

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA IN AND FOR LEON COUNTY

ORLANDO SENTINEL  
COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY, LLC,

Plaintiff,

Case No.: 2021 CA 000501

v.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,

**IMMEDIATE HEARING  
REQUESTED PURSUANT TO  
SECTION 119.11(1), Fla. Stat.**

Defendant.  
\_\_\_\_\_ /

**COMPLAINT TO ENFORCE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT**

Plaintiff, Orlando Sentinel Communications Company, LLC, publisher of the *Orlando Sentinel* (“Plaintiff” or “the Sentinel”), brings this action against Defendant the Florida Department of Health (“Defendant” or “FDOH”) to enforce Florida’s Public Records Act and states as follows:

**Introduction**

1. According to the Center of Disease Control (“CDC”), as of March 17, 2021, coronavirus (or “COVID-19”) infections have resulted in the deaths of more than 534,099 Americans. While vaccination efforts have elicited hope in many Americans, the combination of rising deaths and COVID-19 variants cast doubt on the efficacy of vaccines and current therapies.

2. As variant cases in Florida rise, the Sentinel has pushed for access to vital information about the strains’ presence and impact in Florida. To shed light on the ever-changing conditions in Florida, the Sentinel requested information which would reveal each of the strains’

spread, prevalence and fatality throughout each county in the State. Now, fifty-seven days after the request was made, Defendant has yet to release these critical records.

3. There is a strong, immediate need in the State to understand how the virus continues to spread and affect Floridians. Access to this information will provide critical insight into the present risks posed by the number of variants so that Floridians can make informed decisions about their lives. The purpose of this action, therefore, is to obtain critical records that will permit the public to have knowledge of and scrutinize the Defendant's response to the spread of the virus. In other words, to realize the central goal of open government laws.

4. In this Complaint, the Sentinel seeks an order compelling the Defendant to provide the requested public records and award the Sentinel's attorneys' fees and costs. Additionally, the Sentinel requests that this matter be expedited for hearing pursuant to Section 119.11(1) of the Public Records Act.

#### **Jurisdiction and Venue**

5. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to Article V, Section 5(b) of the Florida Constitution and Section 119.11, Florida Statutes.

6. Venue is proper in Leon County because the underlying records were generated and are maintained in Leon County, and the cause of action accrued in Leon County.

7. All conditions precedent to this Complaint have occurred or have been excused or waived.

8. Pursuant to Section 284.30, Florida Statutes, a copy of this Complaint, which includes a request for attorneys' fees, is being served on the Department of Financial Services.

### **The Parties**

9. Plaintiff publishes the *Orlando Sentinel*, a daily newspaper of general circulation in Florida. Reporters from the *Orlando Sentinel* routinely rely on public records as principal sources for newsgathering, including records from Defendants.

10. Plaintiff is a “person,” as the term is used in Section 119.07(1)(a), Florida Statutes.

11. FDOH is an “agency” as defined by Section 119.011(2) of the Florida Statutes and part of the executive branch subject to Article I, Section 24 of the Florida Constitution and Chapter 119.

12. FDOH has a duty to permit the inspection and copying of any public records in its custody by any person desiring to do so, at a reasonable time, under reasonable conditions, and for reasonable costs. *See* Art. I, § 24, Fla. Const.; § 119.07, Fla. Stat.

### **Factual Background**

13. In late 2019, an outbreak of SARS-Cov-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, emerged in China, and quickly began to spread throughout the world. As a result of the virus’ rapid spread, on March 9, 2020, Governor DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-52, declaring a public health emergency. More than a year later, Florida remains under a state of emergency. *See* Executive Order 21-45.

14. As Florida battles with SARS-Cov-2, it must also handle its varying mutations. Viruses, like SARS-Cov-2, are constantly changing. Genetic mutations can lead to the emergence of new variants that affect the virus’ ability to spread or cause disease.

15. Last fall, the CDC began to closely monitor several SARS-Cov-2 variants of concern, *i.e.*, variants for which there is evidence of increase in transmissibility and severe disease along with significant reduction in neutralization by antibodies, and efficacy of

treatments or vaccines.<sup>1</sup> Currently, there are three variants of concern in the United States—the B.1.1.7, B.1.351, and P.1 variants.<sup>2</sup> Although scientists are working to understand how the COVID-19 disease caused by these variants differs and whether they affect the efficacy of vaccines, all three variants appear to spread the virus more easily and quickly, leading to more COVID-19 cases.<sup>3</sup>

16. The first variant, known as B.1.1.7, originated in the United Kingdom last fall. The variant contains several mutations which increases transmissibility and poses an increased risk of death. This variant was first reported in the United States at the end of December 2020.<sup>4</sup> The second variant, B.1.351, originated in South Africa and shares some mutations with the UK variant, including increased transmission rates. Cases attributed to the South Africa variant were first reported in the United States at the end of January 2021.<sup>5</sup> The last variant, P.1, emerged in Brazil and was first detected in the United States at the end of January 2021.<sup>6</sup> This variant has seventeen unique mutations, suggesting a reduced ability to be recognized by antibodies.

---

<sup>1</sup> See CDC.gov, *SARS-COV-2 Variants*, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/variant-surveillance/variant-info.html#Concern>

<sup>2</sup> See CDC.gov, *About Variants of the Virus that Causes COVID-19*, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/variant.html>

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> See note 1, *supra*.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

17. As of March 16, 2021, Florida leads the country with the most COVID-19 variant cases in the nation.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Florida has reported 738 cases of the UK variant, 2 cases of the South Africa variant, and 13 cases of the Brazil variant statewide.<sup>8</sup> No other state comes close.

18. As of March 17, 2021, Florida has recorded nearly two million COVID-19 cases.<sup>9</sup> As variants bring potential for greater infection risks, records revealing information about their impact, prevalence and fatality throughout the State are of obvious public importance.

### **Plaintiff's Public Records Request**

19. Recognizing that the information concerning these three variants is instrumental to the public's understanding of the virus' continued impact in the State, the Sentinel began to request this information from FDOH.

20. On January 7, 2021, the Sentinel emailed FDOH seeking identification of the counties which had reported COVID-19 variants and the total number of cases reported. *See* Exhibit A at pp. 2-3. That email was acknowledged but no substantive response was provided. *Id.* Despite following up on its inquiry several times, no response was received. *Id.* at pp. 1-3.

21. On January 18, the Sentinel sent a follow up email to the State's Joint Information Center on COVID-19, which includes FDOH, again requesting the number of COVID-19 variant cases in Florida by county and type. *Id.* at p. 1. No response was received. *Id.*

22. Pursuant to Article I, Section 24 of the Florida Constitution and Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, on January 20, 2021, the Sentinel made a public records request for records

---

<sup>7</sup> *See* CDC.gov, *US COVID-19 Cases Caused by Variants*, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/variant-cases.html>

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> *See* Florida Division of Emergency Management's COVID-19: Summary of Cases available at [https://www.floridadisaster.org/globalassets/covid19/dailies/2021mar/state\\_reports\\_20210317.pdf](https://www.floridadisaster.org/globalassets/covid19/dailies/2021mar/state_reports_20210317.pdf)

identifying the number, type, dates, and deaths of COVID-19 variant cases by county. *See* Composite Exhibit B at p. 2. The Sentinel expressly excluded any personally identifiable health information from its request. *Id.* The next day FDOH acknowledged the request and assigned it the following tracking number: P066296-012121.<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

23. Although the Sentinel inquired on the status of its request, no response was received despite FDOH providing the same information to other media organizations during this time.<sup>11</sup> The requested information—at least on a statewide level—is also provided to the federal government on a routine basis.

24. On February 19 and February 22, the undersigned contacted FDOH concerning the status of the request. *Id.* at p. 1. No response was received to either inquiry. *Id.* Later that day, the undersigned followed up on the request, this time contacting FDOH’s General Counsel, Louise St. Laurent. *Id.* at pp. 13-14.

25. On February 23, the undersigned again followed up on the request, and Ms. St. Laurent indicated she had been working with FDOH’s Communications Director, Jason Mahon, to determine the status of the records. *Id.* at pp. 11-12.

---

<sup>10</sup> FDOH’s Public Records Center provides a mechanism for tracking of public records requests. The tracking system is split into three self-explanatory categories: “assigned,” “processing” and “fulfilled.”

<sup>11</sup> *See* Ben Cornack, *More-contagious COVID variant concentrated in South Florida but widespread, data shows*, The Miami-Herald, Jan. 27, 2021, available at <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/coronavirus/article248799490.html> (discussing breakdown of variant cases data provided by FDOH for numerous South Florida counties); *and* David Fleshler, *South Florida shows highest counts in state of highly contagious UK COVID variant*, South Florida Sun-Sentinel, Feb. 3, 2021, available at <https://www.sun-sentinel.com/coronavirus/fl-nc-covid-south-florida-uk-variant-20210204-sgz32ycavjapfnjhoif75g7itm-story.html> (same).

26. Believing Mr. Mahon was now processing the request, on February 25, the undersigned requested an update. *Id.* at pp. 10-11. Ms. St. Laurent indicated she was working on obtaining an update from Mr. Mahon, but never provided a substantive response. *Id.* at p. 9.

27. Since then, the undersigned has repeatedly tried, but failed, to obtain any information on the status of the request. *Id.* at pp. 4-9. Despite these repeated efforts, FDOH has not responded to the Sentinel’s inquiries about the pending request or provided the requested information. *Id.*

28. Notably, fifty-seven days after the request was made, FDOH’s Public Records Center continues to reflect the request as simply “assigned.” *See* Composite Exhibit C.

29. An enormous amount of time and effort has been invested in obtaining these vital public records providing information about the prevalence of COVID-19 variants in each of Florida’s counties. Still, Defendant has released no records. The public cannot continue to wait for the crucial information contained in these records and timely access is critical going forward.

**Count I—Unlawful Withholding of Public Records**

30. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates the allegations of Paragraphs 1 through 29 of the Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

31. The constitutional right of access to public records applies to “any public body, officer, or employee of the state, or persons acting on their behalf . . .” Art. I, § 24, Fla. Const.; *see also* § 119.011(2), Fla. Stat.

32. FDOH is an “agency” under Section 119.011(2), Florida Statutes, and has a legal obligation to provide access to any non-exempt public records upon request.

33. The requested reports are public records as defined in Section 119.011(12), Florida Statutes, and as interpreted by Florida courts, and are encompassed within Article I, Section 24 of the Florida Constitution.

34. No public records law exemption exists that would prevent the inspection or copying of data requested by Plaintiff.

35. FDOH's delay in providing the requested records is unreasonable, unjustified and amounts to an unlawful refusal to provide the records.

36. FDOH has failed and refused to provide the requested records.

37. FDOH's failure to supply Plaintiff with the requested records violates the Public Records Act and Article I, Section 24(a) of the Florida Constitution and is unlawful.

### **Expedited Hearing**

38. Section 119.11(1) of the Public Records Act provides that courts must set immediate hearings in actions to enforce the Act's provisions and give such cases priority over other pending cases. *See Salvador v. Fennelly*, 593 So. 2d 1091, 1094 (Fla. 4th DCA 1992) (recognizing the importance of the statutory provision for immediate hearings in public records cases because "time can be an important element in the right of access to public records.").

39. As the Florida Supreme Court has also recognized: "News delayed is news denied." *State ex. Rel. Miami Herald Publ'g Co. v. McIntosh*, 340 So. 2d 904, 910 (Fla. 1976). Therefore, Plaintiff requests that the Court set an immediate hearing and prioritize this suit over other pending cases.

### **Attorneys' Fees**

40. Section 119.12 of the Public Records Act provides:

(1) If a civil action is filed against an agency to enforce the provisions of this chapter, the court shall assess and award the reasonable costs of enforcement, including reasonable attorney fees, against the responsible agency if the court determines that:

(a) The agency unlawfully refused to permit a public record to be inspected or copied; and



- (b) The complainant provided written notice identifying the public record request to the agency's custodian of public records at least 5 business days before filing the civil action.

41. Plaintiff provided written notice of its public records request to Defendant at least five business days prior to filing this action.

42. Plaintiff has retained the undersigned counsel in this matter.

**Relief Requested**

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff requests that this Court:

- (a) Set an immediate hearing pursuant to Section 119.11 of the Public Records Act;
- (b) Find that the requested records are public records subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act to which no valid exemption applies;
- (c) Find that the Defendant's delay in producing the records was not justified;
- (d) Find the Defendant unlawfully refused to permit access to the records at issue in violation of the Public Records Act and Article I, Section 24 of the Florida Constitution;
- (e) Order the Defendant to immediately provide the requested records to Plaintiff;
- (f) Order the Defendants to release COVID-19 variant information in a reasonable and timely fashion moving forward;
- (g) Award Plaintiff its reasonable attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses incurred in this action, as provided in Section 119.12, Florida Statutes; and
- (h) Award Plaintiff such other and further relief as the Court deems necessary and appropriate.

Dated: March 18, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

SHULLMAN FUGATE PLLC

/s/ Rachel E. Fugate

Rachel E. Fugate

Fla. Bar No.: 0144029

[rfugate@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:rfugate@shullmanfugate.com)

Giselle M. Girones

Fla. Bar No.: 124373

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com)  
100 South Ashley Dr., Suite 600  
Tampa, FL 33602  
Telephone: (813) 935-5098  
*Attorneys for the Sentinel*

**From:** [Santich, Kate](#)  
**To:** [Giselle Girones](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Counties with COVID variant cases  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 17, 2021 8:51:37 PM

---

**From:** Santich, Kate  
**Sent:** Monday, January 18, 2021 3:27 PM  
**To:** [esf14@em.myflorida.com](mailto:esf14@em.myflorida.com)  
**Subject:** FW: Counties with COVID variant cases

Hello,

I am taking over health reporting from Naseem Miller and am following up on her inquiry. We've been trying to find out the number of COVID variant cases in Florida by county. We also want to know which variant has been found – whether it is the UK strain or another. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email ([ksantich@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:ksantich@orlandosentinel.com)) or phone (407-705-7640).

Thank you.

Kate Santich  
senior reporter  
Orlando Sentinel Media Group  
:: c 407-705-7640  
:: t @katesantich  
[OrlandoSentinel.com](http://OrlandoSentinel.com)  
*a Tribune company*

---

**From:** Miller, Naseem <[NMiller@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:NMiller@orlandosentinel.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 11, 2021 7:59 AM  
**To:** Santich, Kate <[KSantich@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:KSantich@orlandosentinel.com)>; Cutter, John <[jcutter@Tribpub.com](mailto:jcutter@Tribpub.com)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Counties with COVID variant cases

---

**From:** Miller, Naseem <[NMiller@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:NMiller@orlandosentinel.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 8, 2021 1:38 PM  
**To:** Feedback, NewsMedia  
**Cc:** EOC-ESF14  
**Subject:** Re: Counties with COVID variant cases

Good afternoon,

Following up on my inquiry below.

Many thanks,  
Naseem

.....

Naseem Miller (she/her)

Senior reporter - Health | Orlando Sentinel

[nmiller@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:nmiller@orlandosentinel.com)

321.710.7947 or 321.436.9205

[@naseemmiller](https://twitter.com/naseemmiller)

<http://bit.ly/2LtJXec>

---

**From:** Feedback, NewsMedia <[NewsMedia@flhealth.gov](mailto:NewsMedia@flhealth.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 5:19 PM  
**To:** Miller, Naseem <[NMiller@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:NMiller@orlandosentinel.com)>  
**Cc:** EOC-ESF14 <[ESF14@em.myflorida.com](mailto:ESF14@em.myflorida.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: Counties with COVID variant cases

**Caution: External Sender**

Naseem,

We have received your inquiry and will advise as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Florida Department of Health  
Office of Communication

---

**From:** Miller, Naseem <[NMiller@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:NMiller@orlandosentinel.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 5:19 PM  
**To:** DOH COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE <[DOHCOMMUNICATIONSOFFICE@flhealth.gov](mailto:DOHCOMMUNICATIONSOFFICE@flhealth.gov)>  
**Subject:** Counties with COVID variant cases

Good evening,

Would you please let me know which counties have reported the new variant for COVID-19 and how

many in total have been reported in the state?

Many thanks,  
Naseem

.....

Naseem Miller (she/her)

Senior reporter - Health | Orlando Sentinel

[nmiller@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:nmiller@orlandosentinel.com)

321.710.7947 or 321.436.9205

[@nascemiller](#)

<http://bit.ly/2LtJXec>

**From:** [Giselle Girones](#)  
**To:** [Harkins, Renee](#)  
**Cc:** [Florida Department of Health](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Public Records Request :: P066296-012121  
**Date:** Monday, February 22, 2021 10:09:00 AM

---

Good morning Renee,

Just following up on the email below. Please advise.

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](#)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

---

**From:** Giselle Girones  
**Sent:** Friday, February 19, 2021 11:17 AM  
**To:** Harkins, Renee <[Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov](mailto:Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov)>  
**Cc:** Florida Department of Health <[fdh@mycusthelp.net](mailto:fdh@mycusthelp.net)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Records Request :: P066296-012121

Good morning Renee,

As you know, Shullman Fugate serves as outside counsel for the Sentinel. I am writing pursuant to our client's public records requests below. It is my understanding that the initial request for documents the FDOH has on the number, type and dates of COVID-19 variant cases and deaths by county for the state was made on January 20. The Sentinel has followed up several times and to date there has been no response. When will you be producing the records as requested?

As I'm sure you know, per the Florida Supreme Court, the only delay permitted by the Public Records Act is the time it takes to retrieve the records and review them for redaction. *Tribune Co. v. Cannella*, 458 So. 2d 1075, 1078-79 (Fla. 1984); See also 119.07(1)(a), (c). Therefore, absent a statutory exemption, your agency has an obligation to turn over the public records upon demand. In this instance, your agency has not provided any reason for withholding the requested records. And 30 days is more than sufficient time for retrieval and review of the document for any purported redactions, especially in light of the fact that the records are statistical in nature and should not contain any confidential or exempt language.

As such, we ask that you provide the requested records immediately. If you would like to discuss further please feel free to contact me.

Thank you in advance,

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](https://twitter.com/shullgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

**From:** Florida Department of Health <[fdh@mycusthelp.net](mailto:fdh@mycusthelp.net)>

**Sent:** Thursday, January 21, 2021 10:47 AM

**To:** Santich, Kate <[KSantich@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:KSantich@orlandosentinel.com)>

**Subject:** Public Records Request :: P066296-012121

**Caution: External Sender**

Dear Kate Santich:

This email is to confirm receipt of your public records request. If this request requires extensive use of resources, this office will contact you again once an estimate of the costs associated with producing the records you seek is prepared. The tracking number associated with your request is in the subject line of this email. If you have any questions, please let me know. Your request was received in this office on 1/21/2021 and given the reference number **P066296-012121** for tracking purposes.

Records Requested: Hello, Pursuant to Article I, section 24 of the Florida Constitution and chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes, I am requesting an opportunity to obtain any data the Florida Department of Health has on the number, type and dates of COVID-19 variant cases and deaths by county for the state. Please know I am not asking you to disclose any personally identifiable medical information. Please give me a cost estimate for fulfilling this request. Should you deny my request, or any part of the request, please state in writing the basis for the denial, including the statutory citation authorizing the denial. I will contact your office within 48 hours to discuss when I may expect fulfillment of my request, and payment of any statutorily prescribed fees. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [ksantich@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:ksantich@orlandosentinel.com) or 407-705-7640. Thank you again. Kate Santich senior reporter Orlando Sentinel Media Group :: c 407-705-7640 :: t @katesantich

OrlandoSentinel.com a Tribune company

You can monitor the progress of your request at the link below and you'll receive an email when your request has been completed.

Florida Department of Health

---

To track your request and respond, visit the [Public Records Center](#), then click on "View My Public Records Requests."



**From:** [Giselle Girones](#)  
**To:** "Harkins, Renee"; "St Laurent, Louise R"  
**Subject:** RE: Sentinel's Public Records Request  
**Date:** Friday, March 12, 2021 12:36:00 PM

---

Good afternoon,

To date I have yet to receive a response to my various emails below. The Sentinel interprets FDOH's continued silence as a denial of its January 20 public records request and will proceed accordingly.

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](https://www.linkedin.com/company/shullgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

---

**From:** Giselle Girones

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 8:53 AM

**To:** Harkins, Renee <Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov>; St Laurent, Louise R  
<Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov>

**Subject:** RE: Sentinel's Public Records Request

Good morning,

To date, I have not received a response to either of my emails last week and the delay (48 days) in responding to the Sentinel's public records request continues to be unreasonable. Please provide an explanation for the continued delay or an estimate on when we should expect the requested records.

Thank you,

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](https://www.linkedin.com/company/shullgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

**From:** Giselle Girones

**Sent:** Friday, March 5, 2021 4:44 PM

**To:** Harkins, Renee <[Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov](mailto:Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov)>; St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Sentinel's Public Records Request

Good afternoon Renee and Louise,

It has been 44 days since the Sentinel made its public records request. This information is provided to the federal government and has been provided to another media organization. I simply do not understand why FDOH has not complied. I have followed up several times (as evidenced by the timeline below) and have not received a concrete response. We need to resolve this issue as the continued delay has effectively denied this request.

**Giselle M. Girones**

**Shuilman Fugate PLLC**

a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shuilmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shuilmanfugate.com) | [shuilmanfugate.com](http://shuilmanfugate.com) | [@shuilgate](https://www.instagram.com/shuilgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

**From:** Giselle Girones

**Sent:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 8:50 AM

**To:** Harkins, Renee <[Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov](mailto:Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov)>; St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Phone call

Hi Renee,

Again, I am sorry for your loss. As I mentioned during our call, I believe you are referring to a different request made by another media client (CBS). The emails below refer to a request made by the Orlando Sentinel for documents that have the number, type, dates and deaths of COVID-19 variant cases by county. We have not provided any additional information for this request. A brief timeline of the relevant

events are below:

- On January 7, the Sentinel emailed the FDOH asking which counties have reported the new variant for COVID-19 and how many in total have been reported in the statement. That email was acknowledged by your agency.
- On January 8, the Sentinel sent a follow up email to which no response was received.
- On January 12, the Sentinel sent another follow up email, which was ignored.
- On January 18, the Sentinel sent a follow up email to the state's Joint Information Center on COVID-19, which includes the FDOH, noting it was requesting the number of COVID-19 variant cases in Florida by county and the type of variant found. The email was acknowledged but no substantive response was provided.
- On January 20, the Sentinel sent its formal public records request to FDOH requesting the number, type and dates of COVID-19 variant cases and deaths by county. The request notes it is not asking for the disclosure of any personally identifiable medical information. The email was acknowledged and assigned P066296-012121
- On January 25, the Sentinel called and left a voicemail following up on the request. It did not receive a response.
- On February 19, I emailed you and the FDOH PIO concerning the status of the request. I did not receive a response. As of February 19, the public records portal reflected the request was still in the "assigned" stage.
- On February 22, I sent a second follow up email to you and the FDOH PIO to which no response was received. Later in the day I spoke to Louise about a different matter and mentioned the pending Sentinel request. She asked me to forward the information to her which I included. Louise responded and indicated she would be in touch ASAP.
- On February 23, I followed up on the status of the request. Louise responded and let me know she is working with Jason Mahon to find out where in the review process it is and would be in touch.
- On February 25, I followed up again requesting an update now that Jason Mahon was processing the request. Louise indicated she does not have an answer for me yet but was working on it. Interestingly enough, the records request portal reflected the request remained in the "assigned" stage.
- On March 1, I sent a follow up email to which no response was received.
- On March 3 (yesterday), I sent Louise an email in the morning requesting an update on the 43 day old request. No response was received. I sent the subsequent email due to the continued lack of substantive answer and unreasonable delay in obtaining the record and received a phone call from you indicating the FDOH was doing their best to get us the records.

I understand that your agency is busy, but our client's request for records vital to the public's understanding of the growing risks associated with COVID-19 variants was made nearly two months ago. And the Sentinel has been actively attempting to get access to this type of information from your agency for 56 days. There has been no explanation from your office as to why the records, which were allegedly being processed over a week ago, have not been produced. Nor has there been any indication as to when we should expect the records. We know the data is reported to the federal government and the same type of information was made available to another media entity in early February, so it is not clear what exactly is causing the delay. There is also no need to redact the records, which contain statistical data, and no exemption has been cited to date.

While we certainly do not wish to resort to litigation, without any explanation for the continued delay or an estimate on when we should expect these records, our client is left with no viable options to obtain access

to these records. I am happy to further discuss this if you wish to set up a time, however, I am a little confused by the invitation given that it was my impression the agency was not interested in engaging in further discussions and would merely notify me when it had any information. Either way, I am happy to jump on a call today with either of you to discuss.

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](https://www.instagram.com/shullgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

---

**From:** Harkins, Renee <[Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov](mailto:Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 2:19 PM  
**To:** Giselle Girones <[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com)>; St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Phone call

Hi Giselle:

Thank you for speaking with me earlier. We are working to follow up on the additional information you provided and will keep you informed of any updates to your requests.

If you'd like to discuss initiating a legal action, please feel free to contact me to discuss.

Regards,  
Renee

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

---

**From:** Giselle Girones <[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 2:05:07 PM  
**To:** St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>; Harkins, Renee <[Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov](mailto:Renee.Harkins@flhealth.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Phone call

Good afternoon Louise and Renee,

I am once again following up on my emails (and attaching previous emails concerning this request) regarding the status of this record request for documents that have the number, type and dates of COVID-19 variant cases and deaths by county that was made 42 days ago. The continued delay is

unreasonable and soon the Sentinel will have no choice but to sue to obtain access to the records. This is not what we want to do, but at this point we are being left with no additional options.

I am happy to discuss via phone.

Thank you,

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](https://twitter.com/shullgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

---

**From:** Giselle Girones  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 8:46 AM  
**To:** 'St Laurent, Louise R' <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Phone call

Good morning Louise,

I am following up on my email from Monday. Please advise on the status of this request for the statistical record that was requested 42 days ago.

Thank you,

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](https://twitter.com/shullgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review,

use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

**From:** Giselle Girones  
**Sent:** Monday, March 1, 2021 9:33 AM  
**To:** St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Phone call

Good morning Louise,

I wanted to follow up to see if you had any update on the records request below. As you know, it has been well over a month now and no response has been received. We would appreciate obtaining the records without any further delay.

Thank you,

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](https://www.linkedin.com/company/shullgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

**From:** St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 3:19 PM  
**To:** Giselle Girones <[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: Phone call

With apologies, not yet, I'm trying to get my hands on an answer. I know they've been running around at the EOC with this week's allocations and delays from last week's shipping due to the weather, so it seems to be even more difficult to track down right now. I will continue trying as often as I can.

Louise St. Laurent  
General Counsel  
Office of the General Counsel  
Florida Department of Health  
4052 Bald Cypress Way, A-02

Tallahassee, FL 32399  
(850) 245-4956 (Office)  
(850) 597-3531 (Cell)  
(850) 245-4790 (Fax)

**Please note:**

Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from state officials regarding state business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your e-mail communications may therefore be subject to public disclosure.

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

---

**From:** Giselle Girones <[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 3:17 PM  
**To:** St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Phone call

Hello Louise,

I hate to pester you, but is there any update on this one?

Thanks,

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](https://www.instagram.com/shullgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

---

**From:** Giselle Girones  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 9:31 AM  
**To:** St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Phone call

Good morning Louise,

Just wanted to circle back on this. I know you mentioned Jason was processing the request, but we have not received anything and it has been well over a month since the request was made. I assume there

should not be much, if anything, to redact given the statistical nature of the request and the fact that it should not take over a month to review the record.

Please let me know if you have any update.

Best,

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shulligate](https://www.linkedin.com/company/shullmanfugate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

---

**From:** St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 23, 2021 4:12 PM  
**To:** Giselle Girones <[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: Phone call

Giselle,

I am working to figure out where it is in the review process with Jason Mahon now, will let you know once I hear back.

Louise St. Laurent  
General Counsel  
Office of the General Counsel  
Florida Department of Health  
4052 Bald Cypress Way, A-02  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
(850) 245-4956 (Office)  
(850) 597-3531 (Cell)  
(850) 245-4790 (Fax)

**Please note:**

Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from



state officials regarding state business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your e-mail communications may therefore be subject to public disclosure.

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

---

**From:** Giselle Girones <[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 23, 2021 2:53 PM  
**To:** St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Phone call

Good afternoon Louise,

I just wanted to check in on the status of the pending records request. As far as the diagram issue, it is my understanding that the Sentinel discussed the issue with the State.

Best,

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](https://www.instagram.com/shullgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

---

**From:** St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 12:21 PM  
**To:** Giselle Girones <[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: Phone call

Thank you, Giselle. I'm checking with Renee and Brad on the pending request. Will follow up ASAP.

The informative statutes for the other issue are:

With respect to CPT investigative records (also the body diagram has the signature of the CPT professional at the bottom):

Florida Statutes, section 39.202(6):

(6) All records and reports of the Child Protection Team of the Department of Health are confidential and exempt from the provisions of ss. 119.07(1) and 456.057, and shall not be disclosed, except, upon request, to the state attorney, law enforcement, the department, and necessary professionals, in furtherance of the treatment or additional evaluative needs of the child, by order of the court, or to health plan payors, limited to that information used for insurance reimbursement purposes.

With respect to court records in particular:

Florida Statutes, sections 39.0132(3) and (4)(a):

(3) The clerk shall keep all court records required by this chapter separate from other records of the circuit court. All court records required by this chapter shall not be open to inspection by the public. All records shall be inspected only upon order of the court by persons deemed by the court to have a proper interest therein, except that, subject to the provisions of s. 63.162, a child and the parents of the child and their attorneys, guardian ad litem, law enforcement agencies, and the department and its designees shall always have the right to inspect and copy any official record pertaining to the child. The Justice Administrative Commission may inspect court dockets required by this chapter as necessary to audit compensation of court-appointed attorneys. If the docket is insufficient for purposes of the audit, the commission may petition the court for additional documentation as necessary and appropriate. The court may permit authorized representatives of recognized organizations compiling statistics for proper purposes to inspect and make abstracts from official records, under whatever conditions upon their use and disposition the court may deem proper, and may punish by contempt proceedings any violation of those conditions.

(4)(a)1. All information obtained pursuant to this part in the discharge of official duty by any judge, employee of the court, authorized agent of the department, correctional probation officer, or law enforcement agent is confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1) and may not be disclosed to anyone other than the authorized personnel of the court, the department and its designees, correctional probation officers, law enforcement agents, guardian ad litem, and others entitled under this chapter to receive that information, except upon order of the court.

Louise St. Laurent  
General Counsel  
Office of the General Counsel  
Florida Department of Health  
4052 Bald Cypress Way, A-02  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
(850) 245-4956 (Office)  
(850) 597-3531 (Cell)  
(850) 245-4790 (Fax)

**Please note:**

Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from state officials regarding state business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your e-mail communications may therefore be subject to public disclosure.

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

**From:** Giselle Girones <[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 11:44 AM  
**To:** St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Phone call

Louise,

I will reach out to my client and update you when I hear back. Would you mind providing me with the statute that makes the diagram confidential? I would like to relay that to them as well.

In the meantime, I have attached my emails to Renee regarding the public records request the Sentinel made to FDOH for documents that have the number, type and dates of COVID-19 variant cases and deaths by county. Please let me know if you have any update on that request as it has been pending for over a month.

Thanks!

**Giselle M. Girones**  
Shullman Fugate PLLC  
a WBENC certified Women's Business Enterprise

50 N. Laura Street, Suite 2500  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
904.551.1496 | Phone  
305.924.7275 | Mobile

[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com) | [shullmanfugate.com](http://shullmanfugate.com) | [@shullgate](https://www.instagram.com/shullgate)

Tampa | West Palm Beach | Jacksonville | Miami

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information contained in this email message is intended for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) designated above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law and any unauthorized or inadvertent use, receipt, disclosure, dissemination or distribution of such information shall not waive any such privilege. If you are not an intended recipient of this message and/or you have received this message in error, then please notify the sender. Any unauthorized and/or unintended review, use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message, or any of the information contained in it, is strictly prohibited.

**From:** St Laurent, Louise R <[Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov](mailto:Louise.StLaurent@flhealth.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 11:13 AM  
**To:** Giselle Girones <[ggirones@shullmanfugate.com](mailto:ggirones@shullmanfugate.com)>  
**Subject:** Phone call

Giselle,

Do you have a moment today for a quick phone call regarding the Orlando Sentinel? If so, please let me know when is good and what number I can reach you at.

Thank you!

Louise St. Laurent

General Counsel  
Office of the General Counsel  
Florida Department of Health  
4052 Bald Cypress Way, A-02  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
(850) 245-4956 (Office)  
(850) 597-3531 (Cell)  
(850) 245-4790 (Fax)

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

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

**Values: ICARE**

I innovation: We search for creative solutions and manage resources wisely.

C collaboration: We use teamwork to achieve common goals & solve problems.

A accountability: We perform with integrity & respect.

R responsiveness: We achieve our mission by serving our customers & engaging our partners.

E excellence: We promote quality outcomes through learning & continuous performance improvement.

**Purpose:** To protect the public through health care licensure, enforcement and information.

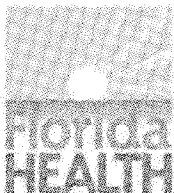
**Focus:** To be the nation's leader in quality health care regulation.

---

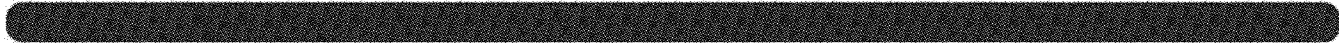
**Please note:**

Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from state officials regarding state business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your e-mail communications may therefore be subject to public disclosure.

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.



It's a New Day in Public Health.  
The Florida Department of Health works to protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, & community efforts.



### Public Records Menu

Home

FAQs

Submit a Request

My Request Center

FAQ

See All FAQs

How to Submit a Request

Fees

What types of Public Records does Florida Department of Health Provide?

Response Time

Scope of Public Records Act

Is an agency required to give out information from public records or produce public records in a par

Search Criteria

Please Select

Equals

Go

Public Records Request about a month ago  
P066206-012121  
Stage 2  
Status: Assigned

Kase Santich

Details

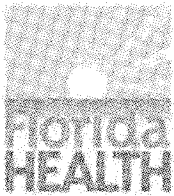
Public Records Request 11 months ago  
P058729-040920  
Stage 2  
Status: Available on Department Website

Kase Santich

Details

Public Records Request 11 months ago





*It's a New Day in Public Health.*

The Florida Department of Health works to protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, & community efforts.

**Public Records Menu**

- Home
- FAQs
- Submit a Request
- My Request Center

**FAQ**

[See All FAQs Q.](#)

[How to Submit a Request](#)

[Fees](#)

[What types of Public Records does Florida Department of Health Provide?](#)

[Response Time](#)

[Scope of Public Records Act](#)

[Is an agency required to give out information from public records or produce public records in a par](#)

[View Message\(s\)](#)

[Request / Incident Submission](#)

**Request Type:** Public Records Request  
**Primary Requester E-Mail:** KSantich@orlandosentinel.com  
**Reference No:** P066296-013121  
**Status:** Assigned

[Additional information](#)

**Describe the Record(s) Requested:\***

Hello;

Pursuant to Article I, section 24 of the Florida Constitution and chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes, I am requesting an opportunity to obtain any data the Florida Department of Health has on the number, type and dates of COVID-19 variant cases and deaths by county for the state.

Please know I am not asking you to disclose any personally identifiable

**Preferred Method to Receive Records:\***

Electronic via Records Center

