



Texas Division of Emergency Management State Situation Report

Event Name	20-0003 COVID-19 2020
Date	March 31, 2020
Time	0900
Operational Period	March 30 to March 31, 2020
Report Number	12

Regions Affected	
Regions Affected	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6
DDCs Active	ALL DDCs are activated

STATEWIDE CURRENT SITUATION: On March 30, Governor Greg Abbott has waived certain statutory provisions to ensure public safety employees who contract COVID-19 during the course of their employment will be reimbursed for reasonable medical expenses related to their treatment of COVID-19. Because the nature of their duties has caused them to increase their risk of contracting COVID-19, the Governor has waived these statutory provisions so that public safety employees who contract COVID-19 are not also financially penalized.

"Texas' public safety employees are vital to our COVID-19 response," said Governor Abbott. "These brave men and women are on the front lines and risking potential exposure to keep our communities safe. By waiving these regulations, Texas will ensure that those who may contract COVID-19 will have the support they need to pay for medical expenses."

On March 30, Governor Abbott announced that the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) (www.cms.gov) has approved the Section 1135 Medicaid Waiver submitted by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) on March 26, 2020. This approval grants Texas flexibility in administering Medicaid while the state continues to respond to COVID-19.

"I thank CMS for quickly granting this waiver so that the Lone Star State can continue to meet the routine needs of Texans on Medicaid," said Governor Abbott. "These flexibilities ensure that care capacity is expanded for Texans who utilize Medicaid services, even as the state continues to respond to COVID-19."

Flexibilities granted under this waiver include:

Extension of prior authorizations: For enrollees who have an existing prior authorization, CMS approves the state extending a prior authorization approved on or after March 1.

Suspension of Level I and Level II PASRR assessments: All new nursing facility admissions may be treated as an exempted hospital discharge for 30 days. After 30 days, new admissions with a mental illness or intellectual disability should be reviewed as soon as resources are available.

Fair hearing and appeals: CMS approves the extension of fair hearings up to 120 days (from 90 days) and Texas may choose to allow up to 90 days for an enrollee to file an appeal.

Provider enrollment:

Texas may reimburse an out-of-state provider if: the service is provided out-of-state, the provider has an NPI on the claim, and the provider is enrolled in Medicare or another state's Medicaid program.

Texas may provisionally/temporarily enroll an out-of-state provider not enrolled in Medicare or another state's Medicaid program and waive the application fee, finger print criminal background check, site visit, and in-state license requirement.

Texas must collect information necessary to process claims, screen for state licensure in other states and screen against the OIG exclusion list. Texas must not issue temporary enrollments after the end of the public health emergency, not allow retroactive effective dates earlier than March 1, and Texas must cease payments to temporarily enrolled providers within 6 months of the end of the public health emergency (unless the provider competes a Texas Medicaid enrollment).

Texas is granted a waiver to temporarily cease provider revalidation.

CMS grants the above flexibilities for CHIP.

Public notice: CMS grants Texas a waiver of public notice requirements

HHSC is continuing to work with CMS on additional flexibility requests that are associated with those approved Monday March 30.

On March 29, the Governor of the State of Texas issued two executive orders expanding the travel restrictions concerning travel from Louisiana. The First order (GA-12) mandates a 14 day quarantine for road travelers traveling from any location in Louisiana. This mandated quarantine does not apply to commercial activity, military service, emergency response, health response or critical infrastructure functions. The second executive order (GA-13) prohibits the release of individuals in custody for or with a history of offenses involving physical violence or threat of physical violence. The Governor also issued a proclamation regarding his prior Executive Order mandating a self-quarantine for individuals arriving from New York Tri-State Area and New Orleans, Louisiana. The Executive Order now includes air travelers arriving from California, Louisiana, Washington, Atlanta, Georgia, Chicago, Illinois, Detroit Michigan, and Miami, Florida.

On March 29, Governor Abbott held a press conference at the State Capitol where he provided new information on the state's health care capacity and issued additional Executive Orders. The Governor announced that hospital beds available for COVID-19 patients have doubled over the past week. He also detailed the joint effort between the state, the Texas Military Department (TMD), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to identify and equip additional locations to serve as health care facilities in the event that hospital capacity is exhausted. The first of these sites will be the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas.

On March 29, the President of the United States Donald Trump extends federal social distancing guidance for 30 days as scientists warn virus continues to spread.

On March 28, Governor Abbott waived certain regulations allowing for an expedited licensing reactivation process for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) in Texas. Under these waivers, an APRN with a license that has been inactive for more than two years, but less than

four years, will not have to pay a reactivation fee, complete continuing education credits, or complete the current practice requirements. For APRNs with a license that has been inactive for more than four years, the reactivation fee and continuing education requirements will be waived.

"Our frontline healthcare workers play a crucial role in Texas' response to COVID-19, and we are working to reduce barriers for former nurses who are ready and willing to serve in our communities," said Governor Abbott. "By expediting the process for APRNs to reactivate their license, Texas is allowing more healthcare professionals to reenter the workforce and assist in our effort to combat COVID-19."

On March 28, Governor Abbott waived certain licensing renewal regulations for Texas pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy technician trainees. With these waivers, the Governor is temporarily extending expiration dates for licenses and temporarily suspending continuing education requirements for pharmacists.

"As our state responds to COVID-19, it is important that Texans continue to have access to the services they depend on to meet their daily needs," said Governor Abbott. "With these waivers, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians can continue to meet the needs of their fellow Texans without potential delays caused by an expired license."

On March 27, as part of the state's ongoing response to COVID-19, Governor Abbott announced the deployment of three National Guard Joint Task Force Brigades. The 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, and the 176th Engineer Brigade will operate ten general support units located throughout the state.

"Whether it's overseas combat, major storms, or deadly viruses, the Texas National Guard is always quick to defend and serve their fellow Texans," said Governor Abbott. "Texans can be grateful that these troops are now standing their post alongside healthcare professionals and first responders on the front lines of this crisis."

The Governor has ordered an initial focus on two critical missions that will directly benefit from Texas National Guard's unparalleled logistics capabilities, medical expertise, communications support, infrastructure maintenance, and transportation assets: assisting drive through testing sites and bolstering the state's healthcare infrastructure.

Over the past week, Guard members have practiced erecting and running drive through testing site locations alongside medical staff to ensure a well-coordinated process that allows Texans to access COVID-19 screenings in a safe, efficient way that also limits contact with potentially infected members of the public.

The Guard is also rolling out support for the state's healthcare infrastructure with medical providers, equipment, and supplies needed to provide access to care. As the response advances, Guardsmen will continue working with partners at the local, state, and national levels to identify and develop additional locations that can be converted to healthcare facilities.

"We are citizen soldiers and we find our highest calling in serving our fellow citizens, no matter where duty calls us," said Major General Tracy R. Norris, the adjutant general of Texas and commander of the Texas National Guard. "This will be no easy task but we have faced difficult

times before. With the commitment of our soldiers and support of the community we will show the world that we are Texas strong and Texas proud, and together we will overcome this challenge."

Governor Abbott also stressed that these taskings will not diminish the Guard's ability to meet operational commitments including the Texas border mission and overseas deployments.

To ensure responding Guard members are healthy, trained medical staff will be attached to each unit and provide screenings before each Guard member is approved for the mission. Any Guard member showing signs of illness will receive treatment and the needed resources to recover while following all requirements outlined by the CDC. This measure will keep responding units healthy and reduce the potential spread of COVID-19.

On March 27, Governor Abbott waived certain Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) regulations to preserve and extend child care capacity for front line workers. These waivers will allow TWC the flexibility to respond to child care needs, and are part of the Governor's work through the Supply Chain Strike Force to strengthen child care infrastructure for critical workers during the COVID-19 response. These waivers ensure that families using child care subsidized through TWC will not lose their slots during this interim period while the state battles COVID-19, and it secures payment to child care providers throughout this time.

"Through these waivers, TWC will be able to better respond to the child care needs of our front line workers in Texas," said Governor Abbott. "We remain committed to working with TWC and other state entities to ensure Texans serving on the front lines of the COVID-19 response have the support they need."

Children within TWC's child care services program will be able to accrue absences due to COVID-19 without impacting ongoing eligibility or provider reimbursements. TWC will also be able to waive parent share of cost requirements and direct local workforce development boards to make supplemental emergency payments to child care programs to offset payments lost due to COVID-19. Additionally, these waivers will allow TWC to temporarily broaden the definition of "protective services" to include children of workers on the front lines of the battle against COVID-19.

On March 26, Governor Abbott announced his request for access to interest-free federal loans (known as Title XII funds) to pay unemployment claims and the accelerated release of funds from the Texas account of the federal Unemployment Trust Fund. Title XII is a federal process that allows states to receive advances (loans) from the federal government to continue to cover Unemployment Benefit payments without disruption.

In a request letter to Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia, Governor Abbott authorized the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to officially request access to these additional funds.

"As job loss and other economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic grow, we are committed to drawing upon all available resources to help Texas hardest hit by the crisis," said Governor Abbott. "With claims on the rise, our current balance of unemployment funds is projected to run out by the end of next month, so we must accelerate the delivery of necessary dollars."

Department of Labor approval would allow Texas to apply for federal loans that would be interest-free through the end of the current calendar year. In the past, TWC has taken such loans then

issued bonds to pay them off. In every case, the agency has never missed making a payment to an eligible claimant.

On March 26, Governor Abbott, ordered the following on a statewide basis effective at noon on March 28, 2020:

Every person who enters the State of Texas as the final destination through an airport, from a point of origin or point of last departure in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, or the City of New Orleans, or in any other state or city as may be proclaimed hereafter, shall be subject to mandatory self-quarantine for a period of 14 days from the time of entry into Texas or the duration of the person's presence in Texas, whichever is shorter. This order to self-quarantine shall not apply to people traveling in connection with military service, emergency response, health response, or critical-infrastructure functions, as may be determined by the Texas Division of Emergency Management. Each person covered under this order to self-quarantine shall be responsible for all associated costs, including transportation, lodging, food, and medical care.

A covered person shall use a form prescribed by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to designate a quarantine location in Texas, such as a residence or a hotel, and provide a full name, date of birth, home address, telephone number, and driver license or passport information. DPS Troopers, or other approved peace officers, shall collect a completed form from each covered person immediately upon disembarking and verify it against the person's driver license or passport. Providing false information on this form is a criminal offense under Section 37.10 of the Texas Penal Code. Questions about this form should be directed to DPS at (800) 525-5555.

A covered person shall proceed directly from the airport to the designated quarantine location entered on the DPS form. Any covered person exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 shall be escorted to the designated quarantine location by a DPS Trooper. The covered person shall remain in the designated quarantine location for a period of 14 days or the duration of the person's presence in Texas, whichever is shorter, leaving only to seek medical care or to depart from Texas. During that period, a covered person shall not allow visitors into or out of the designated quarantine location, other than a health department employee, physician, or healthcare provider, and shall not visit any public spaces.

DPS Special Agents will conduct unannounced visits to designated quarantine locations to verify compliance by confirming the physical presence of covered persons. Any failure to comply with this order to self-quarantine shall be a criminal offense punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000, confinement in jail for a term not to exceed 180 days, or both.

This executive order shall remain in effect and in full force until modified, amended, rescinded, or superseded by the governor.

On March 26, the Texas Attorney General filed a lawsuit to stop Auctions Unlimited LLC from price gouging Texans for necessary health related supplies including face masks, N95 particulate respirators, hand soap, all-purpose cleaner and disinfectant wipes.

On March 25, Governor Abbott released a statement thanking President Trump for issuing a Major Disaster Declaration (DR-4485) for the State of Texas. This announcement comes after the Governor requested the declaration—citing the need for additional federal assistance to save lives, to protect property, public health, and safety, and to lessen or avert the threat of COVID-19.

“Texas is aggressively pursuing and implementing all necessary strategies to limit the impact of COVID-19, and I thank President Trump for his swift action to issue a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Texas,” said Governor Abbott. “The President’s declaration opens up new sources of funding for individual and public assistance that will help Texas respond to this public health emergency and protect public health and safety.”

Governor Abbott has temporarily waived certain hospital licensing rules and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) has adopted an emergency rule to meet Texas’ need for additional hospital capacity while the state responds to COVID-19. These actions allow for certain facilities that have pending licenses or facilities that have been closed for no more than 36 months to come online under existing hospital building licenses. These facilities will be administered and operated by hospitals with existing licenses. The waivers also remove certain mileage restrictions which will allow hospitals to operate additional facilities that are more than 30 miles away from the main licensed hospital.

Governor Abbott has waived certain regulations from the Texas Board of Nursing regarding licensing renewal and subsequent fees for nurses in Texas. The Governor's waiver authorizes a six-month grace period for nurses with expired licenses. This grace period will allow nurses who are otherwise in good standing to continue practicing and will give them additional time to renew their license without added fees and penalties.

March 24, Governor Abbott has directed the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to issue guidance allowing restaurants to sell bulk retail products from restaurant supply chain distributors directly to consumers provided that such foods are in their original condition, packaging, or presented as received by the restaurant. Under this guidance, restaurants will be able to sell items like packaged meat, fruit and vegetables, and dry goods directly to the public to prepare and consume at home. This guidance will allow distributors and restaurants to provide Texans another source of food outside of grocery stores and prepared food from restaurants. These bulk food items would be available for purchase through restaurants offering drive-thru, delivery, pick-up, and curbside service.

On March 23, Governor Abbott sent a letter to President Trump requesting a presidential declaration of a major disaster in Texas based on the continued impact of COVID-19. This action follows on the heels of a series of proactive measures, including declaring a state of disaster for all 254 Texas counties on March 13, 2020. Filed in accordance with the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, the request is based in part on Governor Abbott’s conclusion that the ongoing COVID-19 incident is of such severity and magnitude that supplementary federal assistance is necessary to save lives, to protect property, public health, and safety, and to lessen or avert the threat of a larger disaster.

In his letter, the Governor specifically requested Individual Assistance Crisis Counseling and Public Assistance Category B (Emergency Protective Measures) including Direct Federal Assistance for all 254 counties in Texas, noting that, as of March 23rd, Texas has 352 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with eight related deaths.

Governor Abbott’s letter also detailed the state’s efforts to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, including executing the state's emergency management plan and issuing multiple executive orders, in accordance with guidelines from President Trump and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These include:

- mandatory avoidance of social gatherings of more than 10 people;
- mandatory avoidance of dine-in eating and drinking at bars or restaurants, and of gyms or massage establishments;
- prohibition on non-critical visits to nursing homes, retirement or long-term care facilities; and
- temporary closure of in-person school operations.

The Governor has also issued multiple waivers of state law to remove barriers limiting the response to this pandemic and activated the Texas National Guard to be prepared to assist with response efforts for COVID-19. To date, more than 466 Texas jurisdictions have submitted local disaster declarations, a number that is expected to rise. The requested federal aid would be used to overcome the current shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), needed medical equipment and testing supplies as well as looming shortages of hospital beds, medical equipment, and a healthy and adequate cadre of medical personnel.

The letter also designated Chief Nim Kidd as the Governor's Authorized Representative and State Coordinating Officer, tasked with continuing his coordination with FEMA on all matters related to COVID-19.

On March 22, the governor signed an Executive Order for hospitals to increase unused bed capacity without submitting an application or associated fees. This precautionary measure will help ensure Texas hospitals across the state have adequate care capacity for COVID-19 patients. The order allows for increased occupancy of hospital rooms to treat more than one patient in a room. The order also postpones all surgeries that are of non-life saving category or those who would use up PPE. The order also creates a Supply Chain Strike Force to ensure all health care facilities have the supplies and resources they need. The task force will secure the needed personal protective equipment (PPE) and food for medical personnel, first responders and those who contract COVID-19. This executive order takes effect immediately and remains in effect until April 21.

March 20, The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) released an announcement that warns consumers about unauthorized fraudulent coronavirus tests. The agency is beginning to see unauthorized fraudulent test kits that are being marketed to test for COVID-19 in the home. The FDA has not authorized any test that is available to purchase for testing at home for COVID-19. The FDA will take appropriate action to protect consumers from bad actors who take advantage of a crisis to deceive the public by marketing tests that pose risks to patient health. Enforcement is being stepped up at ports of entry, including International Mail Facilities, to ensure these fraudulent products that originate outside the country do not enter through our borders. Reports may be sent via email to: FDA-COVID-19-Fraudulent-Products@fda.hhs.gov.

On March 19, Governor Abbot issued four Executive Orders to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in Texas.

Order No. 1 - In accordance with the Guidelines from the President and the CDC, every person in Texas shall avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10 people.

Order No. 2 - In accordance with the Guidelines from the President and the CDC, people shall avoid eating or drinking at bars, restaurants, and food courts, or visiting gyms or massage parlors;

provided, however, that the use of drive-thru, pickup, or delivery options is allowed and highly encouraged throughout the limited duration of this executive order.

Order No. 3 - In accordance with the Guidelines from the President and the CDC, people shall not visit nursing homes or retirement or long-term care facilities unless to provide critical assistance.

Order No. 4 - In accordance with the Guidelines from the President and the CDC, schools shall temporarily close.

This executive order does not prohibit people from visiting a variety of places, including grocery stores, gas stations, parks, and banks, so long as the necessary precautions are maintained to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. This executive order does not mandate sheltering in place. All critical infrastructure will remain operational, domestic travel will remain unrestricted, and government entities and businesses will continue providing essential services. For offices and workplaces that remain open, employees should practice good hygiene and, where feasible, work from home in order to achieve optimum isolation from COVID-19. The more that people reduce their public contact, the sooner COVID-19 will be contained and the sooner this executive order will expire.

This executive order supersedes all previous orders on this matter that are in conflict or inconsistent with its terms, and this order shall remain in effect and in full force until 11:59 PM on April 3, subject to being extended, modified, amended, rescinded, or superseded by me or by a succeeding governor.

Governor Abbott also announced that the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has included the entire state of Texas in its Economic Injury Disaster Declaration and granted access to its Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, which will provide long-term, low interest loans to qualifying businesses across the state. The Governor's request was driven by COVID-19-related economic losses across Texas related to major event cancellations, loss of walk-in customers, depletion of stock from suppliers, and client cancellations. Governor Abbott also commented on the SBA's rapid turnaround to a request he made by letter just three days ago. Texas small businesses who believe they may be eligible for an SBA EIDL should visit www.sba.gov/disaster where they can directly apply for assistance. The online application is the fastest method to receive a decision about loan eligibility.

The Commissioner of the Department of State Health Services, Dr. John Hellerstedt, issued a Public Health Disaster Declaration in Texas.

On March 18, Governor Abbott issued a waiver that will allow restaurants to deliver alcoholic beverages with food purchases to patrons, including beer, wine, and mixed drinks. The Governor also directed the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) to waive certain provisions to allow manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers of alcoholic beverages to repurchase or sell back unopened product.

These waivers are in response to the financial hardship caused by COVID-19 that has disproportionately affected the hospitality industry.

"The State of Texas is committed to supporting retailers, restaurants, and their employees," said Governor Abbott. "These waivers will allow restaurants to provide enhanced delivery options to consumers during this temporary period of social distancing."

Under this waiver, effective immediately, restaurants with a mixed beverage permit may sell beer, wine, or mixed drinks for delivery as long as they are accompanied by food purchased from the restaurant.

The buy-back waiver allows alcohol distributors and manufacturers to repurchase excess inventory from restaurants, bars, and clubs affected by event cancellations due to COVID-19.

On March 18, Governor Abbott, announced that Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Driver License Offices across the state are closing immediately. This temporary closure will not apply to those seeking an initial Commercial Driver License (CDL). DPS offices that provide CDL testing will remain open solely for the purpose of providing initial CDLs. Visits will be by appointment only, and can be scheduled by emailing cldappointments@dps.texas.gov. This exception will allow commercial drivers to continue to ship goods across the state of Texas.

Governor Abbott announced that he has directed the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to temporarily waive expiration dates for Driver Licenses, Commercial Driver Licenses, and other identification forms. This action falls within the Governor's State of Disaster Declaration and is part of the ongoing effort to reduce to spread of COVID-19.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) took steps to help prevent disruptions in the food supply-chain by issuing a temporary policy for FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) supplier verification onsite audit requirements during the coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency.

The virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is stable for several hours to days in aerosols and on surfaces, according to a new study from National Institutes of Health, CDC, UCLA and Princeton University scientists in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Governor Abbott announced that he is activating the Texas National Guard in response to the novel coronavirus outbreak in the state.

Governor Abbott issued a proclamation suspending provisions of the Texas Election Code to allow political subdivisions to postpone their 2020 local elections. This means local governments now have the ability to postpone their May 2, 2020 elections until November 3, 2020.

Governor Abbott has announced that Texas is waiving certain rules relating to parking placards for persons with disabilities. The aim of waiving this requirement is to help reduce preventable in-person contact and slow the spread of COVID-19. This will allow Texans to avoid penalties for failure to renew a parking placard, but does not waive the requirement to have a placard in order to park in an accessible parking spot.

Governor Abbott and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) announced a collaboration with local education agencies (LEA) on the Texas Students MealFinder Map which will allow Texas parents to locate LEA facilities serving meals in their communities. This searchable online map will

officially launch on Friday, March 20, and will include the address of each facility, as well as days and times meals will be served. The map will be available on the TEA website.

Childcare Licensing office in HHSC is working with Caesar Lopez, associate General Counsel for the Texas Hospital Association. A waiver has been submitted to Governor Abbott's office to ease regulations during the COVID-19 incident. For up to 20 days, a day care can be operated without a child care license without penalty. They strongly encourage active and progressive safety and security for the center and the children.

On March 21, the US and Canada will temporarily restrict all non-essential travel across the US-Canada land border. The measure will be in place for 30 days, at which point it will be reviewed by both parties.

Governor Abbott announced that he is temporarily suspending certain regulations to ensure that Texans will have continued access to their pharmacists as the state responds to COVID-19. The Governor's actions will allow pharmacists to conduct telephonic consultations, and remove regulatory barriers so that pharmacies can operate at full strength.

Governor Abbott recognized the difference in the number of positive COVID-19 tests reported by the Texas Department of State Health Services and the Johns Hopkins University data dashboard, saying the Johns Hopkins provides "additional cases that may not yet be confirmed" and may include cases of people who have been brought into the state from cruise ships. Medical groups have offered up the masks and medical gear, including the Texas Society of Plastic Surgeons and the Texas Medical Association. Dr. Luis Rios, president of the Texas Society of Plastic Surgeons, delivered 1,000 masks, 1,000 gloves and hundreds of gowns, the governor said.

Governor Abbott held a press conference to provide an update on incoming supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other resources to aid Texas' response to COVID-19. The Governor announced that the newly established Supply Chain Strike Force has already secured more than \$83 million of purchase orders for essential supplies. Additionally, the Governor announced that the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) will begin receiving 100,000 masks per day by the end of this week and the Supply Chain Strike Force will begin receiving an additional 100,000 masks per day by the end of next week—meaning the State of Texas will soon be receiving more than one million masks per week.

The Governor also announced the launch of an online portal run by the Supply Chain Strike Force to streamline the process and validation of leads for more supplies. The portal, accessible through www.texas.gov, will serve as an intake process for those wanting to provide valid leads on PPE and donations. The portal also serves as a portal for those wanting to donate supplies, services, or your time—including medical professionals and nurses looking to volunteer.

The Governor also issued an Executive Order to better track both hospital bed capacity and COVID-19 test results across the state. The Executive Order requires all hospitals, excluding psychiatric hospitals, to submit daily reports on hospital bed capacity to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) who will then share this information with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The order also requires every public or private entity utilizing FDA-approved COVID-19 tests to submit daily reports of all results to the local health department and DSHS who will then share this information with the CDC.

On March 17, Governor Abbott waived certain regulations and directed that the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) issue an emergency rule, all relating to telemedicine care for patients with state-regulated insurance plans to help doctors across Texas continue to treat their patients while mitigating the spread of COVID-19. The suspensions and emergency rule will work together to allow telemedicine visits for patients with state-regulated plans to be paid the same as in-office visits for insurance purposes. These actions build upon waivers the Governor issued last week of portions in the Occupations Code to expand provider flexibility in providing medical services over the phone.

On March 14, Governor Abbott, directed the Texas Medical Board (TMB) and the Texas Board of Nursing (TBN) to fast-track the temporary licensing of out-of-state physicians, physician assistants, certain retired physicians, nurses, and other license types to assist in Texas' response to COVID-19.

The Governor suspended State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAR) testing for the state. Governor Abbott has suspended various provisions that require government officials and members of the public to be physically present at a specified meeting location. This temporary suspension will leave important open-meeting protections in place. Governor Abbott will allow virtual and telephonic open meetings to maintain government transparency.

The President's unprecedented Nationwide Emergency Declaration, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services' (HHS) declaration of a Public Health Emergency for COVID-19 establish that exigent and emergency circumstances currently exist. For the duration of the Public Health Emergency, which began on January 27 as determined by HHS, local governments, nonprofits, and other non-state entities may proceed with new and existing noncompetitively procured contracts in order to protect property and public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threats created by emergency situations for 1) Emergency protective measures under FEMA's Public Assistance Program and 2) Use of FEMA non-disaster grant funds by non-state recipients and sub-recipients to respond to or address COVID-19.

On March 13, the President of the United States Donald Trump declared that the COVID-19 global pandemic is a national emergency.

On March 13, the Governor of the State of Texas Abbott issued a proclamation certifying that COVID-19 poses an imminent threat in the state and declared a state of disaster for all 254 counties in Texas.

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Commissioner Sid Miller announced TDA has been granted flexibility from the federal school meal program to allow Texas schools to continue to provide meals to students even if temporarily closed.

The CDC and Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) coronavirus webpages are reliable sources of information. DSHS is monitoring the Texas situation seven days a week. They are working closely with emergency response agencies, local health departments and the CDC. The most up-to-date information and guidance can be found via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus Disease 2019 (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>). The Coronavirus Task Force continues holding frequent national briefings. DSHS COVID-19 Call Center 1-877-570-9779 Hours 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

Texas People Tested

Total	35,880
Public Labs	3,704
Private Labs	32,176*

*Number does not include the total tested by all private labs.

Texas COVID-19 Cases (1)

Total Statewide Cases	2,877
Texas Counties	124
Deaths	38

County of Residence	Number of Cases	County of Residence	Number of Cases
Angelina County	3	Kaufman County	3
Aransas County	2	Kendall County	7
Atascosa County	2	Kleberg County	1
Austin County	2	Lamar County	3
Bastrop County	6	Lamb County	1
Bell County	28	Lavaca County	1
Bexar County	157	Leon County	1
Blanco County	1	Liberty County	2
Bowie County	4	Limestone County	2
Brazoria County	61	Llano County	3
Brazos County	44	Lubbock County	51
Brown County	3	Lynn County	2
Burleson County	1	Martin County	1
Burnet County	2	Matagorda County	13
Caldwell County	1	Maverick County	1
Calhoun County	3	McLennan County	36
Cameron County	20	Medina County	3
Cass County	2	Midland County	13
Castro County	8	Milam County	2
Chambers County	5	Montague County	1
Cherokee County	1	Montgomery County	66
Collin County	134	Moore County	1
Comal County	9	Morris County	1
Coryell County	1	Nacogdoches County	2
Crane County	1	Navarro County	3
Dallas County	488	Nueces County	22
Dawson County	1	Oldham County	2
De Witt County	3	Orange County	5
Deaf Smith County	2	Parker County	4

Denton County	165	Polk County	1
Eastland County	3	Potter County	5
Ector County	3	Randall County	6
El Paso County	40	Robertson County	2
Ellis County	15	Rockwall County	4
Erath County	1	Rusk County	3
Falls County	1	San Jacinto County	1
Fannin County	1	San Patricio County	1
Fayette County	2	Shelby County	2
Fort Bend County	119	Smith County	32
Franklin County	1	Starr County	2
Gaines County	1	Swisher County	1
Galveston County	70	Tarrant County	139
Grayson County	6	Taylor County	7
Gregg County	5	Terry County	3
Grimes County	2	Tom Green County	5
Guadalupe County	13	Travis County	200
Hale County	1	Upshur County	2
Hardin County	9	Uvalde County	2
Harris County	526	Val Verde County	5
Harrison County	1	Van Zandt County	2
Hays County	16	Victoria County	6
Hidalgo County	28	Walker County	3
Hill County	1	Waller County	3
Hockley County	7	Washington County	8
Hood County	3	Webb County	32
Hopkins County	2	Wharton County	6
Hunt County	3	Wichita County	28
Jackson County	1	Willacy County	2
Jefferson County	18	Williamson County	37
Jim Wells County	1	Wilson County	2
Johnson County	8	Wise County	1
Karnes County	2	Young County	1

To see county totals, scroll table below.

(1) DSHS will update the state case count each day by 12:00 Noon Central Time, the data displayed is current as of 8:00 PM the prior day.

OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES:

1. Protect life and property.
2. Support rapid & effective response.
3. Collect and disseminate accurate incident information to improve decision-making.

4. Accurately track incident costs associated with assigned resources for cost recovery.
5. Expand and maximize bed capacity.
6. Develop alternative care sites to support local governments and the health care systems.
7. Acquire supplies/equipment to support health care and testing.
8. Protect vulnerable populations.
9. Ensure visibility on progression of the disease.
10. Support local governments.
11. Set communications messaging for the event based of science and the circumstances.

Region 1 (Includes DDCs 4, 5, 6, and 22)

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (TEEX): The Texas Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) website <https://texashelp.tamu.edu> has been updated with educational information on Corona virus prevention and management, financial issues and mental health for use by the public. Recent additions to the site include food resources and animal health. County AgriLife personnel have access to the EDEN website to utilize educational information for county programs on Covid-19. Slide presentations and videos are being developed for use by county Extension agents to demonstrate handwashing and disinfecting. Thirty Common COVID- 19 Myths and Responses has been published for viewing on the EDEN site. The Texas Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) website <https://texashelp.tamu.edu> website has had 8,413 page views on Coronavirus information alone.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension also has articles on (and now has a section devoted to) Coronavirus at <https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/tag/coronavirus/> . To date, this site has received 5,602 page views since its inception in late February.

DDC 4 – Hurst (Includes: Denton, Erath, Hood, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, Somervell, Tarrant and Wise Counties)

Tarrant County:

City of Fort Worth: The Fort Worth Fire Department (FD) has opened a COVID-19 testing center available to front line health care workers including physicians, nurses, medical assistants, and other health professionals. Call the Infections Disease Coordinator at the Fort Worth Joint Emergency Operations Center at (817) 714-9709 between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

DDC 6 – Tyler (Includes: Anderson, Camp, Cherokee, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Marion, Panola, Rains, Rusk, Smith, Upshur, Van Zandt and Wood Counties)

The Public Health Laboratory of East Texas (PHLET) reported on March 30, due to reagent shortages PHLET will discontinue receiving samples from all submitters at 12:00 PM Monday March 30. Please notify others in your individual groups and seek other options for testing including in house solutions, reference laboratories and Texas Department of State Health Services Laboratory. If circumstances change they will make notifications as soon as possible. They are working diligently to find other reagent sources.

Cherokee County:

City of Rusk: Rusk State Hospital is only taking walk-ins from any other hospital. They are currently undergoing construction. Everyone who comes through the construction gate is being scanned. Anyone feeling ill or with a fever is being turned away.

Region 2 (Includes DDCs 13, 14, 15, 16 Houston, 16 Texas City, 16 Conroe, and DDC Pierce)

DDC 14–Lufkin (Includes: Angelina, Houston, Jasper, Nacogdoches, Newton, Polk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Shelby, Trinity and Tyler Counties)

Angelina County: Angelina County amended their Disaster Declaration and also added Shelter in Place, Nacogdoches County issued a Shelter in Place.

Region 3 (Includes DDCs 19, 20, 21, and 24)

DDC 20 – Corpus Christi (Includes: Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Duval, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Live Oak, Nueces, Refugio and San Patricio Counties)

Live Oak County: The fire departments also have set up decontamination stations for all reusable PPE. The Health Department has ordered a product called (Envirocleanse) A known product used to kill COVID-19 virus, ordered a 55-gallon drum direct from the vendor.

DDC 21 – Weslaco (Includes: Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy Counties)

Hidalgo County: The City of Edcouch will begin to implementing checkpoints within their jurisdiction to enforce Hidalgo County Shelter at Home Order.

DDC 24 – Del Rio (Includes: Dimmit, Edwards, La Salle, Kinney, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde and Zavala Counties)

Maverick County: Maverick County Judge and Mayor of Eagle Pass authorized the continuation of disinfectant at modified locations in and out of city limits, for resident convenience through Saturday March 28, from hours 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

EOC Command operational March 28 open 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM to support distribution sites.

Mayor Rodriguez from Brackettville visited Maverick County Dispensing operations. He was given a tour of the manufacturing of the product. In addition, took a tote for their community.

A law enforcement task force has been established to enforce Local Disaster for Public Health Declaration and continue to help current progress to flattening the curve.

Region 5 (Includes DDCs 1, 2, 3, and 7)

DDC 1 – Amarillo (Includes: Armstrong, Briscoe, Carson, Castro, Childress, Collingsworth, Dallam, Deaf Smith, Donley, Gray, Hall, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Hutchinson, Lipscomb, Moore, Ochiltree, Oldham, Parmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Swisher and Wheeler Counties)

Randall County: Effective immediately, the City of Amarillo will be going to “Level Red” (on their Corona Virus Alert Scale). Mayor Ginger Nelson is asking everyone to “go in your homes and stay in your homes.” She signed an amended declaration of disaster Monday morning that

requires all residents to stay in, shelter in place. This requirement went into effective March 30 at 11:59 PM and will end on April 13 at 11:59 PM.

DDC 3 – Wichita Falls (Includes: Archer, Baylor, Clay, Cottle, Foard, Hardeman, Jack, Wichita, Wilbarger and Young Counties)

Clay County: County Judge issued a Health Order stating guidelines for county citizens and penalties for not following guidelines effective 11:59 PM March 29. Clay County Courthouse Annex closed and phone numbers posted.

Shelter-in-Place Orders/Stay-At-Home Orders:

Counties w/orders in place	59
Total Population Covered	22,641,323
Percent of Total Texas Population	76.9%

Counties	Issued	Effective	Expiration	Population
Aransas County	27-Mar	27-Mar	14-Apr	27,567
Bastrop County	30-Mar	1-Apr	1-May	86,976
Bee County	27-Mar	27-Mar	8-Apr	33,487
Bell County	23-Mar	23-Mar	6-Apr	355,642
Bexar County	23-Mar	24-Mar	10-Apr	1,986,049
Bowie County	27-Mar	27-Mar	13-Apr	96,365
Brazoria County	26-Mar	26-Mar	3-Apr	389,943
Brooks County	27-Mar	29-Mar	11-Apr	7,114
Brown County	26-Mar	27-Mar	3-Apr	37,924
Burnet County	25-Mar	25-Mar	1-Apr	47,542
Caldwell County	30-Mar	31-Mar		44,378
Cameron County	26-Mar	25-Mar	8-Apr	423,908
Castro County	24-Mar	24-Mar	4-Apr	7,665
Chambers County	24-Mar	24-Mar	3-Apr	42,454
Culberson County	25-Mar	25-Mar		2,204
Dallas County	22-Mar	24-Mar	4-Apr	2,637,772
Denton County	24-Mar	25-Mar	31-Mar	859,064
Duval County	27-Mar	27-Mar	26-Apr	11,212
El Paso County	24-Mar	24-Mar		840,758
Ellis County	25-Mar	25-Mar	3-Apr	179,436
Erath County	25-Mar	25-Mar	1-Apr	44,668
Fort Bend County	24-Mar	25-Mar	3-Apr	787,858
Galveston County	23-Mar	24-Mar	3-Apr	337,890
Gregg County	25-Mar	25-Mar		123,707
Hardin County	27-Mar	27-Mar	10-Apr	54,635
Harris County	24-Mar	25-Mar	4-Apr	4,698,619

Hays County	25-Mar	26-Mar	10-Apr	222,631
Hidalgo County	25-Mar	26-Mar	10-Apr	865,939
Hood County	25-Mar	25-Mar	7-Apr	60,537
Hunt County	23-Mar	24-Mar		96,493
Jasper County	27-Mar	28-Mar	11-Apr	37,626
Jefferson County	27-Mar	27-Mar	10-Apr	255,001
Jim Wells County	27-Mar	28-Mar	27-Apr	40,822
Johnson County	27-Mar	27-Mar		171,361
Kaufman County	24-Mar	25-Mar	8-Apr	128,622
Llano County	30-Mar	30-Mar		23,824
Leon County	30-Mar	30-Mar	19-Apr	17,270
Liberty County	24-Mar	24-Mar	19-Apr	86,323
Madison County	30-Mar	30-Mar	12-Apr	14,422
Milam County	24-Mar	25-Mar	6-Apr	25,131
Montgomery County	27-Mar	28-Mar	12-Apr	617,800
Nacogdoches County	29-Mar	30-Mar	7-Apr	67,771
Navarro County	25-Mar	25-Mar	8-Apr	49,565
Newton County	30-Mar	30-Mar	11-Apr	13,746
Nueces County	25-Mar	26-Mar	8-Apr	362,265
Orange County	27-Mar	28-Mar	11-Apr	83,572
Polk County	25-Mar	27-Mar	3-Apr	50,031
Robertson County	25-Mar	25-Mar	8-Apr	17,284
Rockwall County	24-Mar	24-Mar	15-Apr	100,657
San Jacinto County	25-Mar	25-Mar	9-Apr	28,719
Scurry County	26-Mar	27-Mar	3-Apr	16,866
Smith County	27-Mar	27-Mar	10-Apr	235,560
Stephens County	23-Mar	23-Mar		9,433
Stonewall County	27-Mar	29-Mar	11-Apr	1,483
Tarrant County	23-Mar	23-Mar	8-Apr	2,084,931
Travis County	24-Mar	25-Mar	14-Apr	1,248,743
Tyler County	28-Mar	28-Mar	17-Apr	21,696
Val Verde County	23-Mar	24-Mar	4-Apr	49,208
Webb County	27-Mar	28-Mar	4-Apr	285,552
Wichita County	29-Mar	30-Mar		132,064
Willacy County	26-Mar	26-Mar	9-Apr	19,949
Williamson County	24-Mar	24-Mar	14-Apr	566,719

RESPONDING STATE AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS REPORTS

STATE RESOURCES COMMITTED

Agency	Resource Kind and Type	Personnel	Equipment	Status	Location
AgriLife	SOC Liaison	1		Assigned	SOC/Austin
AgriLife	Specialists/Admin	8		Activated	College Station
DPS-HSCO	GIS Specialist	1	1	Assigned	SOC/Austin
DPS-THP	Liaison	1		Assigned	SOC/Austin
DPS-THP	Personnel	4	4	Assigned	Dallas County
DPS-THP	Personnel	8	8	Assigned	Harris County
DPS-THP	HSOC GIS Specialist	1	1	Assigned	SOC/Austin
DPS THP	Troopers			Assigned	Statewide
DPS CID	Special Agents			Assigned	Statewide
DSHS	MIST	2		Assigned	DDC 4A Hurst
DSHS	MIST	4		Assigned	Denton State School
DSHS	Public Health Regions and Regional Health and Medical Operations Center	149		Assigned	Statewide
DSHS SMOC	SMOC Staff	77		Assigned	Telework
TAHC	SOC Liaison	1		Assigned	Virtual
TAHC	AROCC Operations	6		Assigned	Virtual
TAHC	Logistics	1		Assigned	Virtual
TDA	SOC Liaison	1		Assigned	Remote
TDLR	SOC Liaison	1		Assigned	Remote
TEA	SOC Liaison	1		Assigned	Remote
TFS	Logistical Support	18		Assigned	San Antonio
TFS	Planning Support	2		Assigned	TDEM Region 1
TFS	Planning Support	2		Assigned	DDC 7
TFS	Planning Support	1		Assigned	DDC 3
TFS	Planning Support	1		Assigned	DDC 17
TFS	Planning Support	1		Assigned	DDC 20
TFS	Planning Support	1		Assigned	DDC 5 & 6
TFS	ESF 4 Representative	1		Assigned	Remote
TFS	Type III IMT	5		Assigned	DDC 4B & Remote
TFS	Liaison Officer	1		Assigned	DDC 7 (remote)
TFS	Planning Support	1		Assigned	DDC 15

TFS	Operational Support	1		Assigned	DSHS Region 1 / Lubbock
TMD	SOC Military Desk	1		Assigned	SOC/Austin
TMD	SOC Food Unit	1		Assigned	SOC/Austin
TMD	SOC Logs Veters	11		Assigned	SOC/Austin
TMD	6 CST Support Team	10		Assigned	San Antonio
TMD	Military District Coordinators	14		Assigned	Abilene, Austin, Bryan, Conroe, Corpus Christi, El Paso, Garland, Houston, Hurst, Lubbock, Pierce, San Antonio, Tyler, Weslaco
TMD	J6 Support	6		Assigned	Austin
TMD	ETN Support	4		Assigned	Garland
TMD	GSU 08	34		Assigned	Kingsville
TMD	GSU 10-1	34		Assigned	Houston
TMD	BJTF Mission Cmd	4		Assigned	Fort Worth
TMD	BJTF Mission Cmd	4		Assigned	Houston
TMD	BJTF Mission Cmd	4		Assigned	Austin
TMD	JTF LNO 3 Bde Cmd	3		Assigned	Austin
TMD	General Support Unit	4		Assigned	Lubbock
TMD	General Support Unit	4		Assigned	Dallas
TMD	General Support Unit	4		Assigned	El Paso
TMD	General Support Unit	4		Assigned	Austin
TMD	General Support Unit	4		Assigned	Corpus Christi
TMD	General Support Unit	4		Assigned	Tyler
TMD	Engineering Assistance	26		Assigned	Austin
TMD	Traffic Control ECPT	5		Activated	Huntsville
TMD	GSU Set Up FNS	30		Activated	Dallas
TMD	TMD Traffic Coord	2		Activated	Austin
TPWD	SOC Liaison	2	2	Assigned	Austin

FINAL COMMENTS: The State Operations Center (SOC) remains at Level II (Escalated Response Conditions). The Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) continues to monitor the situation and will provide additional situation reports as needed.

The four levels of SOC activation are:

- Level I (Emergency Conditions)
- Level II (Escalated Response Conditions)
- Level III (Increased Readiness Conditions)
- Level IV (Normal Conditions)

This Situation Report can be found on the TDEM webpage at: <https://tdem.texas.gov/situation-reports/>

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