



Listen ★ Learn ★ Lead

March 17, 2020

SPECIAL EDITION - 1



News and developments relating to COVID-19, referred to henceforth in this newsletter as the Coronavirus, are occurring rapidly. In this newsletter, I will provide you with a quick overview of the latest news in our state and local communities.



This special edition relating to the Coronavirus includes the following:

- Coronavirus Stats
- Education Updates
- Texas Driver License / State ID Renewals
- Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)
- Collin County Updates
- Dallas County Updates

CORONAVIRUS STATS

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is tracking cases of the Coronavirus and updates its site with the latest information each day by noon (CST). According to the DSHS website today, Texas has 64 confirmed cases of the Coronavirus, with six cases involving Collin County residents and nine cases

involving Dallas County residents. Governor Abbott has prepared us that we can expect an increase in these numbers as more people are tested.

The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is in constant communication with the United States Center for Disease Control and sharing the latest news about the coronavirus situation in Texas on their website. For the most up-to-date information on the Coronavirus in Texas, please visit <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/news/updates.shtm>.

EDUCATION UPDATES

Governor Greg Abbott announced Monday, March 16 that he is waiving the STAAR test requirements for the 2019-2020 school year. This decision will ease the strain school districts, teachers, and students are experiencing during the outbreak. [Click here](#) for more information from his office.

[Dallas ISD](#) and [Richardson ISD](#) have announced that campuses will close indefinitely to help slow the spread of the Coronavirus.

[Allen ISD](#), [Lovejoy ISD](#), [McKinney ISD](#), [Plano ISD](#), [Prosper ISD](#), [Wylie ISD](#) will delay classes through Friday, March 20.

[Frisco ISD](#) approved a resolution declaring an emergency closure of all district facilities for the week of March 16-20, and students will begin eLearning March 17.

[Garland ISD](#) announced all facilities will now be delayed through April 3, 2020.

[Collin College](#) has extended student spring break until March 22, 2020.

[Richland College](#) will not hold classes March 16, 2020 - March 29, 2020 as faculty and staff transition to working, teaching, and learning remotely.

[University of Texas Dallas](#) is extending its spring break by one week, and there will be no classes from March 23 - March 27. Faculty and staff will use the additional time to prepare to transition courses to online delivery.

Refer to each Independent School District (ISD), college or university's website for the latest announcement on closures and alternative learning plans.

TEXAS DRIVER LICENSE / STATE ID RENEWALS

Texas Department of Public Safety is extending the expiration of a Texas ID card, driver license, commercial driver license, or election identification certificate for the duration of the Governor's declaration of a State Disaster. The DPS considers a Texas issued card displaying an expired date valid if the expiration date on the driver license or ID card is on or after March 13, 2020 AND the current date is within 60 days of the end of the State of Disaster.

Addressing the issue of long wait times to obtain or renew a driver license or Texas ID at Texas Department of Public Safety driver license offices has been a top priority for me and is particularly important now in an effort to help stop the spread of the Novel Coronavirus.

DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (DUA)

The Texas Workforce Commission's [Disaster Unemployment Assistance \(DUA\)](#) provides unemployment benefits for individuals who lost their jobs or self-employment or who are no longer working as a direct result of a major disaster for which a disaster assistance period is declared, and who applied but are not eligible for regular unemployment benefits. See the Eligibility section for details.

Eligibility

If you are eligible for regular benefits, TWC must pay those benefits before taking a DUA application.

You may be eligible for DUA if one of the following occurred as a direct result of the disaster:

- You lost your job, which was more than 50% of your total income.
- You live in, work in, or travel through the disaster area.
- Your place of employment was damaged or closed.
- You were scheduled to start work but the job no longer exists or you can no longer reach the new job.
- You suffered injury or incapacitation.
- You became the breadwinner or major support of the household due to the death of the head of household.

COLLIN COUNTY UPDATES

Collin County Judge Chris Hill issued a [formal disaster declaration](#) for Collin County on Monday, March 16, 2020. In this declaration, Judge Hill recommends postponing or cancelling all public gatherings of more than 50 people. The declaration took effect immediately and will be in effect for seven days, unless continued or renewed by the Commissioners Court of Collin County. The mayors of Allen, Frisco, McKinney and Plano, working in cooperation with officials from Collin County, issued similar declarations.

DALLAS COUNTY UPDATES

Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins issued an [order](#) prohibiting community gatherings of more than 500 people and discouraging attending events of more than 250 people. High-risk individuals are discouraged from attending gatherings of more than 10 people.

The City of Dallas amended its [emergency regulations](#) effective at 11:59 PM on Monday, March 16 to restrict community gatherings to no more than 50 people, prohibit dine-in services for restaurants, and close bars, lounges, taverns, private clubs, gyms, health studios, and commercial amusement facilities and will continue until they are either rescinded or until they expire. The Dallas City Council will meet at 9 AM on Wednesday, March 19 to vote on whether to extend the disaster declaration.