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Heard On Sundial: Reopening Florida, The State's Unemployment Crisis, And Poems For Isolation

On this Monday, April 27, episode of Sundial:



When Should Florida Reopen?

Florida is experiencing a bit of an identity crisis.

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From Jacksonville to Melbourne, there have been images of beachgoers enjoying the sunshine. In the northern part of the state, some businesses have begun cross-border work in Georgia, which started reopening over the weekend.

Meanwhile, in Palm Beach, Miami-Dade and Broward counties — where approximately 60 percent of coronavirus cases exist — all beaches remain closed.



"I think we have to take a different approach, a little bit of a slower approach in some things but I think it is good we are talking about this," says Republican State Senator Manny Diaz Jr. on Sundial.

Sen. Diaz, who's part of the Reopen Florida Task Force joined Sundial along with Palm Beach County Mayor Dave Kerner to talk about next steps during the coronavirus pandemic.

Understanding the unemployment crisis in the Sunshine State.

Florida's unemployment benefits website reopened this morning after being shut down due to several crashes and design problems.

Thousands of Floridians are still waiting for their unemployment benefits. For the past decade, the state has made a number of changes to the system including the number of weeks individuals can receive benefits, who qualifies for them and how much is received.

"A lot of people are relying on donations from labor unions, on food banks, free food distributions just to be able to eat," says Patricia Mazzei.

She talked to Luis Hernandez on Sundial and explained the history of unemployment in Florida and how people are navigating the system amid a pandemic.

Poem for isolation.

This pandemic has led to more free time. What creative spark has this ignited within YOU?

For Cuban American poet Richard Blanco it's given him time to reflect.

"Poetry in times like this offers us a different way to look at something," says Blanco.

April is National Poetry month and Blanco joined Sundial to talk about his push to shift the celebrations online. Tonight at 6 p.m. he's hosting an event called Poems for Isolation along with the Miami Book Fair. [Find more information here.](#)