

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**Celeste Philip, MD, MPH**  
State Surgeon General

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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August 18, 2016

Dear Health Care Provider:

On August 3, 2016 Governor Rick Scott directed the Florida Department of Health (DOH) to make Zika virus testing available to pregnant women at county health departments statewide at no cost. DOH encourages all providers to continue to follow DOH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance on appropriate risk-based Zika testing. Understandably, some patients and providers will continue to have concerns. Providers should use their clinical judgement, informed by DOH and CDC guidance, to obtain Zika testing for their pregnant patients through commercial laboratories.

**All pregnant women should be assessed for possible Zika virus exposure during each prenatal care visit through determining travel history, where the woman lives/works, and sexual history (e.g., contact with someone who had Zika exposure or infection).**

Asymptomatic pregnant women with NO travel history may be referred to their healthcare provider for testing via a commercial laboratory. Testing through a commercial laboratory does not require approval through the Florida Department of Health in Seminole County (DOH-Seminole). If uninsured, underinsured, or otherwise cannot obtain testing through a commercial lab, they may be tested by DOH-Seminole at no cost. Pregnant women seeking testing through DOH-Seminole should be referred to the DOH-Seminole Epidemiology Program at 407-665-3266 for consultation and an appointment.

Symptomatic patients and asymptomatic pregnant women with travel history to a Zika affected area should be evaluated by their healthcare provider. **All such patients in need of Zika virus testing must receive authorization from the DOH-Seminole Epidemiology Program prior to specimen collection and shipment.** Patients approved for testing will be referred to their physician's affiliated hospital outpatient lab for specimen collection (physician script for testing must be presented to the lab at the time of testing to avoid a charge).

**Please continue to notify DOH-Seminole of any suspected cases of Zika virus infection, especially if you suspect a case of local transmission. This is critical to initiating mosquito control efforts and preventing further spread of disease.**

Thank you for your partnership and support to promote a healthy Seminole County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donna Walsh", is written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

Donna Walsh, MPA, BSN, RN  
Interim Health Officer  
Florida Department of Health in Seminole County