



FLORIDA RESTAURANT & LODGING ASSOCIATION

June 25, 2020

FRLA Strongly Encourages All Florida Residents and Visitors to Wear Masks in Public

In keeping with the recommendations of the CDC and the Florida Department of Health, while not mandated at the statewide level, we strongly encourage all Florida hospitality businesses to wear masks as they serve their guests. This is a proven and demonstrated way to keep both staff and guests safe. We also encourage staff members to pursue antibody testing in areas of the state where these are readily available. We encourage employers to share with their staff any information they may have regarding testing locations and the cost of antibody testing. This is yet another tool that employers may use to keep both their staff and guests safe.

FRLA is concerned with reports of businesses not following Executive Order requirements and CDC guidelines, including capacity limitations and social distancing. All hospitality businesses must take these requirements and guidelines seriously; there are consequences for those who do not adhere to the existing safety regulations in the State of Florida. Noncompliant parties may be subject to penalties from state or local government, including monetary fines and administrative action against your establishment's license which may result in your closure.

While FRLA has no regulatory authority over eating and drinking establishments, we **STRONGLY ENCOURAGE all hospitality establishments** to adhere to all of the requirements of the state government, your local government, and the recommendations and guidelines issued by the CDC.

These recommendations include the following:

- 1) **Screening employees with the questions established in [Executive Order 20-68](#) and recommended by the [Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation](#).**

- 2) Encouraging all individuals to wear masks in public whether it is required by local government or not.
- 3) Practice social distancing and keep six feet apart from others.
- 4) Continue enhanced disinfecting and sanitation procedures.

We all want to see Florida's hospitality industry revived, renewed, and booming, but we must be smart and safe and seek to do so in a wise and prudent manner. We have a responsibility to keep ourselves, our staff, and our guests as safe as we possibly can. When we safely operate, we will build consumer confidence and encourage economic recovery.

There are not established instructions or requirements if an employee tests positive for COVID-19. To ensure continuity of operations of essential functions, the CDC advises that critical infrastructure workers may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure to COVID-19, **provided they remain asymptomatic and additional precautions are implemented to protect them and the community.** A potential exposure means being a household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of time of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic. **While it is important to follow CDC guidelines, please also know that Executive Order 20-68 requires someone who has been in contact with a COVID-19 positive individual to test negative before being allowed to report to work.** Critical Infrastructure workers who have had an exposure but remain asymptomatic should adhere to the following practices prior to and during their work shift:

If an employee becomes sick while at work, they should be sent home immediately. Surfaces and their workspace should be cleaned and disinfected and anyone in close contact of that employee should be considered exposed. If you have an employee who tests positive, there is no one right answer for what you as a business owner should do.

We recommend that all hospitality employers review the CDC guidelines and adhere to the guidelines as they apply to their specific circumstances. We must do everything we can to protect our staff, our guests, and our communities. For additional information on COVID-19 Executive Orders and operating restrictions, visit the [FRLA COVID-19 page](#). For additional CDC interim guidance on implementing safety practices for critical infrastructure workers who may have been exposed to COVID-19, [click here](#).

UPDATE: On June 24, 2020, the National Restaurant Association Restaurant Law Center released additional [Guidance for Restaurants Responding to a COVID-19 Positive Employee](#) and [Guidance for Restaurant Employers On-Premises Workplace Infection Control Practices Impacting Employees](#).