

SPEAKING POINTS

Chairman Anthony O. Viegbesie
Press Conference, Post-Emergency Special Meeting
Friday, March 27, 2020
11 a.m.
Gadsden County Courthouse
10 East Jefferson Street, Quincy, FL 32351

- Good morning.
- My name is Dr. Anthony Viegbesie, many of you know me as “Dr. V”. I am the Chairman of the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners.
- My colleagues and I have just completed an Emergency Special Meeting this morning and took action to pass Board Resolution Number 2020-14,
- ... an extension of Resolution Number 2020-012, which includes our most recent updates from the resolution that we first adopted on Friday, March 13, 2020, declaring a local State of Emergency in Gadsden County, in accordance with the Governor’s Executive Order for Florida declaring for COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019).
- The Board of County Commissioners is empowered to protect the health and safety of Gadsden County and all individuals and families within the County.
- We take this responsibility very seriously.

- What we know is that COVID-19 is spread amongst the population by various means of exposure, including the propensity to spread person to person.
- Despite the measures taken in prior resolutions that followed federal and state guidance limiting gatherings, as well as existing actions taken by the federal, state, and other municipal governments, new cases of COVID-19 continue to increase in surrounding counties and municipalities, demonstrating that more prevention, community action, and cooperation to socially separate and maintain distance is necessary in within the County.
- The threat of COVID-19 continues to pose a threat to public health that requires dynamic emergency response, including the maintenance of existing orders, as well as the imposition of additional directives and orders, as conditions require.
- Due to the rapid escalation of this situation, and the requirement for rapid action, we believe it has become necessary that residents and visitors in Gadsden County do more to avoid close social interaction, including, when possible, remaining in their respective homes and residences to slow the spread of COVID-19 and address the unprecedented threat to the public health and welfare posed by this virus.
- In following the directives and guidance for social distancing mitigation measures from federal and state officials – and – in order to fully and effectively respond to the developing threats posed by the novel coronavirus and its associated disease (COVID-19), we have included the following updates in the action taken this morning resolution:

- A “Stay at Home” executive order, providing the following requirements and restrictions:
- **Prohibiting** all public and private gatherings of any number of people occurring outside a single household or living unit.
- And, using the current guidance from the CDC, any gathering of more than ten people is prohibited.
- All places of public assembly are closed to the public, whether indoors or outdoors, including but not limited to, locations with pools, museums, pool halls, internet cafes, country clubs, social clubs and fraternal organizations.
- Individuals in Gadsden County are ordered to comply with the CDC guidelines by maintaining a distance of 6 feet from other persons and by not gathering in groups of more than ten (10) individuals.
- And, individuals are requested to limit non-essential activity and/or transportation to:
 - Primary or emergency care or direct care support for a family member, relative, friend, or their pet;
 - Healthcare and medical services;
 - Groceries;
 - Meal take-outs from local food establishments;
 - Essential work duties that cannot be performed from home;
 - Banks and related financial institutions;

- Laundry services, laundromats;
- Essential and necessary home repairs & maintenance;
- Veterinarians and pet boarding facilities;
- Gas stations, auto-supply and auto-repair facilities;
- Religious organizations are allowed to hold services, provided they conform to CDC guidance, practice proper social distancing and that the attendance at such services does not exceed ten (10) individuals.
- Also, funerals services shall be permitted to take place, provided that such services conform CDC guidance, adhere to social distancing requirements and that attendance at such services does not exceed ten (10) individuals.
- Additionally, in order to protect the public health, safety and welfare, and mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus, a **curfew** is hereby established in all of Gadsden County, Florida, from the hours of **9 p.m.** and **6 a.m.**, commencing **today, Friday, March 27, 2020 at 9 p.m.**
- The curfew applies to all pedestrian and vehicular movement, standing and parking, except for: individuals participating in, going to, or returning from employment, including, but not limited to, federal, state, and local government employees, judicial personnel, those providing hospital and other health care services, first responder and correctional personnel, child protection and child welfare personnel, housing and shelter personnel, postal and shipping services personnel, and those performing utility and telecommunications repairs.

- Medical patients in need of transport, and others seeking medical care, are also excluded from the curfew.
- The curfew shall not prohibit a person from walking a pet/animal in the vicinity of their residence or in such place where the animal is maintained.
- Violations of this curfew shall be punished in accordance with State law and Section 1-8 of the Gadsden County Code of Ordinances.
- Businesses that sell or offer gasoline, diesel or other fuels shall be exempted from the curfew. Those businesses shall not allow more than ten (10) individuals to congregate on their premises.
- Lastly, the Florida Health Department in Gadsden County has provided detail that testing is currently available through the resident's primary care physician or the Health Department **for those with symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath)**. Residents are advised to call before visiting).
- With that, I would like to invite Gadsden County Sheriff Morris A. Young to speak.