MAYOR’S JULY 24, 2020 STATEMENT

The Honorable Joseph M. Corradino

This week, we are beginning to see a small bit of good news for the first time in two months.

The measures we have taken in the last several weeks (mandatory masks, curfew, restrictions on indoor dining) seem to be having a modest impact.

The first signs of this stabilization are seen in the number of cases per day and the percentage of positive cases out of all tests.

Cases continue to increase each day, but this increase is slowing. For the last several days the average daily increase in number of positive cases has been about 35 per day. Last week it was in the range of 60 per day and two weeks ago in the range of 80 per day. Still more people are getting sick each day, but the pace is slowing.

There is a subtle change in percent positive out of total tests. This is also still going up, but it is going up slower than it was a week ago.

Both of these trends indicate we may be approaching a peak in this round of our fight.

We must keep doing what we are doing to get it to eventually make a turn.

Hospitalizations and deaths lag behind the number of cases. The medical experts tell us that the next month or so will our deadliest yet. We expect to see a rise in hospitalizations over the next few weeks. Beyond that we can expect an increase in the number of deaths, as ICU beds and ventilators continue to be in higher use.
This week, we have been focused on bolstering contact tracing, getting test results back in hours or days not weeks, and consolidating and coordinating the data and analysis. Timely test results seem to be our largest challenge at this point.

The Numbers

Again, this week, the incidents of the disease are greater than they were last week and greatly exceed our first peak in early April. There are signs that the rate of increase is slowing, but the disease is not yet within our control.

In Miami-Dade County, we have tested, on average, about 14,000 people per day over the past two weeks. Over that period, we have averaged 2,800 positive cases per day. Up from last week, and about 16 times higher than where we were at our low point and about seven times higher than where we were at our first peak in April.

When measuring the rate of infection, we have a goal of keeping the percent of positive cases out of total tests under 10% on average over a two-week period. This number has gone from 8.6% in early June, to 20% this week. This number is beginning to flatten. Over 92,000 people have tested positive overall. Last week it was just over 75,000. It is estimated that the actual number of people who have had this is 10 times as high, or over 900,000 people countywide. This is nearly 1 in every 3 people in the county.

When we measure hospital capacity, we look at beds, ICU beds and ventilators. We should stay below a 70% utilization rate. We are continuing to consume capacity at a rapid pace, and this is expected to continue. This week, 70% of regular beds are being utilized. Last week this number was 52%. In early June, 17% were being utilized. Today 132% of ICU beds are being utilized. Last week this number was 107%. In early June, 16% were being utilized. Today 45% of ventilators are being utilized. Last week the number was 35%. In early June, 5% were being utilized.

At the first peak of the disease in early April, we had 710 COVID-19 patients in the hospitals. When we relaxed our regulations and opened businesses, the number of patients in the hospital was at 664, 7% less than the peak. Two weeks later, we hit a low of 546 patients, 23% less than the peak. Since that time, the number of COVID-19 patients in the hospital has climbed. This week we reached 2,302 patients. This number is 220% greater than the first peak.

To manage this load, hospitals are metering beds, which means they have eliminated elective surgeries. They are able to convert certain beds to ICU beds. They are admitting only people who need it and discharging people as soon as they can go home.
Average deaths per day over the last 14 days are rising. The overall average is at about 10. Most of the deaths are people over 60. Over the next month, we can expect the death toll to rise.

This week, most of the cases are still affecting people in the age group between 18 and 34 years old, with a median age of 43 which is higher than last week. Most people are reporting getting the disease at home or at work. The employment sectors the disease is primarily coming from includes healthcare, first responders, construction, and transportation.

About 5% of counted positive cases result in hospitalizations and 1% result in death.

We should have about 500 contact tracers by the end of the week and they are reaching only 37% of those infected. This performance is poor. We need about 800 contact tracers for our nearly 3 million citizens. It can be expected as the disease comes under control and the contact tracing becomes more prevalent, we should be able to reach nearly all of the positive cases, and severely limit the spread of the disease.

To avoid further restrictions and regulations, we need to continue working from home if we you can, keep wearing masks, staying distant when out, and avoiding indoor gatherings. We must learn to live with this disease. This is our way of life for the foreseeable future, through the summer, into the fall, past the holidays and into the winter. Any relaxation in behavior could see an immediate, deadly, demoralizing, and economically devastating jump in the wrong direction as this disease is highly contagious. The sooner we adapt, the sooner we can get to a better place.

We at the Village of Pinecrest are here to help us get through this crisis. If you need to contact me, please do so at 305-606-2364 or jcorradino@pinecrest-fl.gov. Or contact our staff (manager@pinecrest-fl.gov) and Village Council (council@pinecrest-fl.gov). Each and every one of us is working hard every day as a unified team.