



May 19, 2020

SPECIAL EDITION - 10



The impact of our leadership in Texas and the safety precautions exercised by Texans are slowing the spread of COVID-19, and many workers and business owners are able to return to work safely.

I am pleased that the Governor took steps this week to implement Phase II to Reopen Texas, which begins this week. I believe the occupational capacity limitation on business should be further lifted to allow businesses to make the decisions about the safe environments their customers and employees will demand given their unique business settings. Additionally, I am advocating for a statewide sales tax holiday to spur the economy. Eliminating the occupational capacity limitation and implementing a sales tax holiday would be a benefit to business owners, workers, and those they serve. All Texas businesses are essential, and I look forward to a swift reopening of the remainder of our economy.

I appreciate the opportunity to serve you and thank you for all you are doing to lead in your homes, your jobs, and your communities.



COVID-19 STATS

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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 48,693 confirmed cases of COVID-19 out of 723,013 tests. An estimated 28,371 individuals have recovered.
- There are 1,028 confirmed cases of COVID-19 involving Collin County residents out of 15,793 tests. An estimated 695 individuals have recovered.
- There are 7,455 confirmed cases of COVID-19 involving Dallas County residents out of 61,722 tests. An estimated 3,398 individuals have recovered.

*These number are as of noon on May 19, 2020.

STATE OF TEXAS UPDATES

[Governor's Executive Order](#)

Governor Abbott issued an Executive Order yesterday (Monday, May 18), to announce [Phase II to Open Texas](#). This executive order was issued the same day that several other businesses, including gyms and other exercise facilities and classes, were scheduled to reopen as a result of a previous executive order. Here is a summary of the next phase of our state's progress towards economic recovery:

- Child Care Centers (May 18)
- Massage and Personal-Care Centers (May 18)
- Youth Clubs (May 18)
- Rodeo and Equestrian Events (May 22)

- Bowling Alleys, Bingo Halls, Simulcast Racing, and Skating Rinks (May 22)
- Bars (May 22)
- Aquariums and Natural Caverns (May 22)
- Zoos (May 29)
- Day Youth Camps (May 31)
- Overnight Youth Camps (May 31)
- Youth Sports (May 31)
- Certain professional sports without in-person spectators (May 31)

All sporting and camp activities are required to adhere by special safety standards, and minimum standard health protocols have been established for all newly-announced opened services and activities. Businesses located in office buildings may also open but must limit their occupancy to the greater of 10 employees or 25% of their workforce.

Additionally, restaurants may expand their occupancy to 50% beginning May 22. Bars—including wine tasting rooms, craft breweries, and similar businesses—may open at 25% occupancy but like restaurants, these occupancy limits do not apply to outdoor areas that maintain safe distancing among parties.

Opened services and activities under Phase II are subject to certain occupancy limits and health and safety protocols. For details and a full list of guidelines, openings, and relevant dates, visit www.gov.texas.gov/opentexas.

Additionally, starting June 1, 2020 the Governor announced that public school districts may:

- Allow students to access the campus for in person classroom instruction such as summer school, special education, specialized assessments and tutoring services.
- Public education teachers are encouraged to continue working remotely from home, if possible.
- Private schools and institutions of higher education may reopen campuses and are encouraged to establish similar standards to allow students, teachers, and staff to return to campus for limited purpose.

Texas Education Agency Release COVID-19 Support Plan for 2020-2021 School Year

The Texas Education Agency issued its [COVID-19 Support: Instruction Continuity Plan](#) to help districts launch their at-home schooling to maximize the amount of instructional time for students next school year and support student mastery of grade level assessments. This plan allows school districts to change their school calendars through a District of Innovation plan or Year-Round System designation to accommodate short-term disruptions and anticipated high student absenteeism. The goal is for there to be no net impact to instructional weeks due to closure.

Potential changes may include:

- An earlier start date;
- A long winter break;
- Longer other breaks; and
- A later end date.

Six-week long intercessional breaks are recommended to allow for:

- Remediation, acceleration, or enrichment;
- Breaks required due to resurgence of COVID-19; and
- Bad weather make-up days.

Additionally, I along with my colleagues in the House and Senate passed House Bill 3 last legislative session to allow districts to add additional instruction days beyond the mandated minimum of 180 days of instruction. Districts may receive half-day formula funding for instructional days beyond the minimum 180 days up to 210 days of instruction. Adding instructional days may also provide opportunities for students to master grade-level content and minimize summer slide risks.

Collin County COVID-19 Updates

Collin County recently launched the [Collin Cares](#) recovery plan to help those affected by COVID-19. The funds come from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which provided more than \$171 million in federal aid to Collin County. The funding provides relief for family and government costs incurred from March 1 through the end of the year.

Under Collin Cares, the Commissioners Court is providing:

- \$3 million for COVID-19 testing for uninsured individuals;
- \$5 million for personal protective equipment (PPE);
- \$45 million for housing (rent and mortgage), utilities, and food assistance;
- \$5 million to help re-stock local food pantries;
- \$50 million to cities for COVID-19 costs and recovery efforts; and
- \$40 million for county COVID-19 costs.

Additionally, the Commissioners Court has reserved \$23 million for future costs.

Dallas County COVID-19 Updates

Dallas County received approximately \$249 million from the federal CARES Act, and the City of Dallas received roughly \$234 million. [Click here](#) for the most recent updates relating to COVID-19 for Dallas County. [Click here](#) for COVID-19 resources for the City of Dallas. [Click here](#) for COVID-19 resources for the City of Richardson.