

## **Team Castor COVID-19 Resources & Information**

### **\*\*\*HEALTH\*\*\***

#### **State of Florida**

- Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed an [Executive Order](#) Implementing Phase II of the Task Force to Reopen Florida (issued 06/03; effective as of 12:01 a.m. on 06/05/20). Also see [Report to Governor DeSantis from the Re-Open Florida Task Force](#)
  - By [order](#) of the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, the sale of alcohol at bars for on-premise consumption is suspended in Florida. (Issued: 6/26/20)
  - A list of essential services as outlined by the Governor's Executive Order can be found at: [www.floridadisaster.org/](http://www.floridadisaster.org/)
  - Concerns about businesses not complying with the Governor's Order can be reported online to the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulations at [www.myfloridalicense.com/DBPR/](http://www.myfloridalicense.com/DBPR/) or by calling 850-487-1395.
- Concerns about noncompliance of social distancing regulations, call: Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office non-emergency line at 813-247-8200.
- The Florida Department of Health (Department) is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor the current outbreak of COVID-19.
  - Florida COVID-19 Call Center available 24/7: 866-779-6121
  - Email: [COVID-19@flhealth.gov](mailto:COVID-19@flhealth.gov)
  - Website: [floridahealthcovid19.gov/](http://floridahealthcovid19.gov/)
  - Hillsborough County Department of Health: [hillsborough.floridahealth.gov/](http://hillsborough.floridahealth.gov/) or 813-307-8000

#### **What to Do to get Tested for COVID19:**

- Call your health care provider or [county health department](#) if you are symptomatic to determine the need for testing.
- Hillsborough County is operating limited drive-thru testing sites. Insurance is not required. Residents who want to be tested should call 888-513-6321 for an appointment. The call center is open Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Or, appointments can be made online: [www.hcflgov.net/covidtesting](http://www.hcflgov.net/covidtesting)  
Hillsborough County testing sites in Congressional District 14:
  - Raymond James Stadium, 4201 N. Dale Mabry Hwy., Tampa.
  - Lee Davis Community Resource Center, 3402 N. 22nd St., Tampa
- Hillsborough County is operating at-home testing for residents who are homebound or transportation challenged. Please call 813-272-5900.
- Hillsborough County is leasing hotel rooms to serve as quarantine and isolation sites for people confirmed to have contracted or been exposed to COVID-19. These sites provide food and other basic services. The temporary lodging is free for those deemed qualified to live there.
- Various healthcare and laboratories are providing drive-thru and commercial testing for COVID19.
- Lab results may take up to more than a week.

#### **Face coverings**

- Effective 06/19/20, the City of Tampa's executive order states that every person working, living, visiting, or doing business in the City of Tampa is required to wear a face covering in any indoor location, other than their home or residence, when not maintaining social distancing from other person(s). [View more information](#)

- Effective 06/22/20, the Hillsborough Emergency Policy Group (EPG) voted to require face coverings inside places of business. This order will be voted on by the EPG every seven days [View updated information](#)
- The City of Tampa is distributing a limited number of face coverings until further notice:
  - Himes Avenue Complex, 4501 S. Himes Ave.
  - MacFarlane Park – 1700 N. MacDill Ave.
  - Al Barnes Park – 2902 N. 32<sup>nd</sup> St.
  - New Tampa Community Center, 17302 Commerce Park Blvd.
  - Businesses can request to pick up the necessary quantities of face coverings for staff and customers.
  - For more information, visit [www.tampagov.net](http://www.tampagov.net)
- Hillsborough County is distributing free, reusable cloth face coverings to residents at [10 public libraries](#)
  - For more information, visit [www.hillsboroughcounty.org](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org)

### \*\*\*SMALL BUSINESSES\*\*\*

Small business owners should review options available to help bolster their businesses during this difficult time:

- Review temporary SBA initiatives that may be available: [www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options](http://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options)
- The Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act championed by U.S. Rep. Castor provided additional funding for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which resumed on April 27, 2020. PPP loans can be forgiven when used for payroll costs (including paid leave, health care, and other costs) to retain workers, and other expenses such as rent, mortgage interest and utilities. Independent contractors, sole-proprietors and other self-employed persons are eligible for these loans. Eligible small businesses to apply now through their financial institution or community development financial institution.
- The Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and EIDL Advance application is now open to all eligible small businesses, non-profits, and agricultural businesses impacted by #COVID19. Visit the SBA website for more information.
- The following organizations can provide business consulting:
  - Florida Small Business Development Center: Visit [sbdctampabay.com/coronavirus/](http://sbdctampabay.com/coronavirus/) or email: [USF@floridasbdc.org](mailto:USF@floridasbdc.org)
  - Hillsborough County Entrepreneurship Collaborative Center: 813-204-9267
  - Centre for Women: 813-251-8437
- Beginning 06/22/20, small business owners across Hillsborough County who have been financially affected by the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic will be able to apply for \$100 million in relief grants that aim to help get business back up and running again.
  - Application periods will be phased in to give a head start to the smallest and most economically vulnerable businesses in our community. Business owners can use [www.HCFLGov.net/R3Biz](http://www.HCFLGov.net/R3Biz) to look up their address to find out if they are in an economically distressed area.

### \*\*\*FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL ASSISTANCE\*\*\*

- Families First Coronavirus Response Act (passed 03/18/20): The bipartisan legislation guarantees free coronavirus testing, establishes paid sick leave, emergency family leave, enhances Unemployment

Insurance, expands food security initiatives, and increases federal Medicaid funding. For more information: [www.castor.house.gov](http://www.castor.house.gov)

- Families First requires companies with 500 or fewer employees to offer paid sick leave and paid family leave to workers. In return, companies can be reimbursed for the paid leave through tax credits. The paid leave would be available both for employees who have their own health needs and for those who need to provide care for family members.
- Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act (passed 03/27/20): The bipartisan legislation contains a major infusion for our hospitals, doctors, nurses and health care workers and offers additional assistance to families, communities and businesses. Please see the Small Business section of this Quick Guide and stay tuned to U.S. Rep. Castor's website and virtual events for more information about how this law can assist Tampa Bay families and small businesses: [www.castor.house.gov](http://www.castor.house.gov)
- CARES provides direct cash assistance to help Americans afford what they need during this public health crisis, as many are experiencing a significant cash crunch. The amount of the assistance depends on family size. The payment is \$1,200 for each adult individual (\$2,400 for joint filers), and \$500 per qualifying child under age 17. For more information, please see IRS' [FAQs](#).
  - Distribution of this direct cash assistance started in early April. For those who have not received their direct cash assistance may call Office of U.S. Rep. Castor at 813-871-2817.
- CARES also expanded eligibility so that more laid-off and furloughed workers than ever before (including those new to the job market) are able to file for Unemployment Insurance and will see an additional \$600 per week to match the average paycheck for up to 4 months of benefits. While these benefits will be a lifeline for families and available immediately, unemployment claims and compensation are solely administered by states. Constituents have advised that the Florida-operated website is not functioning properly or at all, and that it is difficult to speak with a qualified person over the phone in order to obtain assistance. U.S. Rep. Castor is pressing Florida state officials to continue to make systems upgrades and increase processing capacity.
  - Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) Reemployment Assistance website and hotline: [www.FloridaJobs.org/RAApplication](http://www.FloridaJobs.org/RAApplication) or 1-800-204-2418
    - Backdate your claim date: <https://claimdate.myflorida.com/recertification>
  - Certain FedEx stores in Florida are helping neighbors print and ship applications for unemployment benefits to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. Call your nearest FedEx store to confirm a location's participation.
  - Local government, non-profit, and faith organizations are also providing paper applications to fill out and mail to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. [See list of locations](#).
  - CareerSource Tampa Bay provides assistance with reemployment. Call: 813-930-7400 or visit: [www.careersourcetampabay.com](http://www.careersourcetampabay.com)
- CARES provides for homeowners with certain loans are eligible to put their mortgage into forbearance and pause payments for at least six months with the possibility of an additional six months of forbearance. Homeowners become eligible if they have one of the following types of mortgage loans: FHA, VA, USDA, 184/184A Mortgage, any mortgage backed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac. Those who pause payments will be required to make up missed payments but can work with their lenders at the end of the forbearance period to develop a workable repayment schedule. Borrowers who want to put their loans into forbearance should contact their mortgage lender. Starting 03/18/20, there is also a moratorium on foreclosures for borrowers with any of the above types of government-backed loans.

### **Suspensions/deadline extensions**

- Income tax filing and payment deadlines for individual returns, with a due date of 04/15 will automatically be extended until 07/15/20 for up to \$1 million of their 2019 tax due. Taxpayers do not

need to file any additional forms or call the IRS to qualify for this. For more information:

[www.irs.gov/coronavirus](http://www.irs.gov/coronavirus)

- Gov. Ron DeSantis extended his [order](#) to suspend all foreclosures and residential evictions in Florida until 08/01/20 (extended 06/30/20).
- Tampa Electric is currently not disconnecting customers' service for non-payment at this time, but encourage customers to stay as current as possible on utility bills to avoid accumulating a large balance. It has also suspended any non-essential services. For financial assistance, Tampa Electric has listed [agencies](#) that may be able to help. For more information: [www.tampaelectric.com/updates/](http://www.tampaelectric.com/updates/)
- HART is [operating on a reduced service schedule](#) for its buses and vans. (Effective 04/01/20)

### **Food Insecurity Assistance:**

- Crisis Center of Tampa Bay: 2-1-1 (general referral service to community resources & social services)
- Feeding Tampa Bay for a list of community pantries: [feedingtampabay.org/find-a-pantry/](http://feedingtampabay.org/find-a-pantry/)
  - Feeding Tampa Bay hosts two mass drive-thru food distributions designed to provide a full food bag, combined with fresh food, for hundreds of families on Saturdays, starting at 9 a.m.: HCC North Dale Mabry campus, 4001 W. Tampa Bay Blvd. Tampa, FL. Check the Feeding Tampa Bay website before attending, in case of change, and to find similar events elsewhere.
  - Feeding Tampa Bay also offers several other food assistance programs and information, including Breakspot Meal Sites for children, Senior Groceries, Trinity Café, and more. For details, go to [feedingtampabay.org](http://feedingtampabay.org), or call 813-254-1190.
- Food Assistance for Seniors – Hillsborough County residents age 60 and older can apply for food assistance through Hillsborough County Aging Services. There is no income requirement to participate in the federally-funded program. For more information on receiving meals and to apply, call 813-272-5250.
  - In addition, Hillsborough County has launched Silver Platter to provide additional nutrition by delivering hot, prepared evening meals to the homes of seniors enrolled in Aging Services' home delivered meals program. The County's staff dietician works with the chef at partner restaurants and food trucks to ensure menu items meet the state dietary guidelines, and any special needs of clients.
- Students – Hillsborough County Public Schools summer feeding schedule runs 06/08-07/30, Monday – Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Visit [www.sdhc.k12.fl.us](http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us) for a list of food distribution sites.
- Tampa YMCA Veggie Van – The unique and colorful “Veggie Van” is distributing free pre-packaged bags of produce in several neighborhoods in Hillsborough County. No ID, paperwork or pre-screening is required to receive the food. Learn more on the Veggie Van’s Facebook page [@tampaveggievan](#).
- Florida Food Assistance Program – The Florida Department of Children and Families provides food benefits, access to a healthy diet, and education on food preparation and nutrition to low-income households through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Program requirements have been adjusted to assist additional residents who have recently lost their jobs or experienced a significant reduction in the number of hours they are able to work due to COVID-19. Apply online at [myflorida.com/accessflorida/](http://myflorida.com/accessflorida/) or call 866-762-2237.
- SNAP and EBT Cards - Beginning, 04/21, SNAP recipients across Florida are able to use EBT cards to make eligible food purchases from Walmart and Amazon online. This partnership with federal, state, and local partners will ensure Floridians can access nutritious food while also practicing social distancing and self-quarantining to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The Florida Department of Children and Families will continue to work to expand the network of retailers participating in the pilot program. For more information, go to [myflfamilies.com/covid19/access.shtml](http://myflfamilies.com/covid19/access.shtml)
- Metropolitan Ministries provides food, financial assistance (rent and utility assistance) and emergency shelter. Visit [www.metromin.org/covid-19response/](http://www.metromin.org/covid-19response/) or call 813-209-1000

**\*\*\*EDUCATION\*\*\***

**Hillsborough County Public Schools**

- Hillsborough County Public Schools summer feeding schedule runs 06/08-07/30, Monday – Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Visit [www.sdhc.k12.fl.us](http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us) for a list of food distribution sites.
- If you have student loan debt, Congress secured several options outlined below for borrowers that help provide relief through 09/30/20. During this period, a borrower will be able to:
  - Pause payments for federal student loan borrowers who have Direct Loans and Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL), which means these borrowers will not be required to make any payments toward outstanding interest or principal balance.
  - Suspend interest accrual for such loans so that these balances don't accrue.
  - Avoid forced collections such as garnishment of wages, tax refunds, & Social Security benefits.
  - Halt negative credit reporting.
  - Ensure a borrower continues to receive credit toward Public Service Loan Forgiveness, Income-Driven Repayment forgiveness, and loan rehabilitation.
  - Website: [studentaid.gov/announcements-events/coronavirus](http://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/coronavirus)
- Hillsborough County summer school is virtual. Some Hillsborough County summer camps are open. Other camps, including the YMCA and City of Tampa, are open.

**\*\*\*VETERANS\*\*\***

**James A. Haley Veterans Hospital**

- Veterans who are concerned they may have symptoms of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), flu or cold **should contact the [VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center](#) at 1-877-741-3400 (toll free) before coming to a VA facility.** Clinical staff are available to provide 24/7 virtual care and support, including nurse advice and triage. This service is available at no cost to Veterans enrolled for care in VISN 8.
- VA COVID-19 Website: [www.visn8.va.gov/coronavirus.asp](http://www.visn8.va.gov/coronavirus.asp)
- Visitors will no longer be permitted to enter James A. Haley Veterans Hospital (including to see inpatients or accompany patients to appointments). Exceptions include end-of-life situations or if the visitor is a caregiver and the patient depends on said caregiver for transportation and mobility. (Effective 03/24/20)
- James A. Haley Veterans Hospital is operating a drive-thru triage screening area at the parking garage located on the main hospital grounds at 13000 Bruce B. Downs Blvd. The drive-thru triage service will be available 24/7 until further notice.
- The Internal Revenue Service, working in partnership with the Treasury Department and the Department of Veterans Affairs, [announced](#) on 4/17/20 that recipients of VA benefits will automatically receive the direct cash assistance appropriated by Congress through the CARES Act. Veterans and their beneficiaries who receive Compensation and Pension (C&P) benefit payments from VA will receive a \$1,200 direct cash assistance with no further action needed on their part.
- Website: [www.tampa.va.gov/emergency/](http://www.tampa.va.gov/emergency/)

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS\*\*\***

- Office of U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor: 813-871-2817 (bilingual)

- Referrals for community resources and social services - Crisis Center of Tampa Bay: 2-1-1(bilingual)
- Hillsborough County Department of Health: 813-307-8000
- Hillsborough County: 813-272-5900 (bilingual)
- Alert Tampa System: Text TAMPAREADY to 888-777 OR TAMPALISTA al 888-777 para español
- Feeding Tampa Bay: 813-254-1190
- Small Business Development Center at USF: [USF@floridasbdc.org](mailto:USF@floridasbdc.org)
- Hillsborough County Public Schools: 813-272-4000
- Florida Unemployment Assistance: 1-800-204-2418
- James A. Haley Veterans Hospital: 813-972-2000
- TECO: 813-223-0800
- Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office non-emergencies: 813-247-8200
- CareerSource Tampa Bay: 813-930-7400
- Family Healthcare Foundation: 813-995-7005
- Metropolitan Ministries: 813-209-1000