

# SAM HARLESS

State Representative District 126  
March 2020 Newsletter



*Texas House of Representatives*



**District 126**

**News  
and  
Information**



## Coronavirus Changes the World

This last month has been a difficult one, with so many people across Harris County becoming infected or affected as a result of COVID-19. Our community, county, and the country are reeling from the impact while trying to come to grips with what the future holds for us, our economy, in fact our very way of life. Our county and state leadership is doing everything they think will best protect the public and stop the spread. While we may not agree with everything they are doing, its all our responsibility not to contribute to the spread and to do what we can to follow social distancing and limited movement guidelines.

By the 1st of April, we have almost 450 confirmed cases in Harris County with another 506 inside the City of Houston. In the Northwest quadrant of Harris County where District 126 lies, out of the 450 reported cases countywide, we have had 247 cases, so ours is the more active area. See the quadrant chart below for unincorporated Harris County Numbers.

**Prisoner Release:** Judge Hidalgo signed an Executive Order providing for the release of "non-violent" prisoners awaiting trial. These offenders will now have to go before a panel to be evaluated and released at the discretion of the Sheriff. As we have seen on television, bonds as low as \$10 were given to some inmates, including

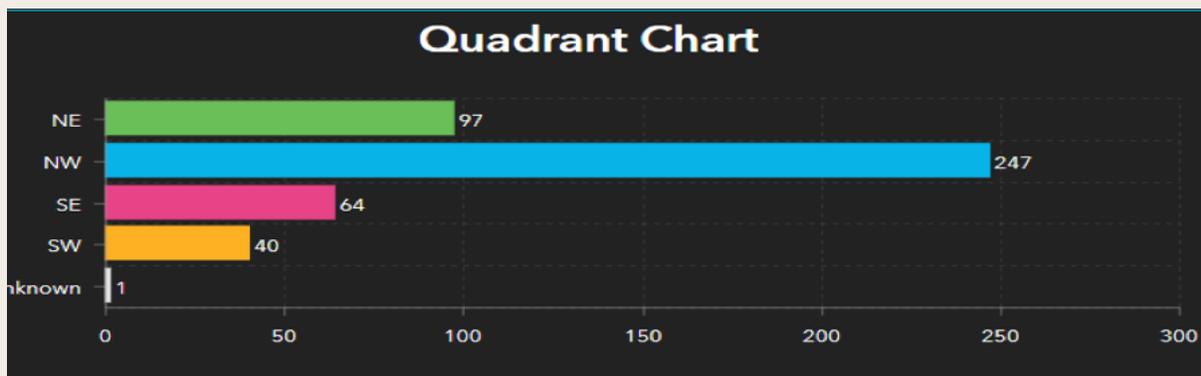
some charged with violent crimes. Our Commissioner, Jack Cagle, has expressed his opposition publicly. As of April 2nd, 14 have been released from jail.

It has been recently reported that Judge Herb Richter has issued an injunction halting these releases.

As your State Representative, I maintain routine contact with our county and state officials to keep you posted on updates to news and announcements about local and state efforts. I try to provide the highlights so you aren't inundated and hope you find our information useful. Please follow my Facebook page for daily updates and new information at: [www.Facebook.com/samharless126](http://www.Facebook.com/samharless126)

At this juncture, no one knows how long we will endure this crisis and while I know it is inconveniencing many people and hurting our economy, please keep in mind the lives that are being lost daily. It is truly one of the greatest tragedies of our time.

### Sam Harless, State Representative



## COVID-19 News and Resources

### State of Texas Resources

#### Texas Unemployment Commission

Texas had the 4<sup>th</sup> biggest increase in jobless claims, with 139,250 claims. TX Workforce Commission does not have an automatic queue for callers – so people are just placed on hold for hours. We are seeing the average turnaround time to be about 21 days to get benefits. According to news reports, over a million calls were placed to Texas Workforce Commissioner during one 24 hour period.

*“The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) encourages individuals previously deemed monetarily ineligible for unemployment benefits to reapply online starting Sunday, April 5, 2020. This date marks the beginning of a new quarter and as such the base period for unemployment benefits and those previously ineligible may now qualify.”*

TWC now has over 1,000 staff helping support unemployment insurance services and more staff is expected to be hired in each of its unemployment benefits call centers.

TWC Website to Apply for Benefits: [TWC Unemployment Benefits](#)

Texas Workforce TeleCenter - 800-939-6631 (Hours M-S 8a to 6p)

Department of Emergency Management - <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>

Texas Department of State Health Services - [DSHS Coronavirus Website](#)

Texas Attorney General Price Gouging Complaints: [AG Price Gouging](#)

## **Harris County Resources**

Harris County and Harris Public Health has a lot of information available.

Harris County Public Health - [Harris Health Confirmed CoronaVirus Cases](#)

Harris Public Health Self Assessment Tool: [Self Assessment Tool](#)

Stay Home Order: <https://www.readyharris.org/stay-home>

### **Testing Sites**

In Houston and Harris County, there are currently 4 testing FEMA supported sites with a capacity of 1,000 tests per day with enough supplies to last 20 more days. By April 10th, Harris County has to come up with a plan to transition to local control of the testing sites. There are many times more tests being done by private labs outside the public testing sites.

**ReadyHarris Website:** <https://www.readyharris.org/#resources>

**Harris County Fire Marshal** hotline to report businesses who are in violation of the “Stay Home, Work Safe” - 832-839-6941

**Precinct 4 Commissioner Community Assistance** - [Pct 4 Community assistance](#)

## **City of Houston**

Houston Public Health Dept - <https://houstonemergency.org/covid19/>

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## **Federal Resources / Websites**

CDC- Center for Disease Control: [CDC Coronavirus](#)

Small Business Administration: [SBA](#)

SBA Paycheck Protection Program - [Paycheck Protection Loans](#)

An SBA loan that helps businesses keep their workforce employed (during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.)

FEMA Corona Response: [FEMA CoronaVirus](#)

## **Community Resources**

Northwest Assistance Ministries (NAM) is a non-profit, community-based, multi-program social service agency that serves part of the Northwestern are of Houston. They provide assistance through a variety of ways including food, shelter (i.e. rental assistance), & health. Here is a link to their support services page where individuals can find more information and signup for services: <https://www.namonline.org/help>

H-E-B has launched community care efforts to assist those in our communities that are most vulnerable. This includes a partnership with Favor Delivery to help individuals who are 60 years or older order and receive essential food and supplies. The Favor Senior Support Line will operate from 11am - 3pm each day and can be reached at 1-833-397-0080. Seniors can also place orders through Favor’s website or by downloading the Favor app and searching for “H-E-B”. More information and links can be found on the H-E-B website here: <https://newsroom.heb.com/h-e-b-launches-community-care-efforts-across-the-state->

[to-assist-our-most-vulnerable-neighbors/](#)

Favor website: <https://favordelivery.com/order-delivery/h-e-b-5/>

Houston Food Bank and its Partners provide essential services and will continue to remain operational. While there aren't any service locations within the immediate area of the District they have a map showing where these locations are and also provide information for those in need of food assistance. As the COVID-19 situation continues they will also be in need of any possible donations. Their website and food assistance information can be found here: <https://www.houstonfoodbank.org/covid19/>

Southern Smoke Foundation is a nonprofit foundation with the primary purpose of assisting those in the food and beverage community. While that may be their primary focus they have a COVID-19 resource page that contains helpful information for everyone. That page can be found here: <https://southernSmoke.org/covid-19-resources/>

Champion Forest Baptist Church website to give or get help: [Champion Forest Baptist](#)

Volunteer Houston: <https://volunteerhouston.org>

### **Local Restaurants Still Open**

As for restaurants still open, these are just a handful of restaurants (all on the border of or inside the District) that remain open for business. If people would like to search for even more local businesses in their area that are still operational you can google for restaurants near you and Google Maps will show altered hours of operation and if the restaurant offers takeout/delivery.

Akaihi Japanese Restaurant- [7312 Louetta Rd, Spring, TX 77379](#)

The Bayou Cajun Cafe - [9803 Spring Cypress Rd, Houston, TX 77070](#)

Pauls Pizza Shop - [16702 Stuebner Airline Rd, Spring, TX 77379](#)

Baileys Restaurant- [17032 Stuebner Airline Rd, Spring, TX 77379](#)

Clementines Restaurant - [6448 Cypress Creek Pkwy, Houston, TX 77069](#)

Bluewater Seafood - [6107 FM 1960, Houston, TX 77069](#)

Black Walnut Cafe - [10623 Louetta Rd, Houston, TX 77070](#)

Gringo's - [6925 Cypresswood Dr, Spring, TX 77379](#)

## **Public Education Moves To At-Home Learning**

As a result of widespread concerns over the COVID-19 spread, all educational activities in the area have immediately transitioned to a distance learning mode. Our Districts have stopped all in-class instruction until at least May 4th, closing buildings until further notice.

In spite of all of this, things are still going on at Klein, Cy-Fair, and Tomball School Districts! Our teachers and staff are working harder

than ever to make sure the learning process goes uninterrupted.

Many of the schools are providing curbside pickup for meals to support a healthy diet for our kids during this difficult time.

Klein ISD: <https://kleinisd.net>  
Klein Remote Learning: [Klein Remote Learning](#)

Cy-Fair ISD: <https://www.cfishd.net/en>  
Cy-Fair Learning From Home: [Cy-Fair Home Learning](#)

Tomball ISD: <https://www.tomballisd.net>  
Tomball ISD Remote Learning: [Tomball Remote Learning](#)



## Around The District

### Champion Stormwater Detention Project

Champions Basin  
Stormwater Project

Champions Stormwater  
Survey Link

The March 21st meeting for the Champions Stormwater Detention Project was postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak and a future date will be announced at a later date.



### Local Business Philanthropy

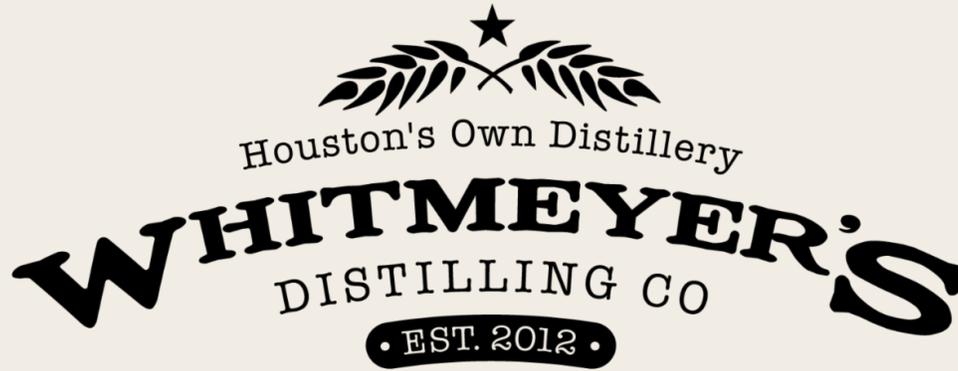
Just a word of recognition for our local businesses that have stepped up during this disaster. We are seeing innovation and repurposing on a grand scale. Using their facilities or working to provide much needed products to help their community says a lot about the companies and their leadership.

One such business I would like to take the time to recognize and thank is a local Houston business that is stepping up to help out our community in this time of need. Whitmeyer's Distilling Co. has recently repurposed their facilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and are producing FDA approved hand sanitizer which they are distributing to the public and organizations in need.

Everyone knows that when times get tough Texans get tougher and this is a great example of a local business stepping up to help their community.

Whitmeyer's Distilling Website: [Whitmeyer's Distilling](#)

Whitmeyer's Facebook Page: [Whitmeyers Facebook Page](#)



Other businesses we've heard about are Bonfire Grill in Tomball. They have provided food for Tomball Police and Fire Departments.

Also, Frey's Backyard Café in Tomball, along with Gordon Food Service, provided breakfast to HCA Houston Healthcare – Tomball, Tomball Fire Department and Tomball Police Department.

## 2020 U.S. Women's Open Golf Championship

One of our areas most popular events, the US Women's Open for slated for June of 2020 has now officially been postponed until December 10- 13th at Champions Golf Club.

## Harris County Precinct 4 Road Project Update

The Champions Drive project (between FM 1960 and Cypress Creek) has now been marked as completed as of April 3rd making the road now useable by the traveling public. The road striping has been completed and a few minor utility issues remain for a later date.

## In The District



### Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce

#### Transportation and Mobility Committee

2nd Tuesday of each month  
Meeting Location:  
29201 Quinn Rd.  
Tomball, Texas 77375  
Upstairs Conference Room

Tomball Government Affairs  
Committee

Cy-Fair Chamber of Commerce

The committee meets the 1st Thursday of each month to discuss governmental issues that confront their Cy-Fair area. They meet at the Chamber offices located at 8711 Highway 6 North, Ste. 120 Houston, TX 77095.

[Cy-Fair Chamber Website](#)



## Houston NW Chamber Public Safety Forum

Public Safety Forum Meeting:  
4th Thursday each month  
8:30 am - 9:30 am  
Champions Emergency Services  
District  
12730 Champion Forest Dr.  
Houston, TX 77066

[Houston NW Chamber Website](#)

[Visit our House of Representative Website:](#)

## Contact Us

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