



EXTENSION OF DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY FOR JIM WELLS COUNTY, TEXAS (COVID-19)

WHEREAS, beginning in December 2019, a novel coronavirus, now designated as COVID-19, was detected in mainland China, and the contagious respiratory virus has since spread, globally; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a worldwide pandemic on March 11, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Texas Governor Greg Abbott declared a state of disaster for the State of Texas on the 13th day of March, 2020, to protect the health and welfare of Texans in relation to the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, On March 14, 2020, I Juan Rodriguez, Jr., County Judge of Jim Wells County, determined that extraordinary and immediate measures must be taken to respond quickly, prevent and alleviate the suffering of people exposed to and those infected with the virus, as well as those that could potentially be infected or impacted by COVID-19 and issued a proclamation relating thereto; and

WHEREAS, the Jim Wells County Commissioners' Court has determined that extraordinary and immediate measures must be taken to respond quickly, prevent and alleviate the suffering of people exposed to and those infected with the virus, as well as those that could potentially be infected or impacted by COVID-19,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE JIM WELLS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT:

1. Pursuant to Section 418.108(a) of the Texas Government Code, a state of disaster for public health emergency is hereby declared for JIM WELLS COUNTY **extending** the original declaration issued by the Hon. Juan Rodriguez, Jr., on March 14, 2020;
2. Pursuant to Section 418.108(b) of the Texas Government Code, this declaration of a state of disaster for public health emergency shall continue for a period of thirty (30) days from the date of this declaration unless continued or renewed by the Commissioners Court of Jim Wells County;
3. Pursuant to Section 418.108(c) of the Texas Government Code this declaration of a state of disaster for public health emergency shall be given prompt and general

publicity and shall be filed promptly with JC Perez, III, as the County Clerk of JIM WELLS COUNTY;

4. Pursuant to Section 418.108(d) of the Texas Government Code, this declaration of a state of disaster for public health emergency activates the Jim Wells County Emergency Management Plan, in addition to implementation of the Jim Wells County Continuity of Operation Plan; and
5. This declaration of a state of disaster for public health emergency shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance.
6. Jim Wells County therefore adopts Exhibit "A" regarding public and private gatherings.
7. IT IS ORDERED that peace officers, code enforcement inspectors, and Fire Departments are hereby authorized to enforce this order.
8. BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that a violation of this Disaster Declaration is Punishable as a Class C Misdemeanor by a fine not to exceed \$500.00 or as authorized by Government Code Sec. 418.173 and adopted in the country's emergency plan by a fine not to exceed \$1,000.00 or confinement in jail for a term not to exceed 180 days, whichever is greater.

SIGNED THIS 20TH DAY OF MARCH, 2020.





Juan Rodriguez, Jr., County Judge

ATTEST:



J.C. Perez, III, County Clerk

EXHIBIT "A"

DECLARATION REGARDING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE GATHERINGS

1. The virus that causes COVID-19 is easily transmitted, especially in group settings, and it is essential that the spread of the virus be slowed to protect the ability of public and private health care providers to handle an influx of patients and safeguard public health and safety.
2. Because of the risk of the rapid spread of the virus, and the need to protect the most vulnerable members of the community, this Declaration prohibits all indoor public and private gatherings within and enclosed space of 10 persons or more anywhere in Jim Wells County beginning on the day of execution and continuing for as long as reasonably necessary unless extended consistent with requirements of state law.
3. For all other gatherings, it is strongly recommended that social distancing protocols established by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and found within the "Implementation of Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission" issued by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") on or around March 12, 2020 (available online at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community-mitigation-strategy.pdf, as well as "Interim Guidance: Get Your Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events Ready for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)" issued on or around March 15, 2020 (available online at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/Mass-GatheringsDocument_FINAL.pdf) including canceling, rescheduling, or not attending events with more than 10 persons.
4. Further, organizations that serve high-risk populations (defined below) should follow CDC guidance for social distancing.
5. Definitions and further guidance:
 - a. For purposes of this Declaration, a "Mass Gathering" is any event or convening, subject to the exceptions and clarifications below, that brings together or is likely to bring together 10 or more persons at the same time in a single room or other single confined or enclosed space, such as, by way of example and without limitation, an auditorium, theatre, stadium (indoor or outdoor), arena or event center, meeting hall, conference center, large cafeteria, or any other confined indoor or confined outdoor space.
 - b. A "Mass Gathering" includes events in confined outdoor spaces, which means an outdoor space that (i) is enclosed by a fence, physical barrier, or other structure and (ii) where people are present and they are within arm's length of one another for extended periods.
 - c. This Declaration also does not prohibit gatherings of people in multiple, separate enclosed spaces in a single building such as a multiplex movie theater, so long as 10 people are not present in any single space at the same time. This Declaration also does not prohibit use of enclosed spaces where 10 or more people may be present

at different times during the day, so long as 10 or more people are not present in the space at the same time. For any gathering covered by this subsection c., compliance with Social Distancing Recommendations, including providing hand sanitizer and tissues and increasing cleaning of commonly touched surfaces is strongly encouraged.

- d. For purposes of clarity, a "Mass Gathering" does not include the following:
- (i) City of Alice International Airport;
 - (ii) public or private schools and places of worship;
 - (iii) museums (so long as visitors are generally not within arm's length of one another for extended periods);
 - (iii) spaces where 10 or more persons may be in transit or waiting for transit such as bus stops;
 - (iv) office space, hotels, or residential buildings;
 - (v) grocery stores, shopping malls, outdoor markets, or other retail establishments where large numbers of people are present but it is unusual for them to be within arm's length of one another for extended periods;
 - (vii) hospitals, medical facilities and shelters; and
 - (viii) jails and detention centers.

In all such settings, it is recommended that the public follow Social Distancing Recommendations, and harm reduction measures such as hand sanitizer and tissues should be provided when possible. However, any specific large gathering space that is part of any building included in this subparagraph d. is subject to the prohibition on Mass Gatherings if the space holds 10 or more people.

- e. "High-Risk Populations" include people who are:
- i. 60 years old and older;
 - ii. People with certain health conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, kidney disease and weakened immune systems;
 - iii. People who are pregnant or were pregnant in the last two weeks;
 - iv. People experiencing homelessness.