



Martin County community update: May 15, 2020

Martin County Update Video with Commission Chair Harold Jenkins:

https://youtu.be/b2D4bC5_M8A

We remain steadfast in our resolve to make Martin County a safe and healthy place to call home. As we move into the recovery phase, protecting the health and safety of our employees, residents and visitors remains the county's primary goal. Collaborating with federal, state and local partners, we will provide guidelines for our community with a data-driven approach. **Together** we will approach new challenges with resilience and sustainability to protect that which is most precious to us. **Together** we will get through this. **Together** we will move our community forward. **Martin Together.**

RECENT UPDATES

***Updated* Governor DeSantis reopening plan:**

Governor Ron DeSantis' "Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step. Plan for Florida's Recovery" outlines a phased approach to reopening.

Highlights of Phase 1 include (new additions in red):

- Gyms/fitness center can reopen on Monday, May 18
- Restaurants may offer outdoor seating, with increased indoor seating at 50% capacity beginning May 18
- Retail can operate at 50% of indoor capacity beginning May 18
- Museums and libraries may operate at 50% of indoor capacity beginning May 18
- Hair and nail salons can operate but must follow established guidelines
- Schools continue with distance learning
- Visits to senior living facilities are prohibited
- Elective surgeries statewide can resume
- Vulnerable individuals should avoid close contact with people outside of their home

Related materials:

- [Executive Order 20-112](#)
- [FAQs for Executive Order 20-112](#)
- [Guiding Principles for Reopening](#)

***New* Drive-thru and Walk-up Testing:**

The Florida Department of Health in Martin County, in collaboration with a variety of community partners, is offering a series of free COVID-19 testing events for Martin County residents. Residents can drive-thru or walk-up to any of the events through May 23. No appointment is needed and testing is offered regardless of symptoms. For more information, click [here](#).

***Updated* Special BOCC meeting:**

The next special meeting of the Martin County Board of County Commissioners is scheduled for Friday, May 22 at 9 a.m. in the John F. and Rita M. Armstrong Wing of the Blake Library. Meetings are open to the public and available on MCTV, Comcast Channel 20 and U-verse Channel 99. Meetings are also streamed on our website at www.martin.fl.us and on Martin County's Facebook and YouTube pages.

***Updated* Boating:**

All restrictions for Martin County-owned boat ramps have been lifted as of May 1, 2020. The restriction by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission that recreational vessels shall have no more than 10 people on board and maintain a 50-foot distance between each vessel **is no longer in effect.**

***Updated* Martin County Property Appraiser:**

Offices are currently closed to walk-in customers, but the tentative reopen target date is June 1. In addition, on May 18 we will be launching a "Live Chat" pilot program on our website. Get your questions answered instantly by clicking the chat bubble icon. Visit <https://www.pa.martin.fl.us/> for more information.

***Updated* Mortgage Foreclosures and Rent Evictions Suspensions Extended**

Governor's Executive Order 20-94 suspending mortgage foreclosures for residential and commercial property owners has been extended until June 2. However, the order does not relieve or forgive any debts. View the order [here](#).

COUNTY INFORMATION

Building closures:

All county buildings and constitutional offices (Tax Collector, Clerk and Comptroller, Supervisor of Elections and Property Appraiser) are closed to walk-in traffic but still providing service to the public. Residents are urged to utilize online, email and over-the-phone resources. For additional information, please visit www.martin.fl.us/coronavirus.

Note: The Robert Morgade Library is closed for maintenance until further notice.

Beaches:

Martin County-owned and managed beaches, with the exception of Hobe Sound Beach, are open to Martin County residents only until further notice. Proof of residency is required and seasonal residents must have documentation with their local address. As a reminder, Bathtub Beach remains closed due to erosion issues.

County parks:

County-owned parks are open. Use of trails, pathways, boardwalks, fishing piers and open areas is permitted, however no organized group sports are permitted. Pavilions, public restrooms, batting cages and racquet sport courts are open. Lap swimming is allowed at Sailfish Splash Waterpark and the splash pad is open at Indian RiverSide Park. Phipps Park Campground remains open and is not accepting any new reservations.

Social distancing and group size restrictions at all Martin County parks and facilities, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, are required.

School District:

All Florida school districts will remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. All Martin County School District and school-related events, programs, athletic events and activities have been canceled for the same time period, with the exception of high school graduation ceremonies. The district continues to collaborate with health and safety experts to tentatively plan traditional graduation ceremonies in late July. More information will be released as it becomes available. Continue to monitor the Martin County School District's [website](#).

STATE INFORMATION

Governor's Executive Orders:

All of Governor DeSantis' recent Executive Orders can be found on the county website at www.martin.fl.us/coronavirus under "Actions."

Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles:

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles authorized changes and extensions to driver licenses, identification cards, registration, delinquent fees and in-person interviews. Visit www.flhsmv.gov/covid-19 for more information.

TESTING

Cleveland Clinic Martin Health:

Cleveland Clinic Martin Health is performing drive-thru testing for COVID-19 by appointment only at Martin North Hospital, 200 SE Hospital Avenue in Stuart, and Tradition Hospital, 10000 SW Innovation Way in Port St. Lucie. Anyone over the age of 16 who has a fever and respiratory illness (such as cough, runny nose, sneezing) or any patient with a fever and gastrointestinal illness (such as diarrhea, vomiting) is eligible for testing. For an appointment, individuals must call 772-419-3360, between 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday – Friday and 8 a.m. – 3 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. Testing hours for both locations are from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Monday – Friday and 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. For additional information, visit www.martinhealth.org.

Florida Community Health Centers, Inc.:

Florida Community Health Centers, Inc. (FCHC) is working in partnership with Martin County Emergency Management, the Florida Department of Health in Martin County and Cleveland Clinic Martin Health to provide expanded access to free COVID-19 testing for the residents of Indiantown. All Indiantown residents are eligible for testing and no symptoms are required.

Drive-thru and walk-up testing is being offered at the FCHC location at 15858 SW Warfield Blvd.in Indiantown. Testing is available Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Call 772-597-3596 for more information or to register. Appointments are preferred.

COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS RESOURCES

Economic Injury Disaster Loans available for agricultural producers:

Agricultural producers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic are now eligible for the U.S. Small Business Administration’s Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and EIDL Advance programs. For more information, visit the [SBA website](#).

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance:

The federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program provides unemployment benefits to those that may not otherwise be eligible under Florida’s state Reemployment Assistance program, including independent contractors and individuals who are self-employed. Individuals who have been impacted by COVID-19 and believe they may be eligible for PUA can visit www.FloridaJobs.org and select “File a Claim” to apply and be considered for PUA.

- [PUA application process](#)
- [PUA Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [COVID-19 employment scenarios](#)

CARES Act economic impact payments:

Millions of Americans have already received their economic impact payments authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act. The Internal Revenue Service continues to calculate and automatically send the payments to most individuals, however some may have to provide additional information to get their payments. Click [here](#) for frequently asked questions about the economic impact payments.

Reemployment assistance:

DEO will be conducting nightly maintenance to the CONNECT system to process claims and payments. CONNECT will be available from 8 a.m. to 7:59 p.m. daily. This schedule does not affect individuals that wish to file a new claim. Individuals can file a new claim 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at www.FloridaJobs.org.

- [Step-by-step guide on how to apply](#)
- [Reemployment Assistance Resource Guide with FAQs](#)
- Those having difficulty accessing the online application, can [download an application](#) and mail it to Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, PO Box 5350, Tallahassee, FL 32314-5350.

Paycheck Protection Program:

The Small Business Administration is still accepting loan applications for small businesses impacted by COVID-19. Funding can be used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest or utilities. For more information, visit the [SBA website](#).

Martin County BizHub:

The Martin County Business Development Board (BDB) has created a centralized online resource, [Martin County BizHub](#), to help meet the ever-changing needs and interests of local businesses. It features announcements, updates, links to state and federal business loan programs, connections to small business, job and workforce development partners and more. Businesses can also call the BDB at 772-221-1380 or email info@bdbmc.org.

BizHub has been expanded with a new “Get Ready” section to provide businesses with information on how to open safely once it is determined by state government and health officials that it is time to do so. View the new information [here](#).

Florida Prepaid Plan:

To provide financial flexibility during this difficult time, all Florida Prepaid Plan payments have been deferred until July 2020. Depending on how you currently make your payments, you may need to take action. Please visit <https://myfloridaprepaid.com/updates> for more information.

Free tax filing:

Tax Day has been moved from April 15 to July 15. Through United Way’s partnership with H&R Block, every household with a simple return can file their taxes free at www.myfreetaxes.com.

211:

211 is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to connect residents with resources for food, paying housing bills, mental health services and more. For assistance, dial 2-1-1 or 561-383-1112.

Basic needs:

If you are unable to meet basic needs like housing, food and healthcare, call House of Hope at 772-286-4673 or Salvation Army of Martin County at 772-288-1471.

SNAP program:

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is allowing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients to use their EBT cards to purchase groceries online. [Learn more](#).

Crisis support:

If you are in need of crisis or mental health resources, counseling and/or emotional support during the COVID-19 pandemic, view the following link for a list of available [crisis resources](#).

Senior resources:

The Council on Aging of Martin County has resources for Martin County seniors in need. For more information related to meal delivery, the emergency food pantry, 24-hour hotline, caregiver counseling, case manager navigator and the Day Medical Center, visit their website at www.kanecenter.org.

Project VITAL for seniors:

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs has launched Project: VITAL (Virtual Inclusive Technology for All) which will utilize virtual technology to relieve the difficult symptoms of social isolation for residents in assisted living facilities and nursing homes. Learn more at www.elderaffairs.org.

Food distribution:

House of Hope is distributing prepackaged food directly into client’s vehicles. Clients on foot and bicycle will also be served. Information for those new to the service can be found by calling 772-286-4673. More about pantry services, hours and locations can be found [here](#).

The Martin County School District’s Food and Nutrition Services Department continues to provide free meals to children from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Meals will be served to children aged 18 and under at the following locations:

- Hobe Sound Elem. School: 11555 SE Gomez Ave., Hobe Sound
- J.D. Parker Elem. School: 1010 E. 10th St., Stuart

- Jensen Beach Elem. School: 2525 NE Savannah Rd., Jensen Beach
- Port Salerno Elem. School: 3260 SE Lionel Terr., Stuart
- Warfield Elem. School: 15260 SW 150th St., Indiantown

Treasure Coast Food Bank supports a network of local emergency food assistance programs. If you are in need of food, please contact one of our agency partners listed at <https://stophunger.org/findhelp/>.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Martin County is providing free meals to children under the age of 18, regardless of whether or not they are club members. Free, ready-to-eat meals for families are also available. Meals can be picked up drive-thru style daily between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. Those picking up meals can arrive on foot, by bike or by car. Meals are available for pick up at:

- Cole-Clark Club, 11500 SE Lares Ave., Hobe Sound
- Bill & Barbara Whitman Club, 17375 SW Palm Beach St., Indiantown
- H. Wayne Huizenga Club, 1150 SW Martin Downs Blvd., Palm City
- John & Marge Bolton Club, 4731 SE Flounder Ave., Stuart
- Hobe Sound Mobile Village, 11411 SE Federal Hwy., Hobe Sound

PREVENTION REMINDERS

The Florida Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urges everyone to protect themselves by using the following precautions:

- Stay home when you are sick
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Wash hands often with soap and water (20 seconds or longer)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Cover your cough or sneeze
- Clean and disinfect “high touch” surfaces often
- Call before visiting your doctor
- Follow guidelines for social distancing
- Wear cloth face coverings in public settings where social distancing is difficult to maintain

INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES

Visit www.martin.fl.us/Coronavirus, Martin County’s online resource for information related to COVID-19. Call 772-287-1652 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

For direct questions or guidance in reference to COVID-19, you can call the 24-hour Florida Department of Health (FDOH) Call Center at 866-779-6121 or email COVID-19@flhealth.gov. You may also call the Florida Department of Health in Martin County between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 772-221-4000, extension 9. Information is also available on the FDOH [website](#). For case count information, visit the FDOH COVID-19 [dashboard](#). For Martin County specific case information, check out the Martin County [dashboard](#).

Residents are encouraged to sign up to receive emergency alerts, including information about COVID-19, by phone, text and/or email. To sign up, simply text ALERTMARTIN to 888777 or [register online](#).

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LAB/ADM



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