

## DeSantis amps up threat to beat back Covid-19 fines on restaurants



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Gov. Ron DeSantis went on the offensive Tuesday, declaring he would fight any locality that levies coronavirus-related fines or restrictions on businesses.

**Food for thought:** Speaking from a West Palm Beach steakhouse, DeSantis told reporters that restaurants had been unfairly singled out as places where the coronavirus can easily spread.

“You're damn right I'm hobbling them from doing that,” DeSantis said, referring to local governments that have sought to fine restaurants. “If they want to shut down businesses, I'm going to stand in the way.”

Contract tracing data collected since the pandemic began show the number of Covid-19 infections tied to restaurants is low.

“The vast majority of infections are occurring in people's homes; closing a restaurant will lead people to doing that in private homes anyway,” DeSantis said.

**Why it matters:** DeSantis signed an executive order that banned local government from attaching fines to violations related to [Covid-19 emergency orders back in September](#). But he used Tuesday's news conference to restart his campaign to boost the state's pandemic-stung economy, after spending the previous two weeks offering videotaped updates on his plan to distribute Covid-19 vaccines and largely avoiding the press.

Those efforts got underway Monday, with the first round of 100,000 doses from a vaccine made by Pfizer Inc. arriving at five of the largest hospital systems in the state.

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