

## **New Release**

Matagorda County Emergency Operation Center Press Release

March 19, 2020 1800 hours

For immediate Release:

At noon today, Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued an executive order taking steps to battle the coronavirus. This executive order called for:

- Avoiding social gatherings to no more than 10 people
- Avoiding eating and drinking in bars, restaurants, food courts, or visiting gyms
- Ban people from visiting nursing homes except for critical care

The order mandates that all bars and restaurant are allowed to offer only “drive through” or “to go” service and to cease all dining in.

The order goes into effect on Friday, March 20, 2020 at 12:00 a.m. (midnight) and is in effect until midnight on April 3, 2020.

He emphasized the order may be extended past April 3rd depending on need.

The Governor stated we are following the guidelines from the President and the CDC.

He went on to make clear, that the use of drive-thru, pickup, or delivery options is allowed and highly encouraged throughout the limited duration of this executive order.

The Governor's 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.

I want to make sure everyone understands the Governor's 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.

The Governor continued to stress offices and work places could remain open and practice good hygiene. But it is recommended, if possible work from home in order to achieve optimum isolation from COVID-19.

The more that people follow the rules and reduce their public contact, the sooner COVID-19 will be contained and the sooner this executive order will expire.

Matagorda County will enforce the Governor's order and we will make sure restaurants and bars in all of Matagorda County follow the directives of the Governor's Executive Order.

In addition to the Governor's orders Matagorda County Commissioners Court has ordered the cancellation of all public activities on County owned property until further notice.

This includes community centers, fire department buildings, parks, and fairgrounds. Matagorda County will not be accepting reservations for rentals for these facilities.

The closure of the parks, community centers, fairgrounds and beach accesses are being undertaken out of an abundance of caution for the protection of the public due to the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Matagorda County beach public access points (including, but not limited to, Matagorda and Sargent) will be closed by 8:00 a.m. on Monday, March 23, 2020.

Although, the track at Heffelfinger Park in Blessing is open for walkers/joggers in pairs.

Matagorda County will continue to monitor the situation and will continue to take appropriate actions.

The Court suggests that all industry limit unnecessary travel.

The Court asks that we limit unnecessary shopping, and social visits.

Please practice good hygiene by washing your hands regularly, avoid touching your face, sneeze and cough into a tissue and disinfect frequently used items and surfaces regularly.

The County's top priority is the safety and well-being of our residents and visitors and they feel that taking these precautionary measures will help in that endeavor.

Should you need any additional information, please feel free to call 211 and you will be able to ask questions.

to work closely with the State of Texas, Matagorda County Hospital District, MEHOP, Palacios Community Medical Center, and the Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

We understand you are scared, but please stay calm and listen to the experts. We will get through this time of uncertainty. We admit that our recommendations change almost daily because we are faced with this new virus.

It is only natural that some might panic. But now isn't the time to panic.

Listen to the facts and the experts.

Now is the time to think about the safety of your family and friends.

Think about our neighbors, check on them. Call them and make sure they understand the newest request.

State health officials cannot stress enough for those who are experiencing mild illness, stay home and care for yourself there. The more the emergency rooms and doctors' offices fill with mildly ill patients, the more resources are used that should be reserved for the sickest patients.

This message is for every person in Matagorda County, please read and understand what we are asking, it is important.

**Again we stress do not panic**, but protect yourself and others from the spread of this virus.

Again the spread of the virus is now being transmitted in the community by individual people. Do your part to limit the

spread. Please be smart about your contact with others. Regardless of your relationship with them.

Please pay attention to the published guidelines from the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), which are everyday actions to stop the spread of any respiratory virus, including COVID-19:

Together we can overcome this current health crisis, let's be Matagorda County Strong and help each other, pay attention to the elderly. Remember our restaurants are NOT closed just doing business in different ways, please check their Facebook page for your favorite restaurant's phone number.