

Governor Ron DeSantis has [declared a state of emergency](#) in response to the rapidly evolving threat of COVID-19 in Florida. VISIT FLORIDA continues to work closely with the Governor and the Florida Department of Health (DOH) on new developments with COVID-19 as they pertain to the traveling public and Florida's tourism industry. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended that those at a higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, including the elderly and those with underlying conditions should take simple precautions, like avoiding crowds, cruise travel and non-essential air travel. The CDC has not recommended a blanket limit on domestic travel for the general population at this time. VISIT FLORIDA continues to market the state and ensure that travelers know Florida is open for business and ready to welcome visitors who are safe to travel.

From the Florida Department of Health: What You Should Know

COVID-19 can spread from person to person, like the flu, through small droplets from the nose or mouth, including when an individual coughs or sneezes. People may contract COVID-19 by contaminating their hands with the virus and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth, among other ways.

Symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough and shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as many as 14 days following exposure. Most people recover from COVID-19 without needing special treatment. The elderly and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems and diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. The Florida Department of Health recommends everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick;
- Staying home when you are sick;
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands;

- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then disposing of the tissue;
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing;
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty, and;
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

As of March 12, 2020, VISIT FLORIDA has taken the following action in response to COVID-19:

- VISIT FLORIDA has ceased all tourism marketing in China. The funding from the Chinese market has been redirected to a domestic campaign that launched on March 2. To encourage visitors to vacation in Florida (including those who may be less inclined to fly), the campaign has a heavy emphasis on attracting visitors from east of the Mississippi, Northeast, Midwest, and “drive markets”, such as Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, and Birmingham.
- VISIT FLORIDA is temporarily pausing all marketing efforts in Germany in accordance with federal travel restrictions. This is the only European country besides the United Kingdom where VISIT FLORIDA has active campaigns.
- VISIT FLORIDA employees at Florida’s three highway welcome centers continue to be provided with the latest COVID-19 information and resources to help keep the traveling public informed.
- Preventive health resources and options have been communicated to all VISIT FLORIDA staff, with new updates and information relayed accordingly.
- VISIT FLORIDA remains in close contact with industry partners and travel organizations and is communicating all new information as it becomes available.
- VISIT FLORIDA is staying abreast of industry trends and outlook with regular discussion and webinars with travel and tourism entities.

- VISIT FLORIDA is currently monitoring social media and tracking traveler sentiment across online platforms.
- VISIT FLORIDA continues to follow all direction from the Executive Office of the Governor and Florida Department of Health in the dissemination of alerts and safety information through social media and VISIT FLORIDA's network of Destination Marketing Organization and business partners.

Information for Travelers

All travelers should refer to the [CDC](#) for the most up-to-date travel information.

International Travel

As of March 11, 2020, the CDC recommends travelers avoid all nonessential travel to [specified countries in Europe](#).

The Florida Department of Health advises all individuals who have traveled internationally to follow [the CDC's new risk assessment guidelines](#), summarized below:

- **Level 3:** CDC recommends 14-day self-isolation and practice social distancing upon return to the United States. Social distancing includes avoiding going out in public and close personal interactions. If you become symptomatic, immediately self-isolate and contact your county health department or health care provider.
- **Level 2 and Cruises:** Travelers should monitor their health and limit interactions with others for 14 days after returning to the United States. If you become symptomatic, immediately self-isolate and contact your county health department or health care provider.

Cruises

The U.S. Department of State has advised U.S. citizens, particularly travelers with underlying health conditions, to not travel by cruise ship. Passengers with plans to travel by cruise ship should contact their cruise line company directly for further information and continue to monitor the [U.S. Dept. of State](#) and [CDC](#) for updates.

The Florida Department of Health has issued cruise advisories for the following locations:

- [Port Everglades](#)
- [Nile River](#)

Other Cruise Resources

- [Cruise Lines International Association \(CLIA\)](#)
- [Florida Ports Council](#)

Air Travel

The CDC has not recommended limiting domestic air travel at this time. Older adults and travelers with underlying health issues should avoid non-essential travel including long plane trips. Passengers with plans to travel domestically by plane should contact their airline directly for specific trip information:

- [Alaska Airlines](#)
- [Allegiant Air](#)
- [American Airlines](#)
- [Delta Airlines](#)
- [Frontier Airlines](#)
- [JetBlue](#)
- [Silver Airways](#)
- [Southwest Airlines](#)
- [Spirit Airlines](#)
- [United Airlines](#)

Information for Businesses

Florida businesses and employers should refer to the [CDC](#) for up-to-date guidance on

business operations.

Recommended Strategies

- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home
- Emphasize staying home when sick, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene for all employees
- Perform routine environmental cleaning.
- Advise employees before traveling to take preventative steps recommended by CDC.

Resources for Businesses and Employers

- [Florida Department of Health COVID-19 Toolkit](#)
- [CDC Stop the Spread of Germs Poster](#)
- [CDC Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease 2019 Poster](#)
- [Guidance from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#)
- [Information from the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association](#)

Business Damage Assessment Survey for COVID-19

On March 12, Governor Ron DeSantis announced the activation of the [Business Damage Assessment survey](#) to assess the impact of COVID-19 on Florida's local business operations. The survey, managed by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), will evaluate businesses affected by COVID-19 and the impacts the virus has had on the local economy so actions to implement appropriate relief programs can begin.

COVID-19 Talking Points

- Florida's tourism industry is open for business and we are ready to welcome visitors who are safe to travel.

- VISIT FLORIDA and Florida's tourism industry is actively working to promote travel to Florida. Florida is home to beautiful beaches, springs and award-winning state parks. If you are looking for sunshine and to get away from it all – Florida is a great destination this spring and summer.
- Anyone who isn't currently under travel restrictions suggested by the CDC, or currently self-isolating, is welcome to come to Florida for Spring Break, and we are reminding them that Florida offers an abundance of safe activities. Our state has some of the best emergency response professionals in the world. Everyone should continue to stay up-to-date on the latest information from Governor DeSantis, state officials and the CDC.
- We are not recommending that people cancel trips to Florida who aren't currently under travel restrictions from CDC or self-isolating. We want the traveling public to remain vigilant, but to continue go about their everyday lives while taking protective actions. If this were to ever change, VISIT FLORIDA, in conjunction with state emergency response professionals will inform the public immediately.

During crisis situations, VISIT FLORIDA is focused on:

- Providing travelers with reliable, trustworthy, and useful information so they can make the best decisions for their health and safety.
- Communicating with and providing support for Florida tourism industry businesses.
- And, protecting Florida's brand perception and destination desirability by being proactive about recovery tactics when the time is right.

Marketing

VISIT FLORIDA will continue to implement our marketing strategy with a few adjustments:

- VISIT FLORIDA has placed a COVID-19 banner on VISITFLORIDA.com to link travelers to the most up-to-date health information.
- In January, we made the decision to cease all tourism marketing in China and have redirected these funds to our domestic campaigns.
- VISIT FLORIDA is temporarily pausing all marketing efforts in Germany in accordance with federal travel restrictions. This is the only European country besides the United Kingdom where VISIT FLORIDA has active campaigns.
- VISIT FLORIDA is enhancing existing campaigns to reach potential visitors in nearby drive markets and focusing on Florida's open outdoor areas like beaches, trails, and springs.
- We continue to monitor social media conversations, traveler sentiment, search trends, cancellations, and future booking changes.
- VISIT FLORIDA is planning for future marketing campaigns to ensure that Florida's tourism industry has a strong, unified voice following COVID-19.

Florida's residents and visitors should continue to refer to the DOH and CDC for the most up-to-date information and guidance on COVID-19.

Florida Department of Health (DOH)

- [Website](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- COVID-19 Call Center: 1-866-779-6121 (available 24/7)

U.S. Centers for Disease and Control Prevention (CDC)

- [Website](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)

COVID Public Website and Call Center

Visit the Florida Department of Health's dedicated [COVID-19 web page](#) for information and guidance regarding COVID-19 in Florida.

For any other questions related to COVID-19 in Florida, please contact the Department's dedicated COVID-19 Call Center at **(866) 779-6121**. The Call Center is available 24 hours per day. Inquiries may also be emailed to COVID-19@flhealth.gov.