

**May 09, 2020**



**UPDATE OF CORONAVIRUS IN WALTON COUNTY  
LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES  
*Measures To Support Long-Term Care Facilities***

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**DeFuniak Springs, Fla.**— The Florida Department of Health in Walton County (DOH-Walton) is working closely with local nursing homes and other long-term care facilities to take proactive steps to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. Nursing home populations are at a higher risk of being affected by COVID-19 because residents are typically older or disabled adults often with underlying chronic medical conditions.

As of May 9, 2020, there is currently one long-term care facility in Walton County that has positive cases of COVID-19. The facility is Chautauqua Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in DeFuniak Springs. The Florida Department of Health publishes the list at [FloridaHealthCOVID19.gov](https://www.floridahealth.gov/covid-19).

The daily COVID-19 report also includes information from the Agency for Health Care Administration, by county about cases and deaths related to staff or residents in long-term care facilities. **There have been 24 residents and/or staff that have tested positive for COVID-19 and two deaths in Walton County.** This report is also available at [FloridaHealthCOVID19.gov](https://www.floridahealth.gov/covid-19).

**Updated demographic information on cases due to ongoing epidemiological investigations, Data in this report are provisional and subject to change: 55 Walton County cases include: Laurel Hill-Paxton (1) DeFuniak Springs (27) Freeport (3), Miramar Beach (3), Santa Rosa Beach (11), Out-of-state tested in Walton County (10)**

**Measures to Support Long-Term Care Facilities**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that nursing homes:

- Restrict all visitation except for certain compassionate care situations, such as end of life situations
- Restrict all volunteers and non-essential healthcare personnel (HCP), including non-essential personal care providers (e.g., barbers)
- Cancel all group activities and communal dining
- Implement active screening of residents and HCP for fever and respiratory symptoms

DOH-Walton monitors implementation of the CDC's guidelines by facilitating daily communication and conducting readiness assessments with each Walton County long-term care facility. The readiness assessments include an infection control evaluation, education of prevention measures and resources

available to support prevention practices, contact information for epidemiology and infection control specialists. These proactive steps improve long-term care facilities' ability to:



- Prevent the introduction of COVID-19 into the facility.
- Identify infections early.
- Mitigate the spread if infection occurs.
- Assess the facility's supply of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Initiate measures to optimize the supply of PPE.
- Manage severe illness.

### **COVID-19 symptoms and treatment**

The symptoms of COVID-19 can mirror illnesses such as influenza. Patients with COVID-19 typically display symptoms such as fever (100.4°F or higher), cough, and/or shortness of breath within 2 to 14 days of exposure to the virus. Approximately 80% of those affected with COVID-19 report mild to moderate illness and experience a complete recovery. Some experience more severe illness. People who are more vulnerable to the illness include individuals who are over age 65 with underlying health conditions, immunocompromised, ill or have underlying chronic health conditions, such as heart disease or diabetes.

Many cases of COVID-19 can be managed at home by treating symptoms, and this is encouraged. However, if you develop worsening symptoms, such as shortness of breath, chest pain, or inability to drink fluids, contact 911 and advise them of your symptoms as you may need treatment at a hospital.

### **COVID-19 overview, symptoms, and general prevention**

COVID-19 is a new type of coronavirus; coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people and others that circulate among animals. Other coronaviruses include the common cold and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). COVID-19 is believed to have emerged from an animal source and is now capable of spreading from person-to-person. There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19.

### **For more Information on COVID-19**

The Joint Information Center on COVID-19 for the State of Florida is also issuing regular updates daily. Updated information can also be found at <http://walton.floridahealth.gov/>, [www.floridahealth.gov](http://www.floridahealth.gov) and [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or you can call the COVID-19 Call Center (866) 779- 6121 24/7 or email [COVID-19@flhealth.gov](mailto:COVID-19@flhealth.gov). The Florida Department of Health has launched a [COVID-19 dashboard](#) that will be updated daily with specific County information **more information on daily case by case can be found on daily report** <https://floridadisaster.org/covid19/>. Expansion to private laboratories has changed the COVID-19 testing landscape in Florida. Private laboratories are running tests as they receive swab samples from practitioners. Testing and reporting times vary among commercial and DOH laboratories. Demographic information may be updated during epidemiological investigations. These daily reports reflect the state's efforts to accurately and transparently share information.

**DOH-Walton has also initiated the use of Nextdoor application for Public Agencies, to share information with Walton County residents. For more information and/or to sign up visit [Nextdoor.com](https://www.nextdoor.com).**

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About the Florida Department of Health

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