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Florida Department of Health Issues Additional Public Health Advisory

~Advises wearing masks in public, encourages elderly and vulnerable populations to limit interactions outside of the home, and urges all individuals to refrain from participating in gatherings of more than 50 people~

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Today, the Florida Department of Health (Department) issued an additional Public Health Advisory in response to COVID-19, providing recommendations to protect Floridians and visitors from this virus. This advisory is in addition to steps that the Department has taken to increase mitigation measures, including the purchase of 20 million cloth masks, which are actively being distributed statewide. Today, Governor DeSantis also directed the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation to increase inspections to ensure that businesses are adhering to applicable Phase 1 and Phase 2 guidance.

The Public Health Advisory provides the following recommendations:

1. All individuals in Florida should wear masks in any setting where social distancing is not possible, unless any of the following apply:
 - A child is under two years of age;
 - An individual has one or more medical conditions or disabilities that prevent wearing a face covering;
 - An individual is obtaining a service involving the nose or face for which temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to perform the service;
 - An individual works in a profession where use of a face covering will not be compatible with the duties of the profession; or
 - An individual is engaged in outdoor work or recreation with appropriate social distancing in place.
2. All individuals over the age of 65 and all individuals of any age with high-risk health conditions should limit personal interactions outside of the home and take all measures to limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19.
3. All individuals should refrain from participation in social or recreational gatherings of more than 50 people. For all gatherings of fewer than 50 people, individuals should practice social distancing by maintaining a distance of at least six feet from each other and wearing a face covering.

This is a reinforcement of the previously issued advisory as well as direction that has been provided in the task force report for a *Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step. Plan for Florida's Recovery*. **Currently, 64 counties are in Phase 2, which dictates:**

Restaurants, bars and other vendors licensed to sell alcoholic beverages, excluding nightclubs:

- May operate at fifty percent of the establishment's indoor capacity.
- May operate at full capacity outside with appropriate social distancing.
- Bar areas may operate with seated service.

Entertainment businesses, including but not limited to movie theaters, concert houses, auditoriums, playhouses, bowling alleys and arcades:

- May operate at fifty percent of the establishment's capacity with appropriate social distancing between groups and proper sanitization protocols.

In-store retail businesses:

- May operate at full capacity with appropriate social distancing measures and proper sanitization protocols.

Gyms and fitness centers:

- May operate at full capacity with appropriate social distancing and frequent sanitization.

Personal services including but not limited to tattooing, body piercing, tanning and massage:

- May operate while adhering to appropriate safety guidelines outlined by the Florida Department of Health.

Barber shops, hair salons and nail salons:

- May continue to operate while adhering to safety protocols.

Phase 2 continued emphasis on preventative measures outlined by the CDC and OSHA:

- Senior citizens and individuals with a significant underlying medical condition are strongly encouraged to avoid crowds and take measures to limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Individuals should avoid gathering in groups larger than 50.
- All persons who work in long-term care facilities should be tested for COVID-19 on a routine basis.

The three counties with the highest number of cases (Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties) are still in Phase 1, which dictates:

Restaurants and food establishments:

- May operate at fifty percent capacity with proper social distancing.
- Outdoor seating is encouraged.

Retail establishments:

- May operate at up to fifty percent capacity indoors with appropriate social distancing measures and proper sanitization protocols.

Museums and libraries:

- May operate at up to fifty percent capacity if permitted by local governments.

Gyms and fitness centers:

- May operate at up to fifty percent capacity with appropriate social distancing and sufficient sanitization measures.

Barber shops, hair salons, and nail salons:

- May operate while adhering to safety protocols.

About the Florida Department of Health

The Florida Department of Health, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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