



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** Honorable Chairman and  
Members of the Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** Barry A. Burton, County Administrator *BAB*

**SUBJECT:** Approach to County Reopening

**DATE:** April 24, 2020

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On April 1, 2020 the Governor issued Executive Order 20-91, restricting Floridians' movement to essential services and essential activities. Previously, the Pinellas Board of County Commissioners closed public beaches and public beach parking facilities in Resolution No. 20-17, and pools in Resolution No. 20-20. Subsequently, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) adopted Resolution No. 20-23, closing non-essential businesses per the State list. The Governor's order will expire on April 30, 2020 unless extended by subsequent order. The County Commissioners Resolution No. 20-23 expires with the Governor's order.

The purpose of the implemented County measures was not to eradicate the virus because that is not possible. Rather, the measures were implemented to slow the increased number of cases through social distancing so there is less opportunity to spread the virus. To continue to combat the spread of COVID-19 in Pinellas County, it is recommended that restrictions are gradually lifted to ensure the progress that has been made to this point is not diminished. The next phase is not a return to normality, it is learning how to live with the pandemic while mitigating the impact on our community.

This memo outlines options for the Board's consideration. These options represent an analysis of the best available data, municipal and other stakeholder feedback, demand on resources, and public health considerations from our local health agencies.

## **Step 1:**

Would involve reopening of public beaches and public beach parking facilities, reopening of swimming pools, reopening of playgrounds and equipment at childcare facilities but keeping public playgrounds closed.

### **A. Reopen public beaches and public beach parking facilities.**

Consideration was given to criteria such as: limited hours, restricted activities to exercise only, and prohibiting items such as chairs, coolers and blankets. Based on the number of miles of beaches and the ability to implement social distancing practices, the following options are recommended:

- Open the beaches and beach parking with a two-day lead time. Municipalities may need time to allocate staff and resources to ensure social distancing given potential crowding.
- Public beach restrooms may be open with enhanced cleaning and sanitation.
- Require CDC social distancing guidelines on all of the above, including but not limited to; Persons should not congregate in groups, and groups of more than 10 are prohibited; All persons not part of the same family unit must remain at least 6 feet apart; persons in a line must adhere to these requirements.

### **B. Reopen swimming pools located at hotels, motels, lodging establishments, condominiums, commercial business establishments and HOAs.**

- Pools may open but must operate at 50% of stated pool maximum bathing load.
- Provide a two-day lead time. Owners and operators may need time to allocate staff and resources to ensure proper sanitation protocols and social distancing are in place.
- Pool owners and operators will need to take a very active approach in ensuring proper cleaning and regular sanitation of pool areas and equipment using CDC guidelines, including: pool decks, furniture, railings, safety devices and other pool equipment to minimize exposure.
- Require CDC social distancing guidelines on all of the above, including but not limited to; persons should not congregate in groups, and groups of more than 10 are prohibited; all persons not part of the same family unit must remain at least 6 feet apart; persons in a line must adhere to these requirements.

### **C. No changes to public playgrounds (these would remain closed).**

**D. Allow for the use of playgrounds and equipment at Child Care Facilities.**

All play equipment and outdoor playgrounds used by one group of children must be cleaned and sanitized before use by another group of children. All other requirements in the Governor's order should apply.

**Step 2:**

Because the current restrictions on individuals' movement for only essential services or activities was imposed by the Governor, the reopening of businesses can only occur at the state level. The Governor must enter a new order or let his current order expire by April 30, 2020. We anticipate the Governor will enter a new order modifying the current restrictions, but we have no definitive information what the new order will prohibit or permit. The most significant impact of the current State orders are their effect on business closures, including restaurants.

If the State does not provide additional guidance prior to its order expiring, it is recommended that the Board immediately take up a discussion and resolution to address an updated County Safer at Home order. This would involve a review of State actions to determine what measures the County is able to consider under updated Governor orders.

The steps outlined above represent the collective thoughts of our Executive Policy Team, Municipal and Community Partners. I have attached a copy of the following two documents:

- Report: Trending Data of Cases, Testing and Healthcare System for Pinellas County.
- Reopening suggestions from Cities and Chambers

This is the beginning of reopening our County. We hope the Governor provides guidance on his Order before Tuesday. If not, we can meet after that guidance is received and have a more robust discussion on updating our Safer at Home Order.

Thank you for all your support and guidance during this crisis.