



BERTHA W. HENRY, County Administrator

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April 22, 2020

TO: Broward County Municipal Managers

Re: Four-County Reopening Activities and Services Discussion

Dear Municipal Managers,

Based on the regional dialogue between the four counties (Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe) in Southeast Florida, we want to have a thoughtful approach to reopen certain activities and services methodically with the guidance of science. The White House has published the attached "Opening Up America Again" criteria for reopening services and activities (Exhibit 1). Based on consultation with health professionals, it appears we currently meet four of the five criteria:

Federal Government Criteria:

Symptoms

1. Downward trajectory of influenza-like illness reported within a 14-day period: **YES**
(Attached Charts 1 and 2, Exhibit 2)
2. Downward trajectory of COVID-19 like syndromic cases reported within a 14-day period: **YES** (Attached Charts 3 and 4, Exhibit 3)

Cases

3. (a) Downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period: **NO -or-**
(b) Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period (flat or increasing volume of tests): **YES**

Hospitals and Healthcare Facilities

4. Treat all patients without crisis care: **YES**
5. Robust testing in place for at-risk healthcare workers, including emerging antibody testing: **NO**

Once we meet all five, or at a minimum have an established plan to address the outstanding criterion, we can begin the federally recommended three-phased approach to reopening activities and services.

Since there is consensus that criterion #5 has not been met, Broward County is proactively working to attain this criterion by exploring robust testing options. The Governor recently announced that the State has placed an order for 100,000 of the antibody test kits approved by the Food and Drug Administration for COVID 19. The County has submitted a request for Broward to be a recipient of 20,000 of these kits. Concurrently, we are also attempting to procure additional antibody testing kits on our own to supplement any we may get from the State. The availability of the kits would facilitate the testing efforts we are contemplating. Secondly, we are in active discussions with a university and healthcare professionals to conduct the serology study for COVID-19 utilizing these antibody kits. This would position the County to possibly meet criterion #5.

The four counties' initial focus has been the gradual reopening of limited recreational amenities (distributed prior to Monday's call). The counties have not announced a date for opening but are strategizing on communications and enforcement. These openings will be guided by the following principles.

Phase 1 of the Federal "Opening Up America Again" Recommended Guidelines:

Individuals

- **All vulnerable individuals** should continue to shelter in place. Members of households with vulnerable residents should be aware that by returning to work or other environments where distancing is not practical, they could carry the virus back home. Precautions should be taken to isolate from vulnerable residents.
- All individuals, **when in public** (e.g., parks, outdoor recreation areas, shopping areas), should maximize physical distance from others. Social settings of more than 10 people, where appropriate distancing may not be practical, should be avoided unless precautionary measures are observed.
- Avoid **socializing** in groups of more than 10 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing (e.g., receptions, trade shows)
- **Minimize non-essential travel** and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel.

Employers

- Continue to **encourage telework**, whenever possible and feasible with business operations.
- If possible, **return to work in phases**.

- Close **common areas** where personnel are likely to congregate and interact or enforce strict social distancing protocols.
- Minimize **non-essential travel** and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel.
- Strongly consider **special accommodations** for personnel who are members of a **vulnerable population**.

Specific Types of Employers

- **Schools and organized youth activities** (e.g., daycare, camp) that are currently closed should remain closed.
- **Visits to senior living facilities and hospitals** should be prohibited. Those who do interact with residents and patients must adhere to strict protocols regarding hygiene.
- **Large Venues** (e.g., sit-down dining, movie theaters, sporting venues, places of worship) can operate under strict physical distancing protocols.
- **Elective surgeries** can resume, as clinically appropriate, on an outpatient basis at facilities that adhere to CDC guidelines.
- **Gyms** can open if they adhere to strict physical distancing and sanitation protocols.
- **Bars** should remain closed.

We are in uncharted waters with this COVID-19 pandemic and appreciate the feedback from our municipal partners as we navigate this situation. As a reminder, the above federal guidelines are simply recommendations for considerations. Given our unique position and the impacts in South Florida related to this pandemic, we will elect to open only those areas that are appropriate.

Sincerely,


Bertha Henry
County Administrator

Attachments

cc: Board of County Commissioners
Monica Cepero, Deputy County Administrator
Tracy Jackson, Emergency Management, Director
Paula Thaqi, M.D., M.P.H., Broward Health Department Administrator
Broward League of Cities