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DOH-WALTON UPDATES POSITIVE CASES OF COVID-19

Contact:
Patti Roberts, PIO
Patricia.Roberts@flhealth.gov
Office: 850-401-6353

DeFuniak Springs, Fla. –The Florida Department of Health in Walton County is working closely with all individuals, their close contacts, and healthcare providers to determine what additional COVID-19 testing may be required. We are also coordinating with local and state officials to ensure proper precautions are being taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19. DOH Walton stresses the importance of following the local, state, federal and CDC guidelines and practicing social distancing to protect those that are most at risk. Governor DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-83, directing the State Surgeon General and State Health Officer to issue a public health advisory to all persons over 65 years of age urging them to stay home and to take such other measures as necessary to limit their risk of exposure to COVID-19.

- **Updated demographic information on cases due to ongoing epidemiological investigations, Data in this report are provisional and subject to change**: **Walton County (434) cases include: DeFuniak Springs (163), Freeport (33), Gaskin (1), Laurel Hill-Paxton (1), Miramar Beach (32), Santa Rosa Beach (140), Ponce de Leon (7), Westville (1), Panama City Beach (1), Inlet Beach (7), Destin (1), Watersound (1)and Out-of-state tested in Walton County (46). Male (213) and Female (221).**
- **Current Hospitalizations (3). There have been nine local deaths with confirmed COVID-19.**
- **Included in today's update is 16 Walton County jail inmates located in DeFuniak Springs which are listed as DeFuniak Springs cases.**
- **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 64 residents and/or staff that have tested positive for COVID-19 in one Long Term Care Facility in Walton County. This report is also available at FloridaHealthCOVID19.gov.**
- **Effective July 2, 2020, COVID-19 confirmed through antigen testing are included in overall case counts. Antigen tests are a new way to check for active COVID-19 infection at the time of your appointment.**
- **DOH Walton/Walton Community Health Center is conducting free COVID 19 testing in Santa Rosa Beach, DeFuniak Springs and Paxton by appointment only. Call 850-401-6453 for more information and to schedule an appointment. Antibody tests are not available.**

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 and www.cdc.gov or you can call the COVID-19 Call Center (866) 779-6121 24/7 or email 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.

Testing and Epidemiological Investigation Process/Contact Tracing

- If a person thinks they have COVID-19, they should **call their health care provider before going to their office so the provider can take precautions to prevent exposing other people.** Review your signs, symptoms and travel history with your physician. If you are without health insurance or a health care provider, please contact the Walton County Health Department at **(850) 401-6453** so we can coordinate your medical evaluation and testing. Once you have been tested for COVID-19, self-isolate for 14 days or until you receive the results from your test and further guidance from your health care provider.
- Most people with confirmed COVID-19 infection reportedly have mild to moderate respiratory illness and can be managed at home in coordination with your provider and your local health department. Persons with severe illness may be hospitalized. Contact tracing as part of the epidemiological investigation process is done for many diseases including tuberculosis, vaccine preventable diseases like measles and pertussis, sexually transmitted diseases and now COVID-19. Contacts of a case of COVID-19 are placed in self-isolation for 14 days from their last date of exposure. These individuals monitor themselves for symptoms of fever, cough, shortness of breath. Public Health personnel stay in touch with the contact throughout the entire isolation process. DOH-Walton provides the individual with a phone number to call if they think they are getting sick. If a contact gets sick with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, that person will be tested. If that person comes back positive for COVID-19, then contact tracing begins again. If the contact of a COVID-19 case completes the 14-day isolation period without illness, they are cleared to return to their daily activities.

What you can do to protect you and your family at home

- Continue to practice good hand washing. Cover coughs and sneezes. Stay home from work if you are sick and keep children home from school when sick.
- Remind family members not to touch their faces.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces like doorknobs, tables and handrails.
- Open windows or adjust air conditioning to increase ventilation.
- Treat vulnerable family members, such as those over the age of 65 or with chronic medical conditions, as though others are a threat to them. Practice good hygiene when caring for them. If they are sick, provide them with their own room, and keep the door closed.

What you can do at work

- Good hand hygiene is as important at work as it is at home. Encourage employees to clean hands at the door and send email reminders to clean hands throughout the day.
- Stop shaking hands. Use other, non-contact methods of greeting customers and coworkers.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Open windows or adjust air conditioning to increase ventilation.
- Consider videoconferencing for meetings whenever possible. When not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces.
- Assess the risks of business travel.
- Handle food carefully and limit food sharing.

- Ensure cafeteria staff and their close contacts practice strict hygiene.
- Allow employees to stay home if they are sick or have a sick family member.

Businesses

Encourage employees and customers to:

- Stop shaking hands. Use non-contact methods of greeting.
- Clean hands at the door and send employees email reminders to clean hands throughout the day.
- Promote tap and pay to limit handling of cash.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Open windows or adjust air conditioning to increase ventilation.
- Avoid crowding by booking appointments to stagger customer flow.

Consider wearing a face covering

CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) especially in areas of significant community-based transmission," writes the CDC.

Cloth face coverings can help prevent those who may have COVID-19 and not know it from spreading the virus to those around them.

"Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure," writes the CDC. "The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Public Transportation Businesses

- Open windows whenever possible.
- Increase ventilation.
- Disinfect surfaces regularly.

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To find the most up-to-date information and guidance on COVID-19, please visit the Department of Health's dedicated COVID-19 webpage at https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/ and COVID-19 dashboard.

For information and advisories from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), please visit the CDC COVID-19 website at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html.

For more information about current travel advisories issued by the U.S. Department of State, please visit the travel advisory website at https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/covid-19-information.html/.

For other questions related to COVID-19 in Florida, please contact the Department's dedicated COVID-19 Call Center at 866-779-6121. The line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, 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.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at @HealthyFla. For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.