

Mission:

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

**Rick Scott**

Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS

State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN DUVAL COUNTY
ADDRESSES COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS**

JACKSONVILLE – The Florida Department of Health in Duval County recognizes the value in measuring health outcomes and today acknowledged the sixth annual County Health Rankings & Roadmaps tool released by the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This study highlights the many community factors that influence health and uses established data, much of which is available from the department at www.floridacharts.com.

“Working with community partners we have seen some progress in Duval County’s overall health outcomes,” said Director of the Florida Department of Health in Duval Dr. Kelli Wells. “While we have made some strides over the past two years in the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings indicator, it is important that we not rely on a single gauge to provide insight on the health status of our community. We are continually engaged in the assessment process, in collaboration with the community, to identify and address Duval County’s most pressing public health concerns.”

These rankings are a snapshot of the health of counties across the country and they emphasize that health is not a singular effort but a combined work in progress involving all community partners. The department works in collaboration with local government, non-profit organizations, health care facilities, business groups, schools, faith-based organizations and many other stakeholders to improve the health of all people in Duval County. These rankings use data related to physical environments, social and economic factors, health behaviors and clinical care.

In Duval County, the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is designed to address specific opportunities for improved health that have been identified by the community. The department has partnered with many stakeholders to implement the CHIP and follows up regularly to track progress. An important part of the CHIP progress is the consideration of health in every policy. Recently the Jacksonville City Council passed an ordinance that now includes the County Health Department director as an ex-officio member of the Recreation, Community Development, Public Health and Safety Committee. The new law allows DOH-Duval direct engagement and assessment of policies and how they might impact the health of the community as they are being considered by the council.

“We have already seen the benefits of the council’s enhanced engagement with the health department,” said former City Council President Bill Gulliford. “Jacksonville is fortunate that our public health agency leadership is willing to examine policy at this level. This can only lead to better health outcomes through an improved understanding of public health by the council, while improving the health of our community.”

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Florida Department of Health in Duval County

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