

# Stopping AIDS is Everyone's Business

Florida Department of Health—Bureau of HIV/AIDS



## HIV is Still in Business

Every 9.5 minutes, someone in the United States becomes infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. There are approximately 1.2 million people living with HIV in the US, and 1 in 7 people are not aware of their infection. An average of 50,000 Americans are infected with HIV annually. To understand the magnitude that HIV/AIDS has had on Floridians, take a look at some quick facts:

- In 2013, Florida ranked 1st in the nation in the number of new HIV infection cases, while ranking 3rd in the number of AIDS cases
- At least 1 in 161 Floridians are living with HIV/AIDS
- By the end of 2014, an estimated 126,100 adults were thought to be living with HIV in Florida
- 6,132 new HIV infections were reported in Florida in 2014
- Of the new HIV infections reported in 2014, men accounted for 80% while women accounted for 20%
- Blacks comprise 15% of Florida's adult population but represent 40% of the newly reported adult HIV infection cases
- For 22 consecutive years, HIV/AIDS has been the leading cause of death for black females between the ages of 25-44. It has since decreased to the 3rd leading cause of death. It is currently the 4th leading cause of death for black males ages 25-44
- Male-to-Male sexual contact (MSM ) is the primary risk among males, while heterosexual contact is the primary risk among females
- MSM represent more than two-thirds of the newly reported HIV infection and AIDS cases among adult men in Florida
- Through 2014, white and black MSM accounted for 44% and 27% of HIV infections among men, respectively

*"AIDS education is an investment in our people and in long term health and productivity as a business. My credibility as an employer is highest if I educate my people on how you get AIDS and how you don't get AIDS."*

*Michael Lauber  
President and CEO, Tusco  
Display*

# Florida's Business and Labor Responds to AIDS



In 2009, the Regional Minority AIDS Program at the Alachua County Health Department (ACHD) Office of HIV/AIDS implemented the “Stopping AIDS is Everyone’s Business” campaign. The yearlong campaign was a part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s *Business Responds to AIDS/Labor Responds to AIDS (BRTA/LRTA)* program. The campaign was originally launched in Miami-Dade county in 2007 with success in targeted neighborhoods. Area 3/13 launched the initiative throughout Alachua, Putnam, and Columbia counties. Due to the success of this campaign, the Bureau of HIV/AIDS began replicating the project statewide.

Dating back to 1992, BRTA/LRTA has engaged and supported the private sector in promoting HIV education, awareness, and policies in the workplace. The program has evolved over the years into a public/private partnership that promotes the involvement of businesses and labor in HIV prevention. It also provides tools and technical assistance to build the expertise and capacity of health departments to engage businesses and labor for HIV prevention. Local BRTA/LRTA projects develop partnerships between health departments, city business and labor leaders, and neighborhood merchants.

The goals of the projects are to:

- Increase community awareness about the impact of HIV/AIDS
- Motivate residents in high prevalence neighborhoods to get tested and seek prevention education, treatment, and care
- Increase the number of persons who know their HIV status and are linked to appropriate prevention and care services

It is a recognized fact that community business leaders have tremendous influence within their communities. BRTA/LRTA allows health departments to utilize these relationships in their HIV prevention efforts. The Florida Department of Health’s Bureau of HIV/AIDS recognizes the influential roles that you play in your communities. We are asking for your support of our new “STOP AIDS: It’s Everyone’s Business” BRTA/LRTA project. Businesses are essential partners in the response to AIDS, and you can make a huge difference in reducing the stigma and complacency about the need for HIV prevention. You are in a unique position to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic because you have relationships with employers, customers, and the local business communities. These relationships allow HIV prevention messages to become a part of your communities’ environment.

## How Does It Work?

Merchants located in neighborhoods with high HIV/AIDS prevalence are asked to:

- Display and distribute free HIV/AIDS point-of-purchase materials to their customers. Materials include grocery bags, dry cleaner bags, posters, postcards, beverage sleeves, and window decals
- Discuss HIV/AIDS awareness with their employees, customers, and peers
- Encourage other neighborhood businesses to share HIV prevention information with their employees, customers, and peers

## Why Should My Business Participate in Florida's BRTA?

It is recognized that community business leaders have tremendous influence within their communities. BRTA/LRTA allows health departments to utilize these relationships in their HIV prevention efforts. HIV/AIDS affects us all, but many people are uninformed or misinformed about the nature of HIV/AIDS and how to prevent the spread of the disease. Stigma and silence about the disease helps to fuel the epidemic.

The key to stopping the spread of HIV is to break the silence around the disease. We must begin talking about HIV/AIDS where we live, work, play, and worship. Having conversations about HIV/AIDS allows for opportunities for raising awareness and educating communities on how they can protect themselves from HIV. As a business leader in your community, you can help start the conversations where people work and play. You have the opportunity to impact the lives of members of your community by simply supporting HIV prevention efforts.

## What Can My Business Expect from Participating in BRTA?

If you choose to participate in the "Stop AIDS: It's Everyone's Business" project, you can expect to receive the following:

- Six months free supply of point-of-purchase materials
- Basic HIV/AIDS 101 training for your employees and customers
- Free HIV/AIDS information and resources
- Your business and participation will be highlighted in press releases and newspaper ads
- Recognition as a supporter of Stop AIDS: It's Everyone's Business
- Discounted prices on point-of-purchase materials

## RESOURCES

### *CDC Business and Labor Resource Service*

Provides information for employers on national, state, and local resources related to HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

1-800-452-5231 (voice)

1-888-282-7681 (fax)

[www.brta-lrta.org](http://www.brta-lrta.org)

### *Florida HIV/AIDS Hotline*

Provides supportive telephone counseling and community referrals on HIV/AIDS related information.

1-800-352-2437 (English)

1-800-545-7432 (Spanish)

1-800-243-7101 (Haitian Creole)

### **Area 3/13 Regional Minority AIDS Program**

Ms. Celia Boykin  
Regional Minority AIDS  
Coordinator

Florida Department of Health in  
Alachua County  
224 SE 24th Street  
Gainesville, Florida 32641  
352-334-7900 ext. 3335  
[Celicia.Boykin@flhealth.gov](mailto:Celicia.Boykin@flhealth.gov)

[www.wemakethechange.com](http://www.wemakethechange.com)

[www.alachuacountyhealth.org](http://www.alachuacountyhealth.org)



## How Can My Business Support Florida's BRTA?

BRTA cannot exist without the support of your business. You provide the direct link to the community. You can help to support the efforts of BRTA by choosing to participate in three ways:

### **Endorsement**

- Business agrees with project goals and signs business commitment letter
- Business agrees to display project logo and print material

### **Support (In addition to Endorsement)**

- Business distributes project materials and point-of-purchase materials
- Business agrees to talk to customers and/or employees about HIV/AIDS

### **Participation (In addition to Support)**

- Business participates and/or supports health department sponsored HIV/AIDS events and activities

## Is Your Business Prepared?

To stop the spread of HIV in your community, your business has the ability to:

- Break the silence around HIV by providing opportunities for education and awareness to employees, their families, and customers
- Help change community perceptions about HIV/AIDS by supporting HIV prevention activities in your community
- Motivate community members to seek HIV testing
- Encourage employees, their families, and customer to engage in healthy behaviors
- Provide customers a link to HIV prevention programs and testing services within your community

***Contact Celia Boykin if you are interested in having your business support the BRTA Initiative***

***Thank you for your support!!***