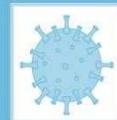


# Coronavirus



## MAYOR'S JULY 31, 2020 STATEMENT

The Honorable Joseph M. Corradino

Good afternoon, Pinecrest. This is our update for July 31st.

This week we have a couple of issues on our hands.

Hurricane Isaias is heading in our general direction. As usual, the track is hard to predict but keeps inching east of us. What we do know is that we will likely have a stormy weekend with rain and wind. Pinecrest is ready and will be coordinating with FPL should any widespread power outages occur. We know how to deal with this type of situation. This is a reminder that the peak of Hurricane Season is still about six weeks away, so we should get ready, any week could bring us a major storm.

On COVID-19, this week we have seen the trajectory of the disease plateau and show signs of beginning to recede. Since July 21<sup>st</sup>, the rate of increase has been slowing, with each day since seeing a moderate drop in leading statistics. Hospital utilization is still extremely high, greatly exceeding any number that is acceptable, but the hospital system continues to manage the crisis while providing those that need critical care with that care. Thus far we have avoided catastrophe, no one has died for lack of beds, ventilators or healthcare professionals. The extra staff from the state has been extremely helpful. We are still in a wait and see position, but the trends seem to be going in the right direction.

Unfortunately, deaths lag behind all other numbers. Some of the deadliest days lie ahead. Because of the strict bed metering done at the hospitals, people now admitted are the most severely ill. One hospital has estimated that about 90% of its ICU patients are on ventilators and the outcomes for people on ventilators is very poor, with up to a 60% mortality rate. Daily deaths are double the rate and numbers of where they were in June.

Not only are we suffering with widespread illness and loss of life, we are simultaneously experiencing a growing economic crisis, which we may be feeling long after COVID-19 is gone. Many small businesses and restaurants are struggling and are in serious jeopardy. In Pinecrest, we've worked in partnership and support of our businesses since the beginning of this crisis. During the *Stay at Home* phase, we relaxed our zoning regulations along the commercial corridor to allow for maximum advertising. Since we entered the Phase I reopening, we have had multiple meetings with each business sector, with the goal of assuring they had everything they needed in order to open and operate safely. We certified each business so patrons would know they were safe. In June, prior to the new restrictions on indoor dining, we encouraged the use of outdoor seating, by modifying our administrative processes so that requests could be processed within hours. We've encouraged complete flexibility in order to allow as many outdoor seats as possible within the county regulations. Other cities have adopted our procedures. We continue to rigorously enforce the rules. The businesses and the patrons have done a remarkable job staying in compliance with few violations.

Unfortunately, this week we have had a financial setback. While our cities and the county have formed close coordination in communicating together management of the response to the pandemic, that cooperative spirit does not yet exist when it comes to distribution of federal relief funds. Miami-Dade County has received \$474 million in federal funding through the Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This money is to provide relieve for COVID related expenses that were unanticipated and unbudgeted, like business relief, and the enforcement of the regulations. Distribution of the funds was intended to be done equitably amongst the local governments. In this County, our 34 cities make up 57% of the population. If distributed by population, the cities would have received about \$270 Million. Miami-Dade County has unilaterally decided to keep nearly all of the money and give the cities \$30 million to split. This is 6% not the 57% that the cities would get based on population. While we do understand that the County has significant regional expenses, this offer is simply unacceptable. Pinecrest will work for a more equitable distribution of these funds.

### *The Numbers*

This week, the incidents of the disease are beginning to slow. The disease is not yet within our control.

**Tests:** The numbers are going up but slowing. In Miami-Dade County, we have tested, on average, about 15,000 people per day over the past two weeks. Over that period, we have averaged 2,966 positive cases per day. This is 166 (5%) more than last week and about 17 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.

**Infection Rate:** The numbers are beginning to go down. 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 19% this week. This number is beginning to flatten and is down 1% from last week. Over 110,000 people have tested positive overall a 16% increase when the total was just over 92,000. It is estimated that the actual number of people who have had this is 10 times as high, or over 1,000,000 people countywide. This is over 1 in every 3 people in the County.

**Cases:** This week, most of the cases are still affecting people in the age group between 18 and 34 years old, and hit a median age of 44 which is higher than last week. Most people are reporting getting the disease at home or at work.

**Hospitalizations:** The numbers are beginning to go down. 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 and peaked at 2,302. This week we reached 2,079. This is 223 (10%) less than last week. It has been declining each day for the last week and down week after week for the first time since early June.

**Utilization:** When we measure hospital capacity, we look at beds, ICU beds and ventilators. We should stay below a 70% utilization rate. Hospitalizations are going down, but ICU and ventilator use are going up. This week 65% of regular beds are being utilized. Last week this number was 70%. In early June, 17% were being utilized. When we count the potential cumulative amount of ICU beds available, we see 61% of ICU beds are being utilized. This week the date is being reported differently, accounting for all potential ICU beds, so this number is well below last week. In early June, 16% were being utilized. Today, 48% of ventilators are being utilized. Last week the number was 45%. In early June, 5% were being utilized.

Deaths: Average deaths per day over the last 14 days are rising. The overall average is at about 11. Most of the deaths are people over 60. Over the next month, we can expect the death toll to rise.

Going Forward: We should have had about 500 contact tracers by the end of last week. This did not happen. We still only have about 300 contact tracers and they are reaching less than 1/2 of those infected. This performance remains poor. We need about 800 contact tracers for our nearly 3 million citizens. This, along with the time it takes to receive test results must be fixed if we have any hope in extinguishing the disease once the infection rate becomes manageable.

We all want to get back to normal as fast as possible. We all want the kids back in school. The fastest way to make this happen is to wear a mask. Continue working from home if you can, staying distant when out, washing your hands frequently, and avoiding indoor gatherings. Along with testing and tracing, this is how we are going to avoid similar peaks in the fall and winter. This is completely up to us as individuals. We must learn to live with this disease.

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](mailto:jcorradino@pinecrest-fl.gov). Or contact our staff ([manager@pinecrest-fl.gov](mailto:manager@pinecrest-fl.gov)) and Village Council ([council@pinecrest-fl.gov](mailto:council@pinecrest-fl.gov)). Each and every one of us is working hard every day as a unified team.