

Miami DDA launches new 'Masks On, Miami' campaign

Amid an alarming spike in coronavirus cases across Florida and in Miami-Dade County, the Miami Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is stepping up with a simple message to residents and visitors: "Masks On, Miami."

The agency has launched a campaign aimed at encouraging individuals to follow CDC guidelines and City of Miami and Miami-Dade County mandates of wearing masks in public to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

The campaign launch coincided with rapid growth in the number of COVID-19 cases among Florida residents ages 18-35. Statewide, the number of infections within this group has risen 400 percent over the past two months. According to the Miami DDA's 2018 Demographics Report, the 18-35 age group represented more than 35 percent of Greater Downtown Miami's population in 2018. All told, approximately 100,000 residents live in Miami's urban core and nearly six million people visit annually.

Using a combination of fresh social media and traditional tactics, the campaign will be comprised of the following initiatives:

Help Granted: A grant program for local small business owners who have been financially burdened by the pandemic, the Small Business Reopening Microgrant will offer businesses up to \$1,250 in reimbursements for purchases made or new expenses incurred associated with a safe reopening. Examples of eligible expenses include rent or mortgage payments, utility bills, personal protection equipment (PPE), and cleaning and disinfectant supplies.

Why Do You Wear a Mask: In line with the visuals, branded graphics that highlight various relatable reasons as to why one wears a mask will be designed and promoted throughout the urban core. For in-



"Masks On, Miami" began with a mask distribution event.

stance, one graphic may read "Reason 243 Why I Wear A Mask: So I Can Hug My Abuela."

Ambassador Team with the Assist: To help with further distribution of masks across the district, the Miami DDA also has enlisted the help of its Downtown Ambassadors. The ambassador team members have been supplied with reusable washable cloth masks and hand sanitizers to hand out to businesses and individuals walking in downtown Miami while the county and city-wide orders remain in effect.

Talk About Influential: Launching soon, the DDA has teamed with local influencers to partner on a video or series of videos that stress the importance of wearing a mask. The minute long TikTok style videos will be used as compelling and educational tools for the public and shared on the DDA's TikTok account.

"A healthy community leads to a healthy economy, and we cannot get our businesses back on track until all Downtown residents and visitors are taking COVID-19 seriously," said Miami Downtown Develop-

ment Authority chair and City of Miami District 4 Commissioner Manolo Reyes. "It is imperative we keep our residents and workforce healthy while encouraging businesses to operate in a safe manner. Our hope is that these tactics will help flatten the curve of transmission, leading to a gradual decline in cases and, longer-term, a sustain-

able economic recovery." "Masks On, Miami" kicked off with a mask distribution event led by the Miami DDA chair Reyes. The Miami DDA designed its own custom mask and ordered thousands to hand out to pedestrians, families and businesses throughout the urban core. The Department of Health donated 30,000 additional masks to be distributed throughout the district.

Individuals who are found to be non-compliant with the city-wide mandate can face a fine of \$50 for a first offense, \$150 for a second offense, and \$500 for a third offense. To facilitate compliance, the Miami DDA wants to ensure everyone who needs a mask has access to one.

Beyond launching the "Masks On, Miami" program, the Miami DDA has been hard at work keeping Downtown Miami's streets clean and healthy, working to help combat the spread of the coronavirus. The agency has fast-tracked the expansion of its popular Pit Stop public restroom program, and created a "Go Local, Go Direct" campaign that supports neighborhood restaurants and incentivizes consumers to stay home by ordering delivery direct from participating businesses.