



Governor Ron DeSantis and Secretary Jonathan Satter held a press conference in the Old Capitol this afternoon, April 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Governor Ron DeSantis:**

- Testing
  - Testing sites at Pompano and now at the Urban League
    - 200 tests a day, eligibility for anyone who has symptoms, to be deemed eligible, call 954-412-7300
  - Continue to do outreach to make sure we are reaching people who are unable to drive to drive-thru sites
  - Working on expanding telehealth capabilities
- Unemployment
  - Announced yesterday Secretary Satter would take over Unemployment
  - DEO over 121,000 payments made totaling over \$50 million
  - DEO mailed over 23,000 checks of the \$600 federal check from the CARES act this week
  - Have made progress, its not nearly enough
  - The provision in law which says you have to re-certify every two weeks
  - Signed executive order today to suspend the need for people to re-certify their status
    - This will hopefully free up space to move claims through
  - Understand its not a silver bullet, but trying to do what we can to make sure people are getting their compensation checks
  - Staff is working around the clock
- Hospitals
  - Numbers have been stable for Florida statewide
  - 43% of beds available
  - 40% ICU beds available
  - 42% of beds available in Miami
  - Hospitals are seeing the plateau and are confident in meeting the needs
  - Looking at opening up elective surgeries in line with the president's guidance that will be released tonight
- Next steps
  - Will have the taskforce
  - Hoping to mitigate economic impact
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### **Secretary Satter**

- 24 hours ago, Governor called with the ask for me to take this over with the single focus of getting Floridians the help they need through re-employment assistance
- Thank you to the Governor for helping us streamline the process to get Floridians paid

### **Press Questions**

- Number of Claims
  - It is an unprecedented number of claims, this interfaces with federal databases, but my charge to Secretary Satter is to work through it and work 24/7 to get checks out.
- Hurricanes
  - Director Moskowitz is preparing multiple plans. This will be an issue depending on how prevalent the virus is during hurricane season.
- Unemployment
  - When we had 100 claims a day, we had a surplus of staff that allowed us to work through the issues. Hoping that this is not enduring. With my emergency authority, I waived everything I needed to waive I did. The agency didn't waive the re-certification, so my executive order forced their hand.
- Unemployment legislative fix
  - I don't know that it is a legislative fix, it seems like it is more technical. I am not sure what legislating would do to get this going.
- Bridge Loan Program
  - Looking to do more money than the \$50 million as well, also looking at how we can utilize some of the CARES Act program. With PPP running out, it's a major issue. The PPP should have been geared more towards small businesses who couldn't operate due to the restrictions.
- Corrections
  - We're looking into it, we have had releases around the state, but we have to put public safety first.
- Processing Applications
  - We have a backlog of 80,000 applications of those who were waiting for re-certification that the Governor's order will satisfy once we do some technical changes.
- Budget
  - Waiting on it, the concern originally was that hospitals would be financially exhausted, but in all the conversations we are having with hospitals, they seem confident in what they are able to handle. Have to be confident we are going in a good direction. The numbers I am receiving now do not rise to the level that we would have to re-do the budget. With the federal money, hopefully we will be okay. May require me to do a lot of vetoes but hoping not to have a special

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session. May even have to do vetoes of things that I want to support, but hopefully next year we will be recovered, and they can come back.

- Taskforce
  - It will look at all different things including education, large events, protection, testing, etc.
  - Will have a silo looking just at southeast Florida. It may look different for them. Having spoken with some of them, they have challenges, but they are ready to go as well.
  - Somewhat of a consensus on what we need to do
  - President will announce a phased approach of re-opening, it wasn't tied to timelines, but it will be based on how the virus spreads with the phased re-opening.
  - We need to get testing back quicker, that is crucial to re-opening. Included in that is beefing up our state testing capability. Looking at having more testing centers in Phase 2 as it is important from a diagnostic perspective.

Governor will be down in Broward tomorrow discussing some of the new sites.

### **Press Questions Secretary Satter**

- Technology
  - Our system is working with multiple systems across the nation. Used the analogy of a car that is seven years old asked to run ten times faster than it was built to. Do not want to over promise and under-deliver and that is why we are upgrading.
- Off-line
  - It will be off-line from 8 pm to 8 am tonight as we do system upgrades. Short-term pains for long-term gains.
- Paper Applications
  - Because many paper applications were hand written, we have many employees that have been marshaled to type the process in.
- Extra Employees
  - Some employees are able to work different. Maybe they can type in 5-6 an hour and then up to ten. We have a variety of production with some workers able to do 2 hours a day, others able to do 8.
- Process
  - Opening applications using Department of Revenue equipment. State employees worked so hard they emptied the queue. Had to crack the whip on the scanning company to load them up.
- Self-employed
  - Building a separate portal for self-employed and gig workers and will be up in a week. Talking now about how to expedite payments.

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- First waiting week checks
  - Did 25,000 checks last night, tapped out DFS' printing capability today and yesterday. JP Morgan Chase will assist in doing 100,000 checks a day. When we have more information, we can do direct deposit.
- Duplicates
  - I would guess we have a lot of duplicates
- Applications Pending
  - 850,000 in queue to go through the process, plus 80,000 which will be addressed by the Governor's action today.
- Gig Workers
  - DEO guidance will be on the website on the separate application for gig workers. On [www.floridajobs.org](http://www.floridajobs.org) information will be posted.