

Palm Beach County Commission District 4

From the desk of
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Phase 2 reopening update

At today's meeting, the Board of County Commissioners requested restrictions on hours of operation for restaurants be removed effective tomorrow (9/25/20).

They also requested additional business be permitted to open as follows:

- Effective 9/28/20, auditoriums, bingo parlors, comedy clubs, concert houses and playhouses to open at 50% capacity and other guidelines to be issued accordingly.

Also, adult entertainment/strip clubs with restaurant licensing may reopen with certain restrictions.

- Effective 10/5/20, bars and hookah, cigar and other smoking bars at 50% capacity with other guidelines to be issued accordingly.

(The above scheduled openings are subject to change if metrics show an increase in infections.)

Nightclub openings will require authorization from Governor DeSantis.

For more information on current openings and more, click [here](#).

Restart Business Grants Program scheduled to resume

The county's CARES Restart Business Grants Program will resume tomorrow, September 25th at 8 a.m. The Board recently approved an additional \$23 million for individual grants up to \$25,000 to help “restart” Palm Beach County businesses forced to close by State or County Executive Order.

Interested businesses are encouraged to prepare for the Restart Business Grant Program Application as they will be processed on a first come, first eligible basis. **The online application is expected to launch on Friday, September 25, 2020 at 8 a.m., and will be accessible through the Palm Beach County website for a two-week period closing on Friday, October 9, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.**

The application process will be completed entirely on-line through the county's portal, and requires general information about the applicant business; applicant certifications, affirmations and acknowledgements; and applicant-uploaded documents including tax returns, payroll reports and an active Palm Beach County Business Receipt or valid exemption from the Palm Beach County Tax Collector. Sole Proprietors and General Partnerships not required to register with the FL Department of State Division of Corporations will be exempt from the Sunbiz requirement. Businesses that previously received funding through this program are not eligible to apply.

For additional information, please visit the county's Department of Housing & Economic Sustainability website.

Local job market shows signs of Improvement

CareerSource Palm Beach County recently reported the county's unemployment rate dipped to 8 percent in August, which is a 3% drop from July.

Other measures of improvement :

- There are 4,274 job openings in Palm Beach County compared to 3,563 a month ago.
- Total nonagricultural employment in Palm Beach County increased to 580,200 in August from 570,800 in July.
- Labor force in the county increased to 698,876 in August from 689,319 in July. This measure indicates that there are more people working and looking for work compared to last month.

- The county's unemployment rate continued to stay below other major markets including Miami-Dade County, Broward County and the Greater Orlando area. These areas with large numbers of theme parks, cruise ships and international flight traffic continue to be the hardest hit.
- New state jobless assistance claims continue to decline.

CareerSource suggested that recovery is gaining some traction due to Phase 2 reopenings and an uptick in hiring for the tourist season.

Click [here](#) for more information on job listings and services provided by CareerSource.

CareerSource Palm Beach County is a nonprofit organization chartered by the state to lead workforce development in Palm Beach County.

Addressing the Digital Divide

The county is playing an integral role in eliminating the digital divide in our community by providing internet access to children and families identified by the county's school district.

As the Chair of the Palm Beach County Broadband Committee, I am pleased to report the county's \$10 million in CARES funding is making a difference.

Some of the work being handled by the county includes installation of radios on poles, hardened traffic signal mast arms and infrastructure for fiber connections.

The school district is responsible for funding, purchasing, and deploying Wi-Fi extenders, which will be in students' home to ensure quality access to the signal the county is providing.

With over 80,000 laptops and tablets deployed to students countywide, and plans to distribute 50,000 to 80,000 more, this collaboration was critical.

In addition to the school district, this effort also included numerous public and private agencies and county departments including ISS, Parks and Recreation and the Traffic Division.

Kudos to everyone for working expediently in addressing this critical need, especially in these challenging times.

FPL to offer direct relief to customers

Residential and small business FPL customers may be eligible for a one-time bill credit based on the status of their account and how long the account has been overdue.

FPL is also continuing to offer payment extensions, waive late, reconnection and collection fees, and help connect customers with financial assistance.

To apply or request more information, please call **800-226-3545**.

Youth Services in-person/virtual mental health services

Palm Beach County Youth Services Department has resumed in-person mental health services following CDC guidelines. Telehealth services will continue to be offered based on client preference.

Office hours are Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. with locations in West Palm Beach, Palm Beach Gardens, Delray Beach and Belle Glade. Mental health services are offered in person or virtually via Zoom Video and are available in English, Spanish, French and Creole. Please call 561-625-2540 to schedule an intake appointment.

For a full list of mental health services provided by Palm Beach County Youth Services, please click [here](#).

Food assistance: pre-paid debit cards

The county is providing pre-paid debit cards to approved residents to purchase food. The one-time benefit allowance is based on household size and maximum amounts are listed below. Only one card will be given out per household, and all expenditures must be made by December 30, 2020.

- 1-2 Household members: \$400
- 3-4 Household members: \$800
- 5 or more Household members: \$1,000

County residents may apply for food assistance [here](#) and a list of frequently asked questions can be found [here](#).

For more information, contact the Community Services Department at (561) 355-4792.

Rail Safety Week in South Florida



On September 23, 2020, Vice Mayor Weinroth presented former County Commissioner and current Tri Rail Executive Director, Steven Abrams and Brightline Chief of Staff Ali Soule, with proclamations declaring September

21-27, 2020 as Rail Safety Week in South Florida. The event took place at the Boca Raton Tri Rail Station with Councilman Andy Thomson also in attendance.

In 2019, 38 people perished from rail trespassing incidents on the tracks and 24 died from grade crossing accidents in the state of Florida.

Tri-Rail and Brightline are dedicated to saving lives by actively educating the public about train safety and have made significant strides to address this problem with enhanced signage and improved safety systems at crossings.