



MESSAGE

FROM MAYOR DAN GELBER

This morning, Thursday August 27th, the State Department of Health reported that the number of COVID-19 cases in Miami-Dade County has surpassed 154,700 and 2,346 people in our County having succumbed to this virus.

A few things that we need to update, but first let's take a look at some recent data.

[The downward trajectory continues in Miami-Dade County.](#) The number of positives and percent of positives continues to drop slowly but steadily. Our new infections per day are still over 500 which is substantially more than April and May, but for 9 days in a row our percentage has dipped below 10%. That's still too high but much better than a month ago.

If you look at the indicators of what happens to those infected who get sick, you can see a similar, though lagging, decline. Over the last two weeks the number of hospitalizations, number of those in intensive care and those on vents continues to chart downward.

Some significant changes are on the way that you need to know about. The County Mayor has decided to lift the ban against indoor dining beginning on Monday. Dining capacity will be limited to 50% and the County-wide 10pm curfew will remain in place. This is a significant move especially in our small City where we have over 800 restaurants. Candidly, our health advisors have expressed some concern. Their belief is that as we take these actions there will likely be a surge in infections, but they also believe the intensity of the surge will be related to how compliant we are with all the protective measures that have been implemented. So it will be important to remain cautious and vigilant.

Dr. Aileen Marty is one of the infectious disease specialists who is a prime advisor to the County Mayor and to our City on these decisions. Here are her thoughts.

Consistent with these concerns, our City will be redoubling our enforcement efforts. Our Police and Code officers have already issued almost 1,000 mask citations. We have also issued temporary closure orders for over 38 businesses who have failed to follow these rules. We are trying to avoid being punitive to an industry that has already been very beat-up, but it is critical we are all on the same page.

Part of our challenge is that unlike many other cities, we have to enforce these rules on an enormous cohort of people that are not our residents. As a hospitality center, we are still receiving many tens of thousands of visitors and workers every day. I suspect that the great majority of mask citations we issue, for instance, are to non-Miami Beach residents.

[If you look at infection rates of residents](#), our City is doing pretty well and better than many communities in the County. But we have this unusual burden of essentially policing the conduct of folks who don't even live here.

Finally, a few things regarding testing. Although the CDC recently questioned the need for testing of people without symptoms, our health advisors uniformly reject that approach. They believe testing, especially for people who believe they may have been in contact with infected persons, is critical. On that note, yesterday,

our Miami Beach Convention Center testing site began offering a rapid antigen test, which is a nasal swab that will report results back to you within 4 hours or less. It will be offered from 9am to 3pm daily.

So, once again, thanks again for your patience and calm, and for wearing a mask. Stay healthy and mostly at home.