



“We’ve got your back if you’re somebody’s who’s a waitress, or a cook, or you’re a family-owned business — you’re an important part of our state.”

— Gov. Ron DeSantis, December 15, 2020, announcing that Florida restaurants could remain fully open despite a surge in coronavirus cases

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Florida

Pop. (2020): 21,587,015

Median household income (2020): \$56,362

Credit Rating: AAA/Stable

Pop. growth 2020–2025: 1.33%

Median age (2020): 43

Right-to-work state: Yes

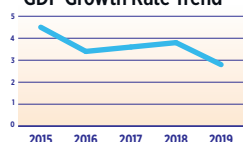
Legislative Update

- The Florida Office of Broadband was established within Florida’s Department of Economic Opportunity under a new law to develop, market and promote broadband services throughout the state. The law allocates \$5 million to be used for projects that assist in the development of broadband infrastructure within or adjacent to a multi-use corridor.
- Revisions to Florida’s Rural Development Grants Program include a provision allowing regional economic development organizations to use grant funds to build their professional capacity and provide technical assistance. Eligible uses of funds were expanded to include upgrades or development of public tourism infrastructure and improvements to broadband in underserved rural communities.
- The 2020 legislative session established two multi-day tax holidays. The Florida Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday is a seven-day holiday during which critical supplies for hurricane preparedness such as water, medicine, flashlights, batteries and generators are tax-free. A three-day Back to School holiday exempts certain school supplies, clothing and footwear and personal computers and computer-related accessories from the state sales tax.
- Local governments now are required to fully account for all costs associated with public building construction projects in deciding whether it is in the public’s best interest to undertake such projects using the government’s own services. The new law requires local governments to list all other governmental entities that may have additional permits or fees generated by the project when issuing a bidding document.

GDP

4th

GDP Growth Rate Trend



2019 GDP
(in millions of current US\$)
\$1,106,500



4th
Business Tax Climate Rank Change 2020–2021: 0



9th
Higher Ed. R&D Expenditure in \$000s: 2,475,305



17th
Number of NCRCs: 115,416 | Percent Improvement 2019–2020: 0.31%



30th
2020 Workers’ Comp Index Rate: 1.81



26th
Industrial power cost per kWh: \$7.11



14th
Total Revenue as Share of Total Expenses, FY 2004–2019: 104.7%

Pandemic Response & Recovery



Tallahassee, Florida
Photo: Getty Images

Florida received about \$8.33 billion from the CARES Act for government assistance. Of the \$3.75 billion earmarked for counties and cities, more than \$2.47 billion was directed directly from the federal government to 12 urban counties with populations greater than 500,000 people. In mid-November, the Orlando Sentinel reported that many smaller counties were awaiting funds ostensibly to be disbursed at Tallahassee’s discretion. Seminole County, the Sentinel reported, was waiting for more than half of a promised \$82 million payment. On Dec. 11, Gov. DeSantis and First Lady Casey DeSantis announced \$23 million in CARES Act funding to bolster Florida’s mental health services system as well as an additional funding initiative to support first responders who have been on the front lines of the COVID-19 emergency. Of the \$23 million in funding, \$18 million will be provided for Community Based Services by expanding the capacity of the Florida Assertive Community Teams (FACT), Community Action Teams (CAT) and the Family Intensive Treatment Teams (FIT) to serve an additional 300 adults and 375 youth with severe mental illness needing crisis intervention. Despite the pandemic, NASA’s Mars 2020 mission blasted off from Cape Canaveral July 30. The Atlas V-541 rocket, one of the largest rockets available for interplanetary flight, soared from the Cape’s Launch Complex 41. NASA’s Perseverance Rover is to land on Mars Feb. 18 to explore the Jezero Crater just north of the Martian equator. Jezero once contained a lake, which scientists see as an ideal place to spot evidence of ancient microbial life.

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