



Town of Palm Beach Fire-Rescue



TO: Kirk Blouin, Town Manager

FROM: Darrel Donatto, Fire Rescue Chief 

SUBJECT: Update on COVID-19 pandemic

DATE: June 2, 2020

On December 31, 2019, Chinese Health officials inform the World Health Organization (WHO) about a cluster of 41 patients with a mysterious pneumonia. By January 7, 2020, Chinese authorities had identify the virus that caused the pneumonia-like illness as a new type of coronavirus.

The first case of the novel coronavirus in the United States was reported on January 14, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. On January 24, 2020, Palm Beach Fire Rescue began to prepare for this emerging viral illness by ordering personal protective equipment, reviewing and updating our policies on infectious diseases. On February 4th, Fire-Rescue began screening 911 callers for signs and symptoms of the coronavirus.

On February 11, 2020, the WHO announced that the disease caused by the novel coronavirus will be called "COVID-19."

On February 13, 2020, the Town Manager and Department Directors began discussing the Town's response to COVID-19. Since that day, the Town has been actively involved in planning, mitigating, educating our residents, and responding to the threats caused by COVID-19.

It wasn't until February 29th that testing became available in Florida and on March 1, the governor announced Florida's first positive cases of COVID-19. Palm Beach County's first two cases of COVID-19 were reported on March 12. On March 14th, Fire-Rescue responded to the first known case in the Town of Palm Beach, a patient who later died.

As of June 3, 2020, there were a total of 31 positive cases in the Town of Palm Beach, 6,477 positive cases in Palm Beach County, and 58,764 cases in the State of Florida. The Town is aware of 2 cases from the Town that have resulted in deaths. In Palm Beach County there have been a total of 359 deaths and 1215 hospitalizations.

Palm Beach County has the third highest number of positive cases by county in the State of Florida and the second highest number of deaths by county.

The number of new cases per day in Palm Beach County varies widely, with a high of 248 on June 2. However, this number can be misleading in that it varies by the amount of testing being performed, when the test results are submitted by testing laboratories, and the amount of COVID-19 in the county. There better metric for monitoring the amount of COVID-19 in the county is the percent of positive people among people tested. As of June 3, 8.1% of all people tested in Palm Beach County tested positive for COVID-19. That number is trending downward as shown below.

Date	% Positive in Palm Beach County	% Positive in Florida
6/2/2020	8.1%	5.5%
5/26/2020	8.1%	5.7%
5/18/2020	9.1%	7%
5/11/2020	9.5%	7.5%
5/4/2020	10.3%	8.4%
4/27/2020	11.1%	9.1%
4/20/2020	13.4%	10.1%
4/13/2020	15.8%	10.7%
4/9/2020	18.1%	11%

It is anticipated that the this trend will continue as summer approaches.

The Town continues to practice and encourage citizens to practice social distancing and wearing of face coverings.