



April 3, 2020

SPECIAL EDITION - 4



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Our communities, state, and nation are battling COVID-19 (the Coronavirus), and as a result, we are living in uncertain times. My motto is to listen, learn, and lead, and I have certainly had the opportunity to do all three these past few weeks as we all adjust to a new normal. I have been on multiple calls with the Governor and his staff, other legislators, local leaders, and superintendents to discuss the current emergency, future policies to promote public health and public safety, and the impact on the state budget.

In this newsletter, I will share some of this information I have learned as well as address some of the questions and concerns I have received from you. One program in particular, the Paycheck Protection Program, is one that I would like to highlight that will help small businesses (including non-profits and churches) and the people they employ. More information about this federal program may be found under [Texas Workforce / Texas Small Businesses](#).

Stay safe and healthy, and join me in praying for our heroic medical professionals and first responders who are on the front lines in this battle, and honor the Texas workers who are placing themselves at risk to ensure we have the vital goods and services we need as we stay safely at home.

Finally, remember to stay home unless it's absolutely necessary to leave. Together, we will defeat this disease and emerge stronger than ever.

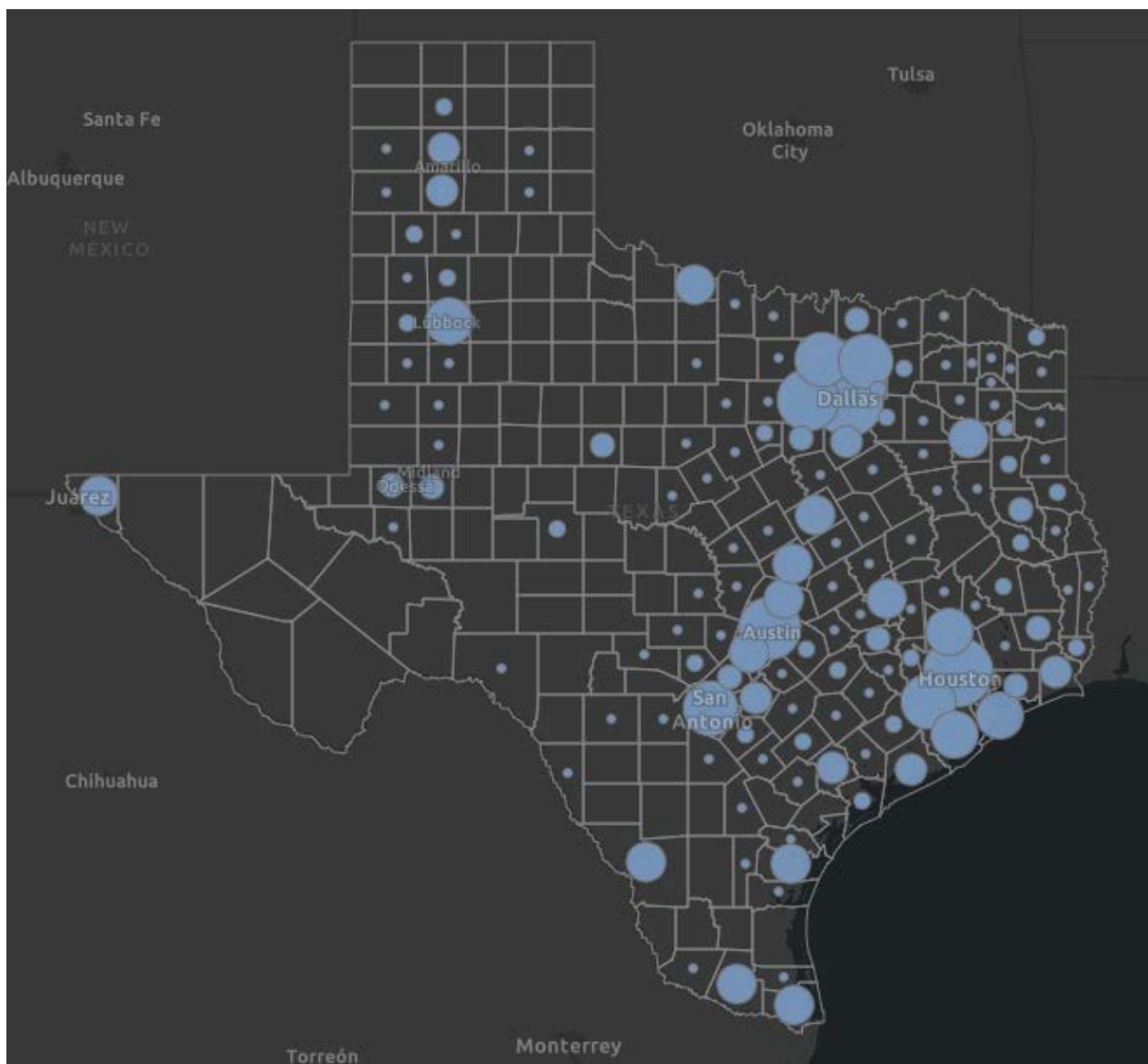


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The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is [tracking COVID-19 cases](#) and updates its site with the latest information each day by noon (CST).

- Texas has 5,330 confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- There are 227 confirmed cases of COVID-19 involving Collin County residents, and
- There are 831 confirmed cases of COVID-19 involving Dallas County residents.



## FEDERAL UPDATES

President Donald Trump issued a **Major Disaster Declaration** for the State of Texas.

Last week, the U.S. Congress passed [the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Relief \(CARES\) Act](#). The U.S. Senate Committee of Small Business and Entrepreneurship has a webpage dedicated to the CARES Act with a guide to federal programs for small businesses.

The **U.S. Small Business Administration** (SBA) has information and guidance for small businesses on the different loan resources available and provides low-interest loans to businesses and homeowners. This webpage includes the following:

- [Disaster assistance webpage](#) that has links to apply for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan online and check application status.
- For additional assistance, the SBA has a contact page or may be contacted at 1-800-659-2955 or [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov).

The **Internal Revenue Service** (IRS) has a webpage dedicated to the [CARES Act](#), including an overview of the Paycheck Protection Program and a link to the [loan application](#). Additionally, the agency offers a [webpage dedicated to COVID-19](#) with the following:

- [News releases](#) regarding the tax deadline extension.
- [Online resources](#) to help taxpayers with filing and refunds.
- Information and updates on the [economic impact payments](#) that were included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.
- Frequently asked questions about the new [Employee Retention Credit](#) created under the CARES Act.

The **United States Department of Labor** (DOL) has created a [resource page](#) with the following information:

- Guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19 from the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#).

- Information on common issues employers and employees face when responding to COVID-19 including information on the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#) and job protected-leave under the [Family and Medical Leave Act](#).

The [U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#) and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency provides [tips on avoiding cyber scams](#) related to COVID-19.

## STATE OF TEXAS UPDATES



[Texas' online information site](#) has a new page offering information for Texans impacted by COVID-19. For a complete list of updates, programs, and services to address the COVID-19 crisis, please visit this website.

[Executive Order](#) by Governor Greg Abbott was issued and took effect April 2, 2020 requiring all Texans to stay home unless they are participating in an essential service or activity (see below for a list of essential business sectors). The social distancing guidelines follows the decision of President Trump and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will now be in effect until April 30, and in-person classroom learning (schools) will be closed until May 4, 2020.

According to the Governor's press release, the Executive Order does not prohibit people from accessing essential services or engaging in essential daily activities, such as going to the grocery store or gas station, providing or obtaining other essential services, hunting or fishing, or engaging in physical activity like jogging or bicycling, so long as the necessary precautions are maintained to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and to minimize in-person contact with people who are

not in the same household. The order also includes exemption for religious services conducted in churches, congregations, and houses of worship. All critical infrastructure will remain operational, and government entities and businesses will continue providing essential services.

Essential services are list on the [Texas Department of Emergency Management](#) and include the following essential critical business sectors:

- Health care / public health
- Law enforcement, public safety, and other first responders
- Food and agriculture
- Energy
- Water and wastewater
- Transportation and logistics
- Public works and infrastructure support services,
- Communications and information technology
- Other community or government-based operations and essential functions
- Critical manufacturing
- Hazardous materials
- Financial services
- Chemical
- Defense industrial base
- Commercial facilities
- Residential / shelter facilities and services
- Hygiene products and services
- Religious services conducted in churches, congregations, and houses of worship.

### **[COVID-19 Testing Information](#)**

The Texas Department of State Health Services provides information on COVID-19 testing. A person's doctor will help make the decision if testing is necessary. Individuals without health insurance can still get tested if a doctor or healthcare worker recommends it. For more information about testing, call your doctor and/or access care the way you normally do. To access help finding a doctor or accessing

medical care, call 2-1-1 to be directed to low or no-cost providers in your community.

[Drive-Thru Testing](#) is available at a number of sites in North Texas for individuals eligible to be tested.

[The Comfort Food Care Package](#) (CFCP) program provides meals for at-risk youth and families in communities across Texas as our state works through the COVID-19 crisis and is the result of a partnership between the Governor's Public Safety Office, the Texas network of Family and Youth Services Programs, Favor Delivery, the Texas Restaurant Association, and Texas restaurants. Participating restaurants list CFCPs on their online ordering system for customers to purchase on behalf of at-risk families and youth in the community. Customers add CFCPs to their orders and purchase. Family and Youth Success Programs identify families and shelters who have the most need and work with participating restaurants and Favor Delivery to have the meals delivered.

[Travel Restrictions to Texas](#) – Governor Greg Abbott expanded his original Executive Order mandating a 14 day quarantine for people traveling to Texas to now include anyone from the State of California, State of Louisiana, State of Washington, City of Atlanta, Georgia, City of Chicago, Illinois, City of Detroit, Michigan, and the City of Miami, Florida. State troopers have been stationed along the Texas / Louisiana border with checkpoints and in Texas airports to enforce this Executive Order.

## EDUCATION UPDATES

### **Education Resources for Families**

[HomeEducator.com](#) launched a website for parents educating their children at home during the threat of COVID-19.



Additionally, the Texas Homeschool Coalition has launched a Facebook page, [Coronavirus Homeschool Support](#), to provide parents who have recently added homeschooling to their other responsibilities.

[Numinds Enrichment](#) also launched a Facebook Live series from 9 AM – 5 PM Mondays through Fridays to provide resources for parents who are educating school-aged children at home. They start the day with words of encouragement and an inspiration moment and offer a parent power hour and enrichment activities for students throughout the day.

[The Texas Meal School Finder](#) site was recently launched by the Texas Education Agency to help students who are food insecure find meals while schools are closed in response to reducing the spread of COVID-19.

## WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### **Texas Workers and Jobseekers**

[Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas](#) is the workforce board serving those living and working in Collin County as well as 13 other counties surrounding Dallas and Tarrant.

[Workforce Solutions for Greater Dallas](#) is the workforce board serving those living and working in Dallas County.

[Unemployment Eligibility FAQ](#) was created by the [Texas Workforce Commission](#) to help displaced workers understand unemployment benefit eligibility.

[The Texas Workforce Commission's Disaster Unemployment Assistance \(DUA\)](#) provides **unemployment benefits** for individuals who lost their jobs, are self-employed, 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.



## Texas Employers

[Texas Workforce Commission FAQ for Employers](#) was recently released to help answer questions relating to COVID-19.

The Texas Workforce Commission offers employers impacted by COVID-19 with information and resources. [Click here](#) to sign-up for these updates.

## Texas Small Businesses

[Paycheck Protection Program](#) was launched by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). The Paycheck Protection Program is a loan designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll. This program is also available for nonprofits and churches. SBA will forgive loans if all employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities.

[Small Business Resources](#) was developed by the **Texas Senate Business and Commerce Committee**, on which I serve. I am working with my colleagues on this committee to provide answers to questions that many small business owners have and provide ways to access resources that are available at the state and federal levels. Many of these public policy concerns and questions will be addressed by the committee once we reinstitute committee hearings and can take public input safely.

[The Collin Small Business Development Center](#) is the arm of the United States Small Business Administration that advises small businesses in Collin and Rockwall counties. Their offices are helping businesses with the Economic Injury Disaster Loan application, marketing strategies and other topics that can help small businesses at this unique time. Their services are completely free.

Additionally, businesses can go directly to their sign-up page at <https://collinsbdc.com/get-started/> or send an email to [SBDC@collin.edu](mailto:SBDC@collin.edu).

[The North Texas Small Business Development Center](#) (SBDC) is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and

the Dallas County Community College District and serves businesses in Dallas County by conducting research, counseling and training business people in managing, financing, and operating small businesses, and providing comprehensive information services and access to experts in a variety of fields.