

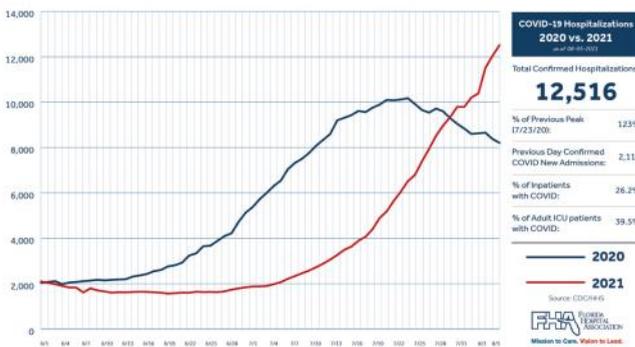
Currently in the Coalition

Updates from the Tampa Bay Health & Medical Preparedness Coalition—August 2021

The Delta Variant & Florida's Largest Hospital Surge Yet

Hospitals across the state of Florida are currently seeing the highest surge numbers of the pandemic, thanks to the delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Officials from the Florida Department of Health, Agency for Health Care Administration, and leaders from the Florida Hospital Association and Florida Health Care Association held a statewide Zoom meeting with hospitals and nursing homes on Wednesday, August 4th. Below are some important highlights; see full notes on the meeting on page 7.

- ◇ The delta variant is much more contagious than previous forms of the virus, causes more serious illness, and is impacting younger populations.
- ◇ There has been a dramatic increase in COVID hospitalizations, resulting in the highest number of hospitalizations of the pandemic—12,516 on 8/5/21. The same day, Florida set a new record for COVID-19 cases reported in one day—23,761.
- ◇ Approximately 90% of hospitalized COVID patients are unvaccinated, and are much younger than in previous waves.
- ◇ Hospitals are seeing the combined pressures of 1) increases in COVID hospitalizations across the state along with 2) significant, high volumes of non-COVID patients in hospitals that we would typically not see this time of year, and 3) critical staffing shortages.
- ◇ Hospitals across the state are activating their surge plans. Some are cancelling elective procedures and converting alternative space into additional patient care areas.
- ◇ Current challenges being monitored are oxygen supply and delivery and staffing shortages.
- ◇ The path forward out of this is vaccination.



◇ *Graphs from <https://www.fha.org/> on 8/5/21; graph of cases is through 8/4/21.



Tampa Bay Health & Medical Preparedness Coalition

Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk & Sumter Counties

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Upcoming Coalition Meetings

Pinellas CHAMP:

August 6th

Pasco Health & Medical Preparedness Coalition:

August 9th

Manatee CHAMP:

August 11th

Hernando County ESF-8 Working Group:

August 12th

Sumter County ESF-8 Working Group:

August 19th

Citrus County ESF-8 Working Group:

August 25th

Polk County ESF-8 Working Group:

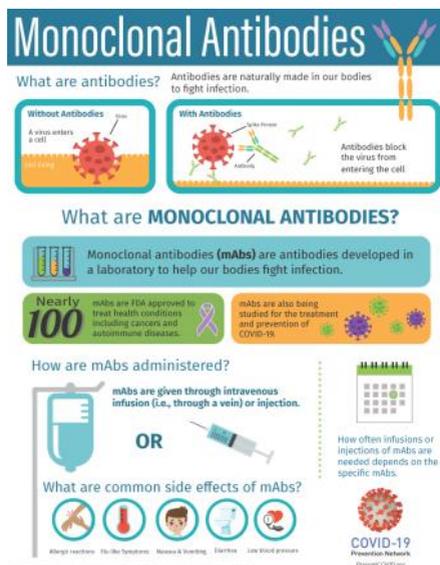
August 26th

For more info on attending these meetings, please reach out to the County Chairperson. Contact info is available on [our website](#).

Important Updates Regarding the Direct Order and Reporting Process for Monoclonal Antibodies

The federal government is responsible for the allocation and distribution of monoclonal antibody (mAb) therapeutics for the treatment of COVID-19 pursuant to the Emergency Use Authorizations (EUAs) issued by the FDA. The federal government has developed a process for practitioners and facilities to order directly from the distributor, AmerisourceBergen (ABC). These details and resources are listed below. Facilities that may request resources may include hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and long-term care facilities. Here is the process overview:

- Facilities (based on classes of trade), are able to [order bamlanivimab/etesevimab \(Lilly\), etesevimab \(Lilly – to pair with bamlanivimab already on hand\) and/or REGEN-COV \(Regeneron\) monoclonal antibodies](#) for their facilities.
- Facilities will be required to:
 - ◇ Provide ABC with a board of pharmacy license or physician letter of authorization.
 - ◇ Attest to their designated class of trade and that they will administer the authorized product according to the terms of the FDA issued EUAs.
 - ◇ Provide utilization data via either TeleTracking or Centers for the Disease Control and Prevention’s National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN).
- Facilities can order product based on established minimum amounts; subsequent orders are subject to a maximum amount based on previous orders and utilization.



Dr. Martin's Minute

The Pediatric Population and the Delta Variant

Last year, while the adult hospitals were overrun by COVID-19 infections, our pediatric hospitals were nearly bored. Kids were home. There were no playdates and the playgrounds were closed. Many daycares were even shut down. Kids just were not getting sick. And they certainly were not getting COVID-19 often. There were a handful of cases, but not enough to keep us busy. We cut shifts and staffing. This was happening all over the country.

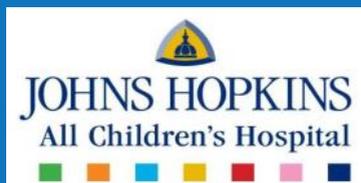
This summer, things changed quickly in the pediatric world. We're suddenly seeing the uptick in cases that the adults have been seeing all along. And it's the Delta variant. It's more contagious, the viral titers are higher and the unvaccinated are most at risk.

The cases have been escalating since the beginning of July. From July 15 to July 24th, there were 94 positive cases, and these were sent for sub-typing. It was overwhelmingly Delta, 92% (85 out of 92 able to be tested) in fact.

With school about to start, and no mask mandate in sight for our region, these numbers will likely increase. Now is the time to consider mitigation efforts, push for mandates and get eligible children vaccinated. Our pediatric hospitals and departments are already swamped and even going on "Divert" status, before schools have opened. Only 33% of 12-15 year olds have received one vaccine and just 25% are considered fully vaccinated.

Get ready. Pinellas schools start August 11th.

Meghan Martin MD
Medical Advisor to the TBHMPC
Pediatric Emergency Medicine Attending
Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital



COVID-19 Vaccination Communication Toolkit

As a trusted source of information on vaccines, health care providers play a critical role in helping their patients understand the importance of vaccination. This is especially important for patients who are more vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19, including those age 65 and older. As you see patients in your practices who have questions about COVID-19 vaccines, please consider utilizing some of these helpful resources to provide them with facts and information about vaccination.

The CDC has created [COVID-19 Vaccination Communication Toolkits](#) to help promote vaccine confidence. These toolkits are designed to help health care providers and community partners share clear and accurate information about COVID-19 vaccines and address common questions and concerns. Several printable fact sheets are included in this toolkit:

- [How mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines Work](#)
- [How Viral Vector COVID-19 Vaccines Work](#)
- [Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

Other helpful resources include:

- [FDOH MOA Health Care Provider Notifications](#)
- [FDOH Immunization Section COVID-19 Vaccine Webpage](#)
- [FDOH COVID-19 Webpage](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions About COVID-19 Vaccination](#)



Hospital Flexibilities Reminder

As hospitals continue their ongoing operations, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) is providing a reminder of flexibilities that have remained in place.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services 1135 waiver, updated on May 24, 2021, providing guidance to hospitals serving patients and staff impacted by COVID-19 **are still in place** allowing hospitals to be flexible with their screening of patients, bed flexibilities, etc. Click [here](#) for a complete list of regulatory flexibilities to help health care providers combat the spread of COVID-19.

Additionally, not-for-profit hospitals can apply for funding through Federal Emergency Management Agency to receive assistance with paying for additional staffing. Click [here](#) for more information.

AHCA remains committed to assisting hospital systems and other health care providers throughout the state. Please contact the Hospital and Outpatient Services Unit at 850-412-4549 if you have any questions.

Upcoming Trainings & Events

Virtual Hospital Emergency Response Training (HERT-B-2) for Mass Casualty Incidents with Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital

The Hospital Emergency Response Training for Mass Casualty Incidents (HERT) course will be offered **Wednesday, August 18th from 8am—5pm** and addresses healthcare response at the operations level. This 8-hour virtual course is intended for healthcare responders such as physicians, nurses, administrators, security personnel, environmental staff, and other hospital staff. [More info and register here.](#)



2021 Plugged In Series: A Primer on Service Animals

We hope you will join us via Zoom on Thursday, August 19th at 1:30pm for the next speaker in our *Plugged In* Series. Our speaker will be Suzy Wilburn, Ambassador of Outreach and Recruitment for Southeast Guide Dogs. Our presenter will be Suzy Wilburn, Ambassador of Outreach and Recruitment for Southeast Guide Dogs. There will be a presentation followed by a Q & A discussion. Find more details and registration via EventBrite [here](#).



Infectious Disease & HICS Trainings

The Southwest Florida Healthcare Coalition is sponsoring a series of trainings on relevant topics throughout 2021, that they are graciously sharing with other HCCs in Florida. Upcoming topics include **Infectious Disease Trainings** in August and **Hospital Incident Command Training** in September. More information on each class and registration are available [here](#).



SCDP ECHO Mini Series on Ebola Virus Disease

The Emory Serious Communicable Diseases Program's ECHO mini series on Ebola virus disease is underway! The fourth session is August 12th on Ebola in the Age of COVID: What EMS Providers Need to Know. [More info & registration available here.](#)

AdventHealth's 4th Annual Human Trafficking Symposium

This virtual symposium will be held on **August 12, 2021 from 8am—4pm**. Florida is ranked 3rd in the Nation for calls to the human trafficking hot line. By receiving education and creating awareness we can help to free these victims. Listen to Experts from the community as they share valuable information. For the safety of everyone, the symposium will be held virtually with Live Streaming of the multiple presentations. Within 72 hours of the symposium, a link and details of each session will be provided via email to all who [register here](#).

MGT-319 Medical Countermeasures Point of Dispensing (POD) Planning and Response is being hosted by Manatee County Emergency Management on November 3rd and 4th, 2021.

This is a U.S. Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS/FEMA)-certified course intended for participants within a community (from volunteers to skilled professionals) that respond to a medical surge and medical countermeasures event. [More info & registration available here.](#)

Florida Week at CDP is Returning! (Details below... put it on your calendar now!)



2022 FLORIDA WEEK AT CDP

SAVE THE DATE
APRIL 3 - 9, 2022

Join state, local, and tribal responders and other healthcare partners from across Florida at the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) in Anniston, Alabama. This week-long event includes a variety of advanced all-hazards training, that will ultimately culminate into an Incident Capstone Event (ICE) full-scale exercise



THE COURSES BEING OFFERED CAN BE FOUND BELOW:

Health Leadership for Mass Casualty Incidents ENROLLMENT: 60	Framework for Healthcare Emergency Management Enrollment: 40
Hospital Emergency Response Training for Mass Casualty Incidents ENROLLMENT: 40	Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response ENROLLMENT: 24

Point of Contact: Alexander Delgado

✉ Alexander.Delgado2@flhealth.gov

☎ 850-445-3142



Further information, course codes, and registration details will be sent via e-mail November 2021.

Pasco County Fire Rescue



Frontline Communications Secures Order with Pasco County Fire Rescue for Mobile Rehab Unit and Mobile Decon Unit

Frontline Communications, a division of Pierce Manufacturing, Inc., and a subsidiary of Oshkosh Corporation (NYSE:OSK), announced today that it has secured a purchase order for two highly customized vehicles from Pasco County Fire Rescue in Florida including a C-45 Velocity® mobile decontamination (decon) unit, and a C-45X-2 Velocity mobile rehabilitation (rehab) unit. These specialized vehicles will provide critical support at structural fires and long-duration deployments to aid with the removal of harmful carcinogens from gear and equipment. Additionally, they will provide respite to avoid overexertion from heat and weather with access to fluids, energy snacks, medical evaluations, and more.

“We turned our sights to selecting purpose-built vehicles that would handle the on-site decontamination of gear and rehabilitation needs our dedicated team of firefighters require during complex structural fires or long-duration deployments,” said Chief Cassin. “We worked with Frontline Communications to design a custom decon unit that is an industry first configuration and will help us save time and energy cleaning equipment. We also collaborated with Frontline Communications on the design of a custom rehab unit that will provide necessary aid. Our biggest return on investment is knowing we are protecting our firefighters from as many risks as possible.” Read more [here](#).



Pasco Fire Rescue Training Partnership with AirLife

We wanted to say thank you to AirLife for coming to Safety Town in Hudson this week to teach advanced airway techniques. These techniques are used to establish an airway for some of our most critical patients.



Thank you to the instructors from Airlife and everyone who participated in this valuable training!



If you would like to share a highlight or best practice from your organization in a future Coalition newsletter or publication, please email it to

Turea at TBHMPC2@gmail.com.

Statewide Conference Calls

Hospital-Nursing Home Statewide COVID-19 Zoom Meeting, Wednesday, 8/4/21 at 1pm

Mary Mayhew, President and CEO—Florida Hospital Association (FHA)

Current situation:

- We've seen a dramatic increase in COVID hospitalizations over a short period of time. Over 12K hospitalizations today, have surpassed the highest peak previously experienced.
- 20% of COVID hospitalizations are in ICU. Of overall ICU patients, just under 38% have COVID.
- We are seeing the combined pressures of increases in COVID hospitalizations across the state along with significant, high volumes of non-COVID patients in hospitals that we would typically not see this time of year, and critical staffing shortages.
- Hospital are activating surge plans across the state. Some are cancelling elective procedures. Some are converting non-patient space to patient care areas (conference rooms, offices, etc). This did not happen to this level in previous surges.
- Last summer, during the highest peak surge, it took 60 days to go from 3,000 to 10,000 hospitalizations. We have gone from 2,000 to 12,000 hospitalization in the past 30 days.
- Bed availability, which is highly dependent on staffing, is around 15%. ICU is about 12%
- Non COVID respiratory illnesses are very high for this time of year (in both children and adults).
- Admissions continue to increase. As new COVID case numbers start to plateau, we hope hospitalizations will level off as well.
- Regional coordination & collaboration have worked well for us throughout the response and need to continue.
- Some Positives: No PPE challenges currently. And when looking at transfers to LTC, they are less than 3%. Indicates vaccination efforts in those settings have worked.
- Of those hospitalized for COVID – around 90% are unvaccinated. And are much younger than we've seen in the past.
- The Delta variant is much more infectious, and impacting younger populations.
- A change in messaging to younger demographics is needed to understand these risks.
- We are hearing concerns about availability of oxygen in some areas.
- As for hospitals shutting down to transfers – we are watching for that. Did not see it in previous surges.

Toby Philpot, Emergency Response Coordinator—Florida Health Care Association (FHCA)

- Our facilities are seeing workforce challenges as well. There is limited capacity to increase staffing/space and decompress healthcare systems.
- Endeavored to identify nursing centers with excess capacity, and provided that info to FHA.
- Want to help community hospitals as much as we can.

Dr. Scott Rivkees, Surgeon General—Florida Department of Health

- The path forward out of this is vaccination.
- Florida started with the senior-first model, with a focus on LTC facilities. More than 85% of 65+ population is vaccinated. 90% of LTC residents are vaccinated.
- The vaccines are incredibly protective against hospitalization and severe disease.
- However, LTC staff vaccination rates are less than 50%.
- The delta variant is a much more contagious variant of COVID-19, spreading quickly through unvaccinated population.
- Approximately 90% of hospitalized patients are unvaccinated.
- What's different now (vs. last summer)?
 - Infectiousness and seriousness of delta variant
 - Last year, virus infectiousness measure (R0) – 1.3, delta variant R0 is between 5 and 9. So it is much more infectious.
 - CDC data also shows the delta variant causes more serious illness.
- There are 3 FDA EUA vaccines – Pfizer, Moderna, J & J.
 - Know that with delta variant – must have 2 doses of mRNA vaccines (Pfizer & Moderna) to be protected.

- Breakthrough cases (case in a fully vaccinated person)
 - Goal of vaccination is to prevent serious disease, hospitalization and death.
 - Breakthrough cases are way less likely to have serious illness.
- CDC changed guidance re: wearing masks indoors due to a study out of Massachusetts where many vaccinated individuals got COVID (breakthrough cases) after significant exposure to indoor, crowded areas without masking. Viral levels of these cases were high enough to be transmissible. So CDC changed their guidance to recommend all wear masks indoors.
- We are seeing a rapid rise in cases – due to the increase in infectiousness of the virus.
- Even after cases stop rising, there will be a lag before hospitalizations fall due to the time it takes for infection and recovery.
- Monoclonal antibodies – synthetically created antibodies. These are given to individuals within 10 days of onset of symptoms to reduce severity of illness. Getting patients the monoclonal antibodies will help keep people out of hospitals.
 - MQA sent emails out last Friday and Monday re: how to get them.
- DOH Hospital Acquired Infection teams are working outbreaks throughout the state. Notify DOH if you have cases in your facility.
- This is a vaccine-preventable disease. Monitor your staff symptoms, get them tested, and if positive, get them monoclonal antibodies to keep out of hospitals.
- Question in chat re: DOH creating MAB (monoclonal antibody) clinics?
 - Note: Regeneron can be given subcutaneously now.
 - Reach out to hospitals you have been working with. They can help you.

Kim Smoak, Deputy Secretary—Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA)

- Please continue your local and regional collaboration.
- If hospitals are having issues with long term care facilities and vice versa, please reach out to AHCA for assistance.
- Pre-authorizations for oxygen – AHCA will take a look at it.
- The federal public health emergency declaration is still in place. A lot of waivers related to that are also still in place (including the 3 day hospital stay for nursing homes).
- Additional waivers needed? Please reach out to AHCA.
- AHCA recently sent out considerations for health care facilities to establish/reestablishing COVID units.
- Best practices have heard around the state – hospitals reach out directly to NH/LTC to see how can help facilitate decompression. Sharing of clinical knowledge between hospitals and LTC.
- AHCA is making notes on Baker Act issues too (lots of questions in the chat).

Mary Mayhew: AHCA and FHA working to lift prior authorizations related to LTC transfers, to make timely discharges to decompress.

Kim Streit, Sr. Vice President—FHA

- Questions in chat re: PASRR requirements? They are waived on federal side, as emergency declaration is still in place at federal level. AHCA would like level 1 and 2 but if cannot be done, should be done within 30 days.
- Reaching out to Medicare and Medicaid plans, waiving discharges to SNFs, some not waiving to all LTC but we can ask them to reconsider. Plans that have include United, Humana, Care Plus. Aetna, Aetna better health. Waiting on Simply (heard they've done it). We will share with FHCA as soon as get the info.

Kim Broom, Director of Regulatory & Clinical Services—FHCA

- When this Zoom started, I got email of another facility with COVID + beds available. Facilities are working to open them up.

Mary Mayhew, FHA

- Will research to see if regional calls with hospitals and long term care are needed in certain areas of the state with more impacts? Such as Orlando, Jacksonville, other East Coast areas.
- There's no pause button in healthcare. We know you've been on the front lines for 17 months,
- Will work on scheduling another call.
- Captured all questions in the chat and will work on answering them and distribute answers.

COVID-19 Vaccine & Testing Sites

◇ Use the [vaccine finder](#) to find a site near you.

◇ Citrus

⇒ First and second doses of the Moderna vaccine (18+), single-dose J&J Janssen vaccine (18+) and now the Pfizer vaccine (12+ with parental/guardian consent), will be provided at the Lecanto Health Department, located at 3700 W. Sovereign Path, by walk-in only on the following days and times throughout August:

- Mondays and Fridays, August 2-30, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Wednesdays, August 4-25, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Saturday, August 7, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, August 21, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

⇒ Langley Health Services– To schedule an appointment, please call .352-419-5760 EXT: 4818. More information [HERE](#).



◇ Hardee

⇒ **Vaccine-** Florida Department of Health in Hardee County, 115 K.D. Revell Road, Wauchula, FL 33873. Wednesdays, 9 am to 11 am Walk-ins welcome

⇒ Free COVID testing by appointment only. Please call 863-773-4161. 115 K.D. Revell Road, Wauchula, FL 33873. Monday– Thursday 8:30AM- 3:00 PM. Friday 8:30AM-12PM

◇ Hernando

⇒ Vaccine- County Health Department, 7551 Forest Oaks Blvd, Sping Hill, FL 34607. By appointment, 352-540-6800.

⇒ Testing- [COVID-19 Testing Sites in Hernando County](#)

◇ Hillsborough

⇒ Hillsborough County has demobilized its COVID-19 coronavirus operations as more private providers are offering these services. To find pharmacies and other providers that are offering vaccines, go to [Vaccine.gov](#).

- Homebound Residents- Residents who don't have transportation to get a vaccine can contact the Florida Division of Emergency Management to be placed on a list to receive a vaccination at home. Email HomeboundVaccine@em.myflorida.com to receive a survey to help determine qualification.
- On-Site Targeted Vaccination Events- The Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County is coordinating requests from businesses, community organizations, and faith-based organizations interested in an on-site targeted vaccine event. Requests can be made by [filling out this form](#) or calling (813) 307-8000.

⇒ Testing Locations: The following temporary **locations will open on Saturday, Aug. 7** and will be open seven days a week from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. **No appointments needed.**

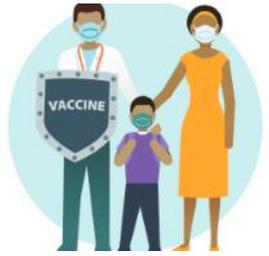
- Palm River Park Community Center, 725 S. 58th St., Tampa, FL 33619
- 1101 E. 139th Ave., Tampa, FL 33613

◇ **Manatee** - Free COVID-19 testing and vaccinations available at Palmetto Bus Station. The Florida Department of Health in Manatee County (DOH-Manatee) and the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) have teamed up to offer a one-stop shop for COVID-19 testing and vaccination. The COVID-19 testing and vaccination site is located at the Palmetto Bus Station, 1802 Eighth Avenue West in Palmetto. The site operates 9 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays. Testing (including both PCR and rapid testing) and vaccinations (Moderna) are free of charge. This is a walk-up operation; no appointment necessary. Visitors are asked to bring proof of Florida residency (driver's license, utility bill with Florida address, etc.). For more information, call (941) 242-6646.

◇ **Pasco**

⇒ COVID-19 vaccination appointments are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the following DOH-Pasco clinic locations:

- 13941 15th, Dade City, FL 33525
- 10841 Little Rd., New Port Richey, FL 34654 then Option 2 for Immunizations. More information [here](#).



⇒ **Testing Sites-** [COVID-19 testing sites](#) for Pasco County

◇ **Pinellas**

⇒ Appointments available at St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Mid-County and Pinellas Park locations. Schedule by calling (727) 824-6931. More information [here](#).

⇒ DeliveRxd Pharmacy is offering in-home vaccinations in Pinellas & Hillsborough for those who can't or prefer to not leave home. No out-of-pocket costs. Call 813-932-6266.

⇒ [COVID-19 Testing Locations in Pinellas County](#)

Get vaccinated.

Wear a mask.



◇ **Polk**

⇒ The Florida Department of Health is providing COVID-19 vaccines to those wanting one from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the following locations:

- Mondays - Lakeland Health Department, 3241 Lakeland Hills Blvd. in Lakeland;
- Wednesdays - Auburndale Testing location, 245 E. Lake Ave. in Auburndale;
- Fridays - Haines City Health Department, 1700 Baker Ave. E. in Haines City.



Stay 6 feet from others, and avoid crowds.



Wash hands often.

⇒ Vaccine is also available at 54 locations in Polk County, through both federal and state programs. Below is a list of federal programs and local partners:

- Lakeland Regional Health - <https://www.mylrh.org/vaccineform> or call (863) 904-1895
- Winter Haven Hospital
- Watson Clinic, Bond Clinic, Gessler Clinic, Ridge Medical Group and Health Medical Ultra
- Retail pharmacies - Walmart, Publix, CVS, Walgreens, Quick & Save, Ariana Pharmacy, Cleveland Heights Pharmacy, Family Discount Pharmacy, Polk Community Pharmacy, Broadway Pharmacy, Noble Pharmacy and Medoz Pharmacy.

⇒ [COVID Testing Sites](#)

◇ **Sumter**

⇒ Sumter County Health Department- APPOINTMENT REQUIRED, Call 352-569-3102 to schedule

⇒ Langley Health Services– To schedule an appointment, please call 352-569-2992. More information [Here](#).

