



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Laina Levy
EMAIL: laina@voteriders.org

No Photo ID = No COVID-19 Test for Millions?

ORLANDO, FL, April 2, 2020 -- More than 25 MILLION American adults do not have a government-issued photo ID — which is now, apparently, a FEMA requirement to obtain potentially life-saving COVID-19 testing. These tens of millions of Americans are disproportionately among our most vulnerable populations — including senior citizens, people of color, people with disabilities, people from low-income communities, and younger adults. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the barriers to obtaining an ID have become practically insurmountable, as DMVs and similar ID-issuing offices are shuttered indefinitely across the nation.

According to the Florida Department of Health, coronavirus tests are to be provided for anyone showing symptoms, first responders, healthcare workers, people who are autoimmune-compromised, and those who have pre-existing conditions. However, VoteRiders has confirmed that FEMA-run test sites such as those in Seminole, Orange and Duval Counties require everyone to show a photo ID with their name and birth date.

Jazlyn Gallego, the Florida State Coordinator for VoteRiders (a nonpartisan nonprofit organization that helps individuals obtain their ID for voting), is an expert on helping voters navigate the ins and outs of Florida's bureaucracy to ensure that lack of ID is not a barrier to voting. She became alarmed after discovering that certain testing sites in Florida are asking potential COVID-19 victims to show an ID before being tested. Ms. Gallego reached out to the Tax Collector's offices in Osceola, Orange, and Seminole Counties to find out what options a person without an ID might have, and was told there is no immediate solution. All relevant Florida government offices are closed to in-person services until at least April 30 due to COVID-19.

Ms. Gallego said: **“The situation is heartbreaking. Many vulnerable Floridians, especially those over 65, don't have - and can't obtain - a photo ID. The policy of requiring IDs for tests is putting their lives, and the lives of their loved ones, at unnecessary risk.”**

###