

## Fayette County Judge Press Release March 20, 2020

To the residents of Fayette County - in response to the Coronavirus which directly threatens our county and its residents, and as a result of Emergency Declarations issued by both our President and Governor. Last Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> of March, I issued a Local Disaster Declaration. That Declaration led to the cancellation of the 2020 Fayette County Antique Fair and Show. On the morning of Thursday March 19<sup>th</sup> in compliance with Texas Government Code Chapter 418, Fayette County Commissioners Court met and extended the Local Disaster Declaration by 7 days. At noon yesterday the Commissioner of the Texas Department of Health Services declared a Public Health Disaster for the entire State of Texas. Immediately following, our Governor issued an Executive Order, and I emphasize the word “Order”, to be applicable state wide.

The following applies to all within Fayette County:

1. People in Fayette County shall avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10 people.
2. People shall avoid dine-in eating or drinking at bars, restaurants or food courts. The use of drive-thru, pickup or delivery of food or beverage will be allowed and highly encouraged.
3. People are prohibited from visiting gyms and massage parlors.
4. People are prohibited from visiting nursing homes or retirement and long term care facilities unless to provide critical assistance.
5. All schools shall remain temporarily closed. This executive order does NOT apply to child care facilities including a day care center, group day care home, or family home. All

child care facilities should continue to follow the guidance from HHSC Child Care Licensing (see [COVID-19 Guidance to Child Care Providers](#)), the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

6. All people will be allowed to visit grocery stores, gas stations, parks, banks and other businesses so long as necessary precautions are maintained to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 virus.
7. People are **NOT** required to shelter in place.
8. All critical county and city infrastructures will remain operational.
9. Domestic travel throughout the county will remain unrestricted.
10. All county entities will continue to provide essential services. Private businesses may choose to remain open if all necessary precautions are taken.
11. Where feasible all employees should work from home.

All of the above will be in effect beginning at 11:59 p.m. on March 20<sup>th</sup> thru 11:59 p.m. April 3, 2020.

With respect to Fayette County operations, effective Monday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March;

1. All county and city offices will continue to be staffed but offices and facilities will be closed to the general public, except as provided in #2 below.
2. County residents who require essential or emergency services may call the respective office providing the service and coordinate assistance and delivery of service as needed.

3. District and County Court proceedings will be cancelled thru April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Any need for special court proceedings will be handled thru the District Judge's office, the County Judge's office or the Fayette County Attorney's office.

Any questions regarding the information I have provided can be addressed by calling the office of the Fayette County Judge (979-968-6469) or the office of the Fayette County Emergency Management Chief and Homeland Security Administrator (979-968-1811).

On a most recent note, it has been reported and confirmed that Fayette County has experienced its first positive test case of Coronavirus. We do know that the person infected has had no recently known visits to any Fayette County establishments and is in home isolation. We are monitoring and investigating this case in collaboration with appropriate local and State Health Officials of Region 7. This should come as no surprise to us. As stated previously, the virus has no restrictions or limitations as to its spread. Please continue to take all measures that have been made known with respect to protecting yourself and others and we will continue to deal with the crisis within the County in a safe and confident manner ensuring we reduce the spread to the greatest extent possible.

To the people of Fayette County, I know what I've just shared with you is somewhat more restrictive than the general guidelines which you have been so faithfully following up to this point in time. In lieu of and in support of our Governor's Order, and in an effort to stop the increasing spread of the virus throughout our State and County, I believe these measures are in our County's best interest at this time. They are temporary and time based. We will be evaluating the effects of the virus on our state and county continuously and adjusting as necessary. Things will be changing quickly and I seek your patience, understanding and strict

compliance. I urge you all to continue to monitor the Fayette County website for the latest information and to continue to take all personal measures to protect yourself and your loved ones from infection. You know what you have to do. Your County, City, Community leaders, health officials and first responders are working hard to contain the virus and bring an end to the restrictions we find ourselves under – as soon as possible. By supporting them, working together in our communities and helping each other we will endure as a Nation, a State and County.

Thank you and God Bless.