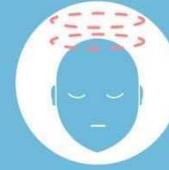
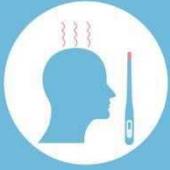


Coronavirus



MAYOR'S SEPTEMBER 11, 2020 STATEMENT

The Honorable Joseph M. Corradino

We've come out of the Labor Day holiday and Miami-Dade County has announced we will be moving into the Phase 2 re-openings next week. This allows businesses, including movie theaters, concert halls, bowling alleys, and similar places, to open at 50% occupancy. The County Mayor says bars and night clubs will not reopen. The Miami-Dade Public Schools Superintendent says school re-openings will be discussed next week but has not given a time frame. The curfew will be pushed back one hour to 11:00 p.m., parks will be open until 10:00 p.m., charter boats will be allowed to operate at 50% capacity, youth baseball and softball will be allowed to resume, and outdoor attractions like the zoo will be allowed to open at 50% capacity.

This is the first time during this crisis that our cities were not given an advanced notice of the action. It is unclear how we are meeting the gateway criteria for Phase 2. It is also unclear if this was supported by the medical experts as it is seemingly contrary to their latest advice.

The numbers continue to decrease, getting better each day. This is encouraging. The medical experts ask us to remain cautious because they expect a spike due to Labor Day and a fall wave due to the cold and flu season; as well as colleges re-opening and eventually in person K-12 schools. How well we come out of September is important because it will tell us how well we can handle the next wave.

The most informative numbers during this period are the positivity rate and the number of hospitalizations. These are both about where they were at our low point in early June. If we keep it going down from here, we have an excellent chance of significantly controlling the disease this fall.

The positivity rate continues to decrease each day. We strive to keep it under 10% on a two-week average. The medical experts suggest we can begin considering further relaxation of the rules when we get below 5%. As a comparison, places like New York are making moves based on a 2% positivity rate. It could be another couple of weeks before we get to below 5%; if we do not stall. This week's number is at about 6.3%. It is going down slower than it has been in previous weeks, which indicates we may be headed towards a plateau. This needs to be watched closely.

The number of people in the hospital is about 580. This is just a bit higher than where we were at our lowest point since this started, which occurred two weeks after Memorial Day, when it reversed quickly and increased out of control for three months.

The utilization of hospital beds and ICU beds has continued to go down. The utilization of ventilators has gone up about 1 percentage point from last week. Only the sickest people are in the hospital.

We've come a long way in terms of treating the disease. If a person is admitted to the hospital, something meaningful can be done for them with drugs and therapies. Our local healthcare system is providing a level of care that is not exceeded by any other community in the nation. This is still a very dangerous disease and will likely turn out to be one of the largest causes of death in the county over the last year.

We have about 600 tracers where we need 800. Tracers are contacting about 90% of the people that are tested positive. Still, 20% of people contacted are refusing to participate.

Test results countywide are coming back in less than three days on average. Testing for the disease and the antibodies continues at the Pinecrest Municipal Center. Test results for the swab test are coming back in 48 hours and antibody results are coming back in about 30 minutes. Lines are low and there is almost no waiting.

We've been told by the medical experts that this won't be over until the second quarter of 2021, so we are about 1/2 way through. How well we practice what we have learned will be the determinate on how quickly we can get back to a more familiar way of life.

We can't be in a hurry. There are no shortcuts. It takes about 10 to 14 days from the time a person is infected to the time they need hospitalization. So, what we experience related to the trajectory of the disease today is the product of what we did two weeks ago. As we consider relaxation of

regulations, it is recommended by our experts to make one change at a time, then wait two weeks to see the results, and then make the next change, forwards or backwards. That way we can determine if any given change was effective. This is not happening. Indoor dining was opened the week before Labor Day against the advice of the doctors. If a Labor Day spike occurs, we won't be able to tell if it was due to the holiday or indoor dining. Next Monday, Miami Dade County will officially enter Phase 2 with additional re-openings.

The worst thing we can do is relax. The fear is that the premature, unexplained and hurried action by the County Mayor will be viewed as an "all clear" signal. If it is perceived that way, as it was in June, we will likely go backwards. How we are doing what was done in June, that resulted in a near collapse of our healthcare system, has not yet been explained to the municipal officials.

The best thing we can do is exactly what we've been doing for the last 6 weeks. We already know how to live with this. Even if everything was open, we are better off by wearing a mask, washing our hands, avoiding large gatherings, particularly in doors, and staying six feet away from others.

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.