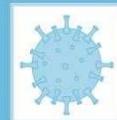


Coronavirus



MAYOR'S AUGUST 7, 2020 STATEMENT

The Honorable Joseph M. Corradino

Good afternoon, Pinecrest. This is our update for August 7th.

There is some positive movement this week, for the first time in two months, as the disease, in this wave, has peaked and is going back down.

All indicators are still many times more intense than they were at our first peak, and we have weeks or months to go before we get to the point where we are in control.

We have come to a resolution on the distribution of the Federal government's Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds. This money is to provide relieve for COVID related expenses that were unanticipated and unbudgeted, like business relief, rent abatement and the enforcement of the regulations. Pinecrest should be able to get reimbursed for all of its expenses related to this the disease to this point. This will be a county-wide injection of \$474 Million to help our citizens and businesses absorb the impact of the crisis.

The Numbers

This week, the incidents of the disease have not only slowed, but have started to decrease. The disease is not yet within our control.

Symptoms: Hospital emergency rooms report that the number of people exhibiting COVID or flu symptoms, like cough, fever and shortness of breath, are going down.

Tests: Because of the hurricane, and the resulting closure of the testing sites, the average number of tests per day and average number of positive cases dropped. This week, we've collected 11% less tests per day on average.

Infection Rate: The numbers are going 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 a peak at about 21% in the third week of July. It is now about 17%, which is down 4% from the July peak. We cannot consider relaxing any of our current rules until the positivity rate goes under 5%. Medical experts tell us this could take a couple of months to occur. Over 125,000 people have tested positive overall. It is estimated that the actual number of people who have had this is 10 times as high, or over 1,250,000 out of 2,700,000 people countywide.

Cases: This week, most of the cases are still affecting people in the age group between 18 and 34 years old. The median age is 43, which is lower than last week by one year. Most people are reporting getting the disease at home or at work. The workplaces with the most exposure are health care and protective services at about 22% each. Only 4% report getting the disease while shopping.

Hospitalizations: The numbers are going 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 first peak. Two weeks later, we hit a low of 546 patients, 23% less than the first peak. Since that time, the number of COVID-19 patients in the hospital has peaked at 2,302, over 320% higher than our first peak. This week we reached 1,863. This is 20% less than the recent peak but 260% higher than the first peak.

Utilization: When we measure hospital capacity, we look at beds, ICU beds and ventilators. We should stay below a 70% utilization rate. This week 26% of regular beds are being utilized. This number peaked at 70% in the third week of July. In early June, 17% were being utilized. When we count the potential cumulative amount of ICU beds available, we see 50% of ICU beds are being utilized. Ventilators are about 44% occupied, 4% less than the recent peak about a week ago. ICU and ventilator numbers are very high and should start to decline in the next few weeks. Most people in ICU beds are now on ventilators and the mortality rate in this situation is up to 60%. Relative to hospital capacity, we have avoided the disaster turning to a catastrophe by running out of beds, medical professionals and drugs. Everyone who needs critical care receives critical care.

Deaths: Average deaths per day over the last 14 days are rising. Most of the deaths are people over 60. Deaths will continue to go up as they are a lagging indicator. The data is reported so late that we are just now seeing reported deaths that occurred in early July. Over the next month, we can expect the death toll to rise in a dramatic way.

Contact Tracing /Test Results: Contact tracing and test results, the two things that are absolutely critical to eradicating this disease once we have it under control, are still the weakest part of the response. The State of Florida is in complete control of this and has simply not produced. After five months, they have allocated us less than 400 contact tracers. They say they are reaching about 70% of those people testing positive, which is up from around 50% last week. We need about 800 contact tracers for our nearly 3 million citizens. The State is reviewing over 2,000 applications for the positions. If you are contacted, please answer the questions you are asked. We are finding that people are hesitant to respond when contacted. Adopting best practices from other communities who do this well is imperative in the next several weeks. It is still taking 10 days to 2-weeks to get test results back. We must work with the labs to change this unacceptable condition prior to the next spike. This week at Village Hall, Pinecrest opened a testing site offering two types of tests; a swab test that tells you if you have it and an instant test that tells you if you've had it.

The Future: While the numbers are finally going down, this is not time to relax. To get back to the baseline number of cases where we were in late March, may take months. It is a time to gather ourselves as individuals, businesses and governments and reassess our strategies and prepare for when the next spike inevitably occurs this fall or winter. Schools are set to open in person on October 5th, at that same time the traditional cold and flu season will begin. Doctors say we can anticipate seeing a predictable rise in symptoms that will complicate issues. Even a moderate cold and flu season coupled with a COVID spike could make the next situation much worse than the one we are dealing with, which brought us to the brink of consuming all of the hospital capacity. We cannot afford to be here again. Please consider a flu shot this season.

By November, the elections will be over, and we will be then attempting to set up a communications strategy between the new county administration (new Mayor and many new County Commissioners) and the cities. The County's Mayor is the ultimate decision maker for us. Cities can be more restrictive but not less restrictive than the rules the Mayor sets forth. This presents an additional challenge as it's taken months to begin to form clear lines of communication and cooperation with the current administration. Experts say that we may not be half-way through this entire event. Leadership and patience are going to be critical. We must continue work vigorously to be better prepared.

What we have been doing is finally working. If we let our guard down, we let our community down. Continue wearing a mask, working from home if you can, staying distant when out, washing your hands frequently, and avoiding indoor gatherings. 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. 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.