more about it every day. This is a virus that is not going to go away. This is something that we are going to be living with year after year. It is like influenza. Unfortunately, we as humans have clawed our way to the top of the food chain, but we are still prone to Darwinian pressures, and any time there is a new pathogen that is introduced into the community, it has to make its way through. Eventually we will develop a herd immunity and we will develop vaccines, and most importantly, we are going to get the infrastructure and the equipment we need to treat the sickest individuals that come down with COVID-19 effectively and efficiently. That was the mistake that came about in some of the other countries like Italy and France, where it was such an overwhelming number that they couldn't keep up with the demand. This has worked very well over the past six weeks. We're going to introduce some social

interactions again, but as was alluded to earlier, we still have to be socially responsible. And, that is the key from transitioning from social distancing to social responsibility and we're going to go out, we're going to re-open restaurants, but it's still a good idea to protect yourself if you are one of the vulnerable individuals. And, right now we know that if you are over the age of 65, you have some baseline health issues, you are still prone to a COVID type infection. We're finding out that this is a heavily prevalent virus in the community, probably more so than we ever expected. It is very infectious and there has been a good percentage of people out there who have been exposed to this and have the antibodies but have been completely asymptomatic. So, these are carriers and you are never going to get rid of this virus because there are probably a lot of people out who are probably carriers and can transmit it to the members of society who are most vulnerable. So, all of us need to be responsible, those who have the illness need to protect themselves, and those that may be carriers need to help and be responsible for protecting those who need that type of protection.

Again, think that what we've done to date has really been a learning experience on multiple levels, not have we only reduced incidents of COVID, in Florida, but we've also reduced the incidence of influenza so we're finding out that the responsibility of personal hygiene and hand washing has far reaching implications above SARS COV2. And, we need to continue these practices into the future for the safety of all Floridians. Thank you.

**Kevin Captain – Interim Director of Community Information of Volusia County**

Thank you Dr. Klioze. Our next speaker is DJ Lebo, the CEO of Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia Counties.

**D.J. Lebo - CEO, Early Learning Coalition of Flagler & Volusia**

Good afternoon everyone. As Kevin said, my name is D.J. Lebo, and I am with the Early Learning Coalition, and we are a contracted agency with the state of Florida, Department of Education and Office of Early Learning. We contract with child care providers in Flagler and Volusia County. So, we work hand in hand with the Department of Children and Families in this area with childcare centers and programs. So, I want to say, first of all with childcare, it is an essential service based on conversations with the Governor early on. So, I want to talk a little bit today about the current situation with childcare programs in Volusia County.

So, right about now about 60% of childcare programs in Volusia County are closed temporarily. So, only 40% are open, which means that there are 65 programs that we are contracted with in Volusia County that are open right now. You can see that on our website we have [www.ELCFB.org](http://www.ELCFB.org) is where you can see that. There is a map that shows you all of the different childcare programs and it shows you information about them. That changes on a day to day basis, and especially since we are seeing some changes with the Governor's new executive order you are going to see some increases there as well. I encourage you that if you are looking for childcare, to please go there and look.

One of the things that I want to mention is that programs that are open right now are using CDC guidelines of nine children with one adult, maintaining single rooms and keeping those children in one space, and bringing them lunches in, and keeping them all in one group together when they go outside. So, making sure that they are keeping those children safe and secure.

So, I wanted to let you a little about what we are doing to help maintain the infrastructure for childcare services in our community. We are currently paying contracted childcare providers that are with the Early Learning Coalition for School Readiness or Voluntary Early Pre-kindergarten whether they are open or closed and we have been doing that since the middle of March. We plan on doing that at least until the middle of May, possibly through June. We are waiving parent fees for parents who are currently in our programs, are not paying parent fees. We just finished giving out over \$22,000 to 78 programs for supplies. We gave out supplies including Clorox wipes, soap, paper towels and toilet paper, which are things that they had a hard time getting and really need to keep their programs open.

I think that the biggest thing that you will be interested in is that through the CARES Act, funds are coming to the state of Florida, and then coming down to our local area for childcare for first responders and for essential healthcare workers, and so there are referrals available for employers of those workers and we have those available. I have been working with several cities, sheriff departments, police departments, and Halifax Health to be able to help families put children in care. Already, we have 135 children in probably three weeks-time in care. If you are interested in that we have the information available for you. There is a referral that the employer fills out with information. And, then again, we have over 65 programs available and ready to take in these children. We encourage you to use that.

We also have websites available for provider childcare program resources, because we know right now children are at home and providers are working remotely or on-line, and that is a whole different world

for us. And, we know that children birth to five need limited screen time and so we are trying to provide lots of resources where we can show what limited screen time looks like for both childcare providers and families. And have lots of resources for what families can do with children during this time. So we encourage you to use our website and look at all these different resources we have.

And. Lastly what are we going to be doing in addition over the next couple of weeks we plan on offering additional mini-grants for infrastructure for childcare providers. We hope to offer some additional professional development for our pre-school teachers. We hope to continue to pay childcare providers to keep that infrastructure going, because if childcare providers go out of business, none of us has a place to take our children, so none of you have workers to keep your businesses open. So, we hope to continue to do that. And, we also hope to continue working with our K12 system to make sure that our kindergarteners will be ready for school in the fall. So with that I think I am done. Thank you very much for your time.

**Kevin Captain – Interim Director of Community Information of Volusia County**

Thank you so much Ms. Lebo, especially going through this pandemic childcare is of the utmost importance. We do have a question that was submitted by Channel 9's, Mike Springer, and this will be directed to the Florida Health Administrator, Patricia Boswell.

**Question:** Why are the number of positive COVID-19 cases, why have they increased by almost 50 in the last 24 hours?

**Patricia Boswell - Administrator, Florida Department of Health in Volusia County**

**Answer:** So, the question is why did it increase, or go up, by almost 50; it went from 452 to 500 from yesterday to today? And, as I have discussed, there has been multiple facility outbreaks here in Volusia County, so that increase can be attributed to those outbreaks for the most part, and then a couple of other cases. Thank you.

**Kevin Captain – Interim Director of Community Information of Volusia County**

Thank you Ms. Boswell. We'll move to the second part of today's update with the 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court. Please welcome Chief Judge Raul Zambrano.

## **Raul A. Zambrano – Chief Judge of the 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court**

Good afternoon. Thank you to Volusia County for letting us use this forum to get our message out. My name is Chief Judge Raul Zambrano, and I am Chief Judge of the 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, which encompasses four counties: Volusia, Flagler, and St. Johns and Putnam counties. On behalf of 42 other judges who encompass the circuit court, I want to thank you once again for being here. Accompanying me here today is, Dr. Margaret Crossman, who is senior vice-president and senior chief officer of Halifax Health; First Assistant State Attorney, John Reid; our elected Public Defender, Jim Purdy; our elected Clerk of Court, Laura Roth, as well as attorney Aaron Delgado, who is the Daytona City Commissioner for Zone 2, as well as President of the Volusia Criminal Defense Lawyers Association. Also, a representative of the Sheriff's Office, Captain Ben Israel, who is my bailiff for today. The purpose of us being here today is to give you an update on what the circuit court has been up to in trying to deal with the COVID-19 Corona virus issues.

On March 13, 2020, the Supreme Court entered an order that suspended all jury trials. Jury trials as you may know is our Constitutional Right and one of our most treasured ones. That suspension is still in effect as of this day. On March 17<sup>th</sup> I entered an administrative order that closed two of our facilities; the Volusia County Courthouse Annex, as well as the S. James Foxman Justice Center, as a result of the COVID-19 spread.

We maintain one courthouse partially opened. That is the Volusia County Courthouse in DeLand, Florida, for what are called essential services. Since those dates we are operating in only providing those essential services to the community. Essential services are listed in those orders that include: first appearances, juvenile delinquency proceedings, juvenile shelter proceedings, independency cases, as well as domestic violence injunctions and other sundry injunctions.

But, as time has progressed time has come for us to start expanding our opportunities for individuals that come to the courthouse to take care of some businesses. But, we must do that in a careful and calculated manner. Two weeks ago I spoke with Representative Tom Leek about how the court could expand a little bit of some of our services. I give him credit for putting an idea in my mind as to how best to approach this issue and in a safe manner. He suggested that we reach out to the hospital, and so I did. I called Dr. Margaret Crossman, to see whether or not there was any way that we could incorporate medical professionals in the assessment of individuals who come through the doors of the Volusia County Courthouse in DeLand? This is a novel idea and Halifax Health and the courts are not entities that

normally would run with each other or cross paths for that matter. But, I was very, very encouraged and enthused by the positive reception I received from the hospital and their administrators.

Effective on Monday, at 9:00 a.m., the Volusia County Courthouse in DeLand, will permit individuals who have negotiated their cases, whether they be a misdemeanor or felony, to enter the courthouse after going through a screen process and dispose of their case. This is limited to felony and misdemeanor cases that are currently pending before the court. The procedure that we have established can be assessed by calling our offices. Judicial assistants have all of the information necessary, but we want to encourage attorneys come forward and call our offices to set and schedule, on an appointment basis, a disposition of a case which may include a felony or misdemeanor.

Now, these services are new and are still within the purview and framework of the Supreme Court's order which is still in effect until the end of May 2020. At that point in time we will need to reassess to see if we may provide additional services to other individuals who come into the courthouse. I have invited some of our stakeholders to come forward and provide some additional information as far as what each of them has been doing in order to provide services to our community. I'd like to present Dr. Crossman at this time.

**Dr. Margaret Crossman, MD – Chief Medical Officer, Halifax Health**

Thank you Chief Judge Zambrano. Again, Margaret Crossman, it is a pleasure to be here on behalf of Halifax Health and working with our court systems to make sure that we all enter into this first phase in the safest way possible. You know, as Dr. Klioze said earlier today, Halifax has been in this community for a long time and we anticipate continuing being here. This is our family our homes our community and we are all in this together, and I so appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with so many of our public health officials and our court system and our officers and Sheriff's department, to make sure we all move ahead in a very collaborative process in working with one another and using each other's strengths to help meet the needs in each other's areas. And so, we are here to serve, we are here to serve the community, we are here to serve in whatever way that we can. And, just like the court system, we are entering into phase one, which is opening up our doors for more electives.

Now, as a trauma center our doors have been open, and we've been busy with things that are not considered elective up to now. But, as we open the doors up on Monday, similar to what will happen in the court system there will be screenings up front for those entering in. And, I would encourage you not

to postpone if you need any healthcare, or if you have an emergent, or surgical type services, we are doing everything we can in Halifax to make sure that you are safe when you come in. So, that screening is similar to what it will look like at the courthouse; there will be someone asking strategic questions, there will be temperature checks and a relatively quick process, just making sure that we are keeping you safe, our team members safe our court system safe and others as safe as possible.

And our whole goal is as we roll into phase one is to make sure that those who are the most vulnerable are as protected as possible. And, one of the ways we can do that is making sure that even if we are among those who are considered less vulnerable, that we are being considerate of what we do in the way of potential transmission. And, so, we need to make sure that if you happen to be a carrier, or you happen to have symptoms, you may not know that you are a carrier, have symptoms but are not sure what you have going on that it is important that you communicate that to the individuals that you are encountering. Whether in the court system or in the healthcare system or wherever. Our first responders out in the community, make sure you communicate in advance and then we'll know what to do at that point. So, everyone, you are going to be screened; expect that. And, those who screen positive, either by questionnaire or by exposures or symptoms, or that you have a temperature, there will be more information coming to you at that time and more direction for you. So, we just look forward to this collaboration and we look forward to having more opportunities to serve this community. And, it gives me great pleasure at this time introduce to you from the court system, Mr. John Reid, Chief of Operations at the State Attorney's Office.

### **John Reid – First Assistant State Attorney**

Thank you and good afternoon. My name is John Reid, and I am the Chief of Operations at the State Attorney's Office, and on the behalf of State Attorney, R. J. Larizza, I'd like to thank the leaders that we have here today for their cooperation in making sure that the criminal justice system continues to operation. I want the community to know that the state attorney's office has continued to operation and will continue to operate through this crisis. We were prepared for this. State Attorney R. J. Larizza was a visionary and foresaw an eventuality like this could happen and made sure that our office was prepared. On day one, we were one of the first government agencies to send our employees home to work remotely. All of our employees were issued laptops and we had the software and equipment in place to allow them to conduct their duties from home.

We have continued to work with law enforcement to prosecute crimes and to make sure that the communities remained safe. The bottom line is that crime is being prosecuted. We have now begun the next phase of this and that is working with Judge Zambrano and the others leaders in the community to begin to open the courthouse. I'd like to thank Judge Zambrano for his leadership and his efforts in working with us to make this transition as seamless as possible. While we look forward to getting back to business as usual, we will continue to monitor the situation and make sure that the safety of our employees and community comes first. Thank you very much and at this time I'd like to introduce our elected public defender, Jim Purdy.

### **Jim Purdy – Public Defender**

Thank you John. I am the public defender of the 7<sup>th</sup> judicial circuit of Florida, and I'd also like to start out by thanking Judge Zambrano with the leadership he has shown through this particular emergency. But, I would like to address my comments to anyone who is watching this broadcast, who has been arrested or has a friend or family member, who has been arrested in Volusia County during the COVID-19 emergency.

Chief Judge Zambrano has issued an order appointing the office of the Public Defender to represent everyone who has been arrested during this emergency, but is not represented by private council. Therefore, if you or a member of your family, or friend, has been arrested or are facing charges that have occurred since the emergency began in March; please contact our office. You can call the Public Defender's Office at (386) 239-7730. Let me repeat that, (386) 239-7730, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and someone on the phone will direct you to the attorney that will be handling your case for you. Please contact us because we are trying to reach out to all the clients that are now coming into the system that we are trying to work their cases. Thank you very much and at this time I would like to introduce attorney Aaron Delgado who is also a criminal defense attorney and a county attorney.

### **Aaron Delgado – President of Volusia County Criminal Defense Lawyers**

Good afternoon, I am Aaron Delgado a criminal defense attorney and I am here on behalf of the Florida Criminal Defense Attorneys Florida Chapter. I first want to thank everyone who has come before me for

their role in getting the justice system to continue to function during this unprecedented time. I want to ensure everyone watching at this time as what Mr. Purdy said, that people's rights are being protected and respected at this time. One of the things that I want to point out is that the unprecedented change in technology has brought to the way that we practice and continue to practice law in the coming days. For example, since the COVID-19 crisis has begun some 50 days ago, I had 50 video conference meetings with clients who have been held in custody at the Volusia County Branch Jail. That is about 24 hours' worth of video time that I have spent with my clients, which is significantly more than I have spent with my clients in any given period prior to that.

The Volusia County Branch Jail immediately reacted to providing us with video access to clients and by allowing us to add email communication with our clients. This allowed us to continue working with people who were at risk and who were not able to get easy access to information or otherwise get easy access to attorneys.

We haven't just focused on people who have been incarcerated, the justice system has been working to schedule and bring back on-line court proceedings using ZOOM and other types of on-line communications. The State Attorney's Office and Public Defender and private attorneys have been working this entire time so that cases would continue to move forward, cases resolved, and despite what could have been a shutdown of the entire judicial system, the 7<sup>th</sup> judicial circuit has been moving forward making sure that people's cases are moving forward and people's rights are being protected. And, that more importantly when things reopen we won't have a six month back log on justice. I am very confident that with the stakeholders here that we are going to see a very smooth and orderly return, not life as we knew it, but certainly a high level of justice that we've come to expect in Volusia County. Thank you all very much.

**Laura Roth – Volusia County Clerk of Court**

Hello, thank you. My name is Laura Roth, I'm the Clerk of Court for Volusia County, Florida. Our hearts and thoughts are with all of you during this unprecedented crisis. With the courthouses closed to the general public, the Clerk's office provides many services on-line on our website at [www.clerk.org](http://www.clerk.org). You can find free land records like deeds and mortgages and liens and court case records. On our website you can order certified records you might need, pre-fill out marriage licenses or passport applications and pay traffic citations and pay child support payments and more.

Attorneys, you can still file in all case types and we are continuing to process in all case types. Property transactions can be e-recorded. For these or any of your needs please first visit our website at [www.clerk.org](http://www.clerk.org) or email us at [Clerk@clerk.org](mailto:Clerk@clerk.org), or call at (386) 736-5915. We are operating with a rotating partial staff for safety reasons, but thanks to Chief Judge Zambrano's leadership and to the professionalism and dedication of the team clerk staff, we are also able to continue to provide some in person services at our exterior walk-up windows at the DeLand courthouse at 101 North Alabama, in DeLand. In-person services include issuance of marriage licenses and not all clerks in all counties are able to continue to issue marriage licenses, but thank goodness to our walk-up windows we are able to continue to issue those. We will also accept all and any documents for recording official records at the windows, including notices of commencement for you contractors that want to continue work. We will also assist with injunction of any types of injunctions and will accept in-person filings of all case types if you are unable to electronically file, and accept payments into all case types. Citizens at the current Supreme Court timeline holds you may start seeing jury summons issued in May for June court dates, but we are not sure about that. If you do receive a summons, please know that we will work closely with the Chief Judge to insure that the best safety possible for all jurors. You are vital to the trial process, so we look forward to making that a safe and efficient system. Let us know what you need from the Clerk's office because we are here to help. Go to [www.clerk.org](http://www.clerk.org) or contact [Clerk@clerk.org](mailto:Clerk@clerk.org). Thank you.

**Kevin Captain – Interim Director of Community Information of Volusia County**

Thank you, Ms. Roth, and Judge Zambrano, and everyone from the 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court and all of our panelists today. We want everyone to have a safe weekend. We will be back here on Monday to give you additional updates. Please keep yourself safe over the weekend. Remember to social distance. Take care and have a great evening.