

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

**Scott A. Rivkees, MD**  
State Surgeon General

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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## **Important Updates for Health Care Providers for COVID-19**

August 12, 2020

### **Governor DeSantis Extends State of Emergency for COVID-19**

Governor Ron DeSantis issued [Executive Order 20-166](#) extending the state of emergency for 60 days for the entire state of Florida, which expires on September 5, 2020. The state of emergency was originally declared in [Executive Order 20-52](#) and extended by [Executive Order 20-114](#).

### **State Surgeon General Issues Public Health Advisory for COVID-19**

The State Surgeon General, Dr. Scott A. Rivkees, issued a [Public Health Advisory](#) on July 20, 2020, with updated measures regarding face coverings, gatherings, and vulnerable populations to ensure the protection of public health in response to COVID-19.

### **Volunteer for COVID-19 Clinical Trial**

Florida has been invited to participate in the federal CDC vaccine pilot group. Florida is one of four states chosen to participate, along with the city of Philadelphia. To learn more about volunteering for a COVID-19 Prevention Clinical Study, please click [here](#).

### **Agency for Health Care Administration Emergency Rule**

The Agency for Health Care Administration issued [Emergency Rule 59AER20-8](#) on August 5, 2020. This rule replaces the previous Emergency Rule 59AER20-6 to align with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) updates to provide clarity for hospitals and long-term care facilities about clinical decision making during the transfer of residents. The rule updates reflect the CDC changes based on evidence that supports ending isolation and precautions for persons with COVID-19 using a symptom-based strategy.

### **Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection (Interim Guidance) Updated - for HCP**

The CDC issued updated interim Guidance on Health Care Personnel Returning to Work. This guidance indicates that, except for rare situations, a test-based strategy is no longer recommended to determine when to allow health care personnel to return to work. To learn more about the interim guidance, click here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html>.

### **Duration of Isolation and Quarantine for Persons with COVID-19**

On July 22, 2020, the CDC released updated guidance regarding the [duration of isolation and recommendations regarding retesting of COVID-19 cases](#). The Florida Department of Health seeks to ensure that providers have resources available to assist with educating their patients regarding the actions that they, along with their close contacts, should take to remain safe. Provided below is a brief overview of recommendations.

**Isolation** is used to separate people **infected** with the virus from those who are not infected. People in isolation should remain home, and then within their home, separate themselves from other members of their household by staying in a designated room or area to minimize the risk of exposing others in the home.

Symptomatic cases of COVID-19 should remain isolated until:

- At least **10 days**\* since symptoms first appeared; **and**
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication; **and**
- Symptoms have improved.

\*A limited number of persons with severe illness or patients who are severely immunocompromised may need to be isolated for 20 days after symptom onset; consider consultation with infection control experts.

Cases of COVID-19 without symptoms should remain isolated until:

- At least **10 days** have passed since they were tested

**Quarantine** is used to keep someone who might have been **exposed** to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus but not experiencing symptoms.

Close contacts (came **within 6 feet** of someone who has COVID-19 for **at least 15 minutes**) should:

- Stay home for **14 days** after their last contact with a person who has COVID-19.
- Watch for fever (100.4°F or more), cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from others, especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.

Retesting Recommendations:

- For persons diagnosed with COVID-19 who remain asymptomatic after recovery, retesting is not recommended within 3 months after the date of symptom onset or the date of first positive viral test for COVID. In addition, quarantine is not recommended for individuals that have recovered from COVID-19 in the event of close contact with an infected person during the 3 month-period.
- For persons who develop new symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the 3 months after the date of initial symptom onset, if an alternative etiology cannot be identified by an authorized health care provider, then the person may warrant retesting. Consultation with infectious disease or infection control experts, as well as the Florida Department of Health, is recommended. Isolation may be considered during this evaluation based on consultation with an infection control expert, especially if symptoms develop within 14 days after close contact with a person infected with COVID-19.

### **COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma**

Donating plasma is one of the ways you can help those fighting COVID-19. If you or your patients have had COVID-19 and have been completely symptom free for at least two weeks, your plasma may help save the lives of other patients. Learn more at <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/donate-covid-19-plasma>.

### **Agency for Health Care Administration Complaint Process**

For concerns regarding a health care facility in Florida, consumers, patient advocates, and practitioners may file a complaint with the Agency for Health Care Administration. Complaints can be filed anonymously. However, please be sure to include sufficient information, such as the patient/resident name,

date(s) of events, and any other specifics pertinent to the complaint, to allow proper assessment of concerns.

You may file a complaint with the Agency by calling our toll-free Complaint & Information Call Center at 1-888-419-3456 or by completing our online complaint form at: <https://apps.ahca.myflorida.com/hcfc/>. Please refer to the Agency's Consumer Complaint website for additional information at [https://ahca.myflorida.com/Contact/call\\_center.shtml](https://ahca.myflorida.com/Contact/call_center.shtml).

### **Health Care Practitioner COVID-19 Resources**

Health care practitioners have access to resources developed by the Department of Health related to COVID-19 that can assist their patients. Patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 or close contact with a case should be provided the following resources to help prevent disease transmission. Please click on the following for the newly developed rack cards:

- [What to do if you've been exposed](#)
- [I tested positive. What happens now?](#)

For additional information, please visit <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/>.

### **Department of Health COVID-19 Dashboard**

To view the latest COVID-19 statistics, such as the number of positive cases, please visit the [Department of Health's COVID-19 Data and Surveillance Dashboard](#).

### **Weekly Health Care Provider Telephone Conference Call Information**

Beginning Tuesday, July 21, 2020, the weekly health care provider telephone conference resumed with a new start time: 5:30 pm. Participants are asked to email questions in advance to [Provider.COVID19@flhealth.gov](mailto:Provider.COVID19@flhealth.gov) no later than close of business on the Monday preceding the call. All participants will be muted during these calls to help streamline information delivery. The State Surgeon General, Dr. Scott A. Rivkees, in collaboration with Secretary Mary Mayhew from the Agency for Health Care Administration, will provide updates from the Department of Health on the COVID-19 response efforts, provide a briefing from the Agency for Health Care Administration, offer updates from other state agencies and address questions submitted from our health care providers. This call is not transcribed or recorded. If you are interested in joining this weekly telephone conference call, please see the updated call-in information below:

**Date: Every Tuesday**

**Time: 5:30 pm, EST**

**Call-In Number: 888-585-9008**

**Conference Room ID: 208-305-233**

**Submit Questions in Advance: [Provider.COVID19@flhealth.gov](mailto:Provider.COVID19@flhealth.gov)**