



As the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to evolve and spread, Leon County Emergency Management is committed to actively monitoring the disease and coordinating preparedness efforts with local health officials, healthcare providers, first responders, and other critical emergency response functions. Now is the time for everyone in Leon County to stay informed and stay prepared for any occurrence of COVID-19 or other respiratory illness.

While no cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Leon County, and while the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has ruled Florida an area of low risk, now is the best time for residents and businesses to prepare.

Further operational updates will be provided as conditions change and experts advise.

Leon County's Emergency Management Role

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Florida Department of Health is the lead agency and County Emergency Management serves in support of the local health experts.

Like with H1N1 swine flu (2009), Ebola (2014), and the Zika virus (2016), County Emergency Management serves as the coordinating and command liaison between our local Florida Department of Health and the many local and state agencies who help prepare and respond, such as law enforcement, schools, universities, tourism, and more. Like with previous communicable diseases, the Florida Department of Health is the lead agency at both the state and local levels, and health officials will be providing guidance and public information messaging at every stage.

Beginning on Jan. 21, County Emergency Management staff began close coordination with the Florida Department of Health and other healthcare experts. Building on that coordinating role, Emergency Management now:

- Convenes regular coordinating calls with K-12 school, university, healthcare, and emergency response representatives to ensure continuity of operations and information exchange;
- Stands ready to activate the Emergency Operations Center to assist health experts in coordinating any public health emergency response, similar to the efforts before and after a natural disaster;
- Provides expert operational guidance across 18 different emergency support functions in support of the Florida Department of Health in Leon County's operations and response;
- Receives regular statewide and local briefings on the developing situation;
- Coordinates joint information and messaging to ensure accurate, vetted, and unified messaging on COVID-19 and disease transmission.

Stay Informed

In coordination with the Florida Department of Health in Leon County, the County recommends the following sources to assist with community mitigation and preparedness. While health experts are working

around the clock to learn more about COVID-19, you can also stay informed as new information becomes available.

[Florida Department of Health: COVID-19](#) – This online State resource has critical information for travelers, residents, businesses, guidance for school administrators, and important personal preventative measures such as handwashing and hand sanitizer use. The website also reports the number of positive and presumed positive COVID-19 cases, as well as progress updates on COVID-19 testing. You can also reach the FDOH Call Center at (866) 779-6121 from Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to midnight.

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: COVID-19](#) – CDC experts provide guidance for healthcare providers, emergency responders, and individuals. On the CDC’s website, you can find information on how COVID-19 spreads, the associated symptoms, suggested preventative measures, and more information on COVID-19 testing.

[World Health Organization: COVID-19](#) – WHO experts produce quick, informative videos and infographics on COVID-19, specifically how to prevent transmission. Topics include when people should wear masks (only when someone is sick, and even then you should still stay home and isolate), frequently asked questions, and situation reports from around the globe. Notably, on Feb. 28, the World Health Organization issued a “very high” global risk assessment for this novel coronavirus.

[Leon County Schools: COVID-19](#) – Local resource from Leon County Schools that references important information and provides parents and students with important updates.

Download the Leon County Citizens Connect Mobile Application – Relunched in 2017, the Leon County Citizens Connect app puts timely emergency notifications at your fingertips through push notifications on your smartphone or other device. Be the first to know of any emergency management messaging or service changes by downloading the app on the Apple Store or the Google Play Store.

Take Action to Stay Prepared

Now is the time to be ready and reflect on your personal preparedness and plans. At this time, experts do not recommend social distancing or isolating yourself unless you are sick or suspect transmission. To remain well, practice good hygiene measures like washing your hands and using hand sanitizer with an alcohol content of 60 percent or greater. Also, it is not too late in the season to receive a flu vaccine, as recommended by the CDC. Getting sick back-to-back (from flu and another respiratory illness such as COVID-19) can be severely challenging. Mitigate your risk now.

According to the CDC, the most effective ways to prevent transmission of not only COVID-19 but any respiratory illness is to avoid being exposed by washing your hands and cleaning regularly used surfaces ([more info can be found here](#)).

- For information about handwashing, see [CDC’s Handwashing](#)
- For information specific to healthcare, see [CDC’s Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings](#).
- These are everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses. CDC does have [specific guidance for travelers](#).

For local businesses, the CDC also recommends [the following guidance to prevent workplace exposures to acute respiratory illnesses in non-healthcare settings](#). These guidelines discuss sick leave, doctor's notes, telecommuting and other considerations.

Also, if you are a business owner, please consider [posting proper handwashing posters and signs in your bathroom locations](#) to encourage good hygiene.

Continue to follow www.LeonCountyFL.gov/eip for any local updates or changes to services.



850.606.5300 | cmr@LeonCountyFL.gov | www.LeonCountyFL.gov
301 S. Monroe St., Suite 502, Tallahassee, FL 32301



The 2020 Census is approaching and Leon County Government wants you to Make It Count. Learn how at www.LeonCountyFL.gov/Census

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· 301 S. Monroe Street · Tallahassee, FL 32301 · 850-606-5300

