

KATHY CASTOR
14TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

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June 24, 2020

Attn: Records Custodian

Office of the Governor of Florida
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Florida Department of Health
4052 Bald Cypress Way
Tallahassee, FL 32399

RE: Public Records Request for State of Florida's COVID-19 Testing Plan

Dear Records Custodian:

The key to controlling the spread of COVID-19 and safely reopening Florida's economy is a widespread and rapid testing plan and contact tracing with diligent focus on our most vulnerable Floridians. The State of Florida was required to submit a testing plan to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in May, but it is unclear whether or not the State complied with the law passed by Congress to do so. I requested Florida's testing plan in a June 1, 2020 letter to Governor DeSantis, but I have not received a response.

Therefore, I respectfully request, pursuant to the Public Records Act, Chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes, copies of any and all documents that you have in your files regarding the State of Florida's testing plan that was required to be sent to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 30 days after H.R. 266, Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act was signed into law on April 24, 2020. The testing plan that was required by federal statute includes the State's testing goals for the remainder of 2020, the number of tests needed, month-by-month estimates of laboratory and testing capacity – including workforce, equipment, supplies and available tests – and a description of how the State will use its resources for testing. This is important information that Floridians, local officials and public health experts need to make informed decisions and save lives.

This request includes everything contained in the Office of the Governor's and the Florida Department of Health's file for the aforementioned entities and/or persons including but not limited to all printed, handwritten, electronic, computer stored, audio, photographic and/or video records.

If you contend that any of the above information is not publicly accessible, confidential, and/or exempt from public disclosure, you are required to advise us in writing and with particularity the reasons for withholding such information by citing to the applicable exemption for the Public Records Act. See, Florida Statute §119.07(1)(e) and (1)(f). If the purported exemption you are claiming only applies to a portion of the records, please redact or delete that portion of the records and provide copies of the remainder of the records in accordance with §119.07(1)(d), Fla. Stat.

I will pay the actual costs of duplication as defined in § 119.07. Please review the amount of data that you have in your custody, control or possession and provide me with either a verbal and/or written estimate of the total costs at the earliest practicable date so we may obtain the records. Please acknowledge receipt of this letter and please respond within two weeks by mail to my district office with the requested information. If that is not a reasonable amount of time, please send what information is available and if you cannot, please let me know why it will take longer to send the requested information.

It is more important than ever that we work together to keep Floridians safe, especially with the recent spike in cases and growing positivity rate among Floridians. As steps are taken to move away from the State's Safer at Home plan, it is imperative that we have a publicly available testing plan to help our neighbors make decisions for their families, fight this pandemic and start building back our economy. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or my Chief of Staff, Clay Phillips, at 813-871-2817.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Castor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathy Castor
United States Representative
Florida – District 14

CC: Governor Ron DeSantis
Surgeon General Rivkees