

COVID -19 INSIDER REPORT



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It's Tuesday, or as we call it now: day

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Going Viral: Five Things You Need To Know

1. **From Coughin' to Coffin.** Compared to the common flu, COVID-19 is highly contagious and primarily spreads through invisible respiratory droplets in the air expelled when an infected person exhales, coughs or sneezes. A [sneeze can produce up to 40,000 droplets](#); a cough or talking for five minutes can produce about 3,000 droplets. While the virus can be spread from surfaces, it seems that by far [the most common form of spread](#) is from face-to-face exhalation of infected air. For example, in Seattle at a church choir practice 45 of the 60 people present became infected, and two died. If we can limit exposure to infected respiratory droplets, perhaps we can limit the spread of the disease.
2. **"It's Time to Face Facts, America: Masks Work."** So says [an article in Wired](#) that points out the paradox that the WHO claims masks are essential for healthcare workers but somehow not useful for average citizens. There is growing evidence that a program based on the wide public use of masks for face protection can reduce the transmission of the disease and "flatten the curve" of community spread to make the epidemic manageable for hospitals. On March 18, Prague imposed on its 1.3 million citizens a face mask

requirement. Virtually overnight the city went from almost no face mask usage to almost 100% compliance. As a result, the Czech Prime Minister recently stated that transmission of COVID-19 has been reduced by 80% and the curve of COVID-19 cases has been flattened in Prague. Studies have shown that masks offer up to a [five-fold protection](#) against disease transmission as compared to no barrier being used. George Gao, the head of the Chinese equivalent of the CDC, [said in an interview this week](#), **“The big mistake in the U.S. and Europe, in my opinion, is that people aren’t wearing masks.** This virus is transmitted by droplets and close contact. If they are wearing face masks, it can prevent droplets that carry the virus from escaping and infecting others.” The American CDC announced today it is reviewing its policies on wearing masks in public.

3. **In Q2 2020, We Stray Off the Known Economic Map.** Today we end Q1 of 2020. If you think Q1 economic results were bad, save a few happy pills for Q2. The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis [just published on its blog](#) an estimate of economic activity and hiring in Q2, and the conclusions are unlike anything the nation has ever experienced, including in the depths of the Great Depression. The bottom line: **In the next three months, an unemployment rate of 32% and an additional 47 million Americans laid off from work.** By comparison, unemployment during the Great Depression topped out in 1933 at 25% and during the Great Recession at 10%. And, the rapidity of this cataclysmic drop is almost unfathomable. Just two months ago, in February, unemployment

stood at 3.5% and fewer than six million Americans were jobless.

4. **Will Florida Hospitals be Overwhelmed?** New coronavirus cases in Florida are increasing daily and hospitals could run out of beds for those patients, according to data from [Harvard](#). But an analysis from the [University of Washington](#) predicts that the state will face a shortage of intensive care unit hospital beds only, not regular hospital beds. They estimate that Florida's ICU hospital bed shortage will start on April 16 and last until May 16, with the state's shortage of ICU beds reaching a peak of 843 on May 3. Harvard estimates that even in a best-case scenario of 20% of Floridians needing hospitalization over 18 months, hospitals would be close to 100% capacity of total beds, and if 60% need hospitalization over only six months, hospitals could reach 800% capacity. The largest bed deficit is expected to occur in the Tampa-to-Orlando corridor. Governor DeSantis said Monday that his team has been focused on hospital capacity since "Day 1" and has taken measures to increase it. Two field hospitals have been deployed to Miami-Dade and Broward counties and he has issued an executive order suspending elective procedures at hospitals. He said about 30% of Florida's hospital beds are currently available.

5. **The School Was Virtual but Parents' Tears are Real.** This may be the first time parents cried because they couldn't drop off their kids at school. Students saw their seemingly eternal spring break come to an end as they returned to school via distance learning yesterday. It

felt like the first day of the school year with plenty of hiccups along the way. The first half of the day for virtual learning seemed to pass smoothly, until Miami-Dade families began reporting issues around midday, which was around the time that west coast students were logging on to begin their school day. Counties that also faced similar issues regarding logging in and technical outages include Orange, Osceola, Flagler, Volusia and Manatee. Despite these technical problems, Broward County School did report that 160,000 students were successfully able to access the online curriculum via Canvas. The entire country is transitioning to online learning...that's over 56 million K-12 students in America- there are going to be issues, just like on the first day of school except instead of school buses being slow, it's the internet.



As newsfeeds fill with stories about the growing economic impact of COVID-19, we at **The Southern Group** couldn't be more proud to partner with organizations like Central Florida's [TECO](#). Not only did TECO suspend all disconnections for residential and commercial customers in response to the coronavirus crisis, they are connecting customers with bill payment resources and programs. In addition, [TECO is donating \\$1 million](#) to local

charities to benefit those financially impacted by the pandemic.

US CASE COUNT

181,099

3,440 DEATHS

As Reported by Johns Hopkins

FL CASE COUNT

6,338

77 DEATHS

As Reported by FL DOH

FLORIDA HEADLINES

[Associated Press](#): **Florida Governor Doesn't Want Cruise Ship To Dock In State**

[Florida Politics](#): **174 Floridians Could Die Daily At Coronavirus Peak In May, Research Suggests**

[Florida Politics](#): **Jimmy Patronis Orders Workers' Comp For Coronavirus-**

Infected State Employees

Tampa Bay Times: **Is Gov. DeSantis' Executive Order Asking New Yorkers To Quarantine Legal?**

Miami Herald: **Will A Change In South Florida's Weather Forecast This Week Slow Coronavirus?**

Orlando Sentinel: **COVID-19 Scams, Price Gouging Prompt Statewide Warnings, Crackdown**

NBC Miami: **Spring Breakers May Have Taken Coronavirus From South Florida Across US: Data Firm**

THE NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Washington Post: **CDC Considering Recommending General Public Wear Face Coverings in Public**

NPR: **CDC Director on Models for the Months to Come: 'This Virus is Going to be With Us'**

Fox Business: **Dow Heads Toward Worst Quarter Since 1987**

CNN: **The US is Starting to See 'Glimmers' That Social Distancing Could**

Be Slowing the Spread of Coronavirus -- But There's More Work to Do, Officials Say

Politico: **CNN Anchor Chris Cuomo Tests Positive for Coronavirus**

THE INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Gulf News: **German City Introduces Face Masks For Shoppers As COVID-19 Spreads**

Reuters: **France To Ramp Up Domestic Production Of Face Masks, Respirators: Macron**

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

- [Learn If You May Be Eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance](#)
 - [Business Damage Assessment Survey - Communicate Impacts of COVID-19](#)
 - [Application Window Extended for Florida Disaster Grant Fund - Hurricanes Irma & Michael](#)
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QUICK LINKS

Florida Department of Health COVID-19 Daily Reporting [continue](#) →

U.S. Centers for Disease Control COVID -19 Resources [continue](#) →

Preparing Your Business - CDC COVID-19 Guidance [continue](#) →

World Health Organization COVID-19 Resources [continue](#) →

PROTECTING YOURSELF & OTHERS

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#) *(Florida Department of Health)*
- [What Travelers Need to Know](#) *(Florida Department of Health)*
- [Preparing Your Workplace](#) *(U.S. Department of Labor)*
- [Fliers for Display and Instructional Materials](#) *(Florida Department of Health)*

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