

DECLARATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, in December 2019 a novel coronavirus, now designated COVID-19, was detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Outcomes have ranged from mild to severe illness, and in some cases death; and

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization Director General declared the outbreak of COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), advising countries to prepare for the containment, detection, isolation and case management, contact tracing and prevention of onward spread of the disease; and

WHEREAS, on March 5, 2020, the World Health Organization Director General urged aggressive preparedness and activation of emergency plans to aggressively change the trajectory of this epidemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared that the COVID-19 outbreak should be characterized as pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention is closely monitoring the growing number of COVID-19 cases that have spread into the United States; and

WHEREAS, over 1,629 cases of COVID-19 have been reported in the United States, including 41 deaths; and

WHEREAS, President Trump declared a national emergency on March 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Governor Greg Abbott declared a public health disaster on March 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS, reports received as of March 16, 2020, report more than 57 cases in Texas, and 49 states in the United States reporting more than 3,487 confirmed cases from government agencies and the CDC; and

WHEREAS, Coronavirus as compared to the seasonal flu shows results of a huge fatality rate difference of 1% and 0.1%; and

WHEREAS, Coronavirus as compared to H1N1, Swine Flu, had a fatality rate of only 0.02 percent; and

WHEREAS, Covid-19 is more contagious than seasonal influenza once symptoms appear, it may be possible to control by testing widely and quickly isolating those who have the disease; and

WHEREAS, DSHS, the Texas Division of Emergency Management, and other state agencies continue their ongoing preparations so that all of state government is working together to limit the spread of the virus and protect Texans; and

WHEREAS, the estimated difference between a 0.1 percent and a 1.0 percent fatality rate could result in 360,000 dead Americans; and

WHEREAS, the responsibility of local, state and national government is dependent on how we respond when the difference in fatality rates demands extreme measures be taken to combat the coronavirus as compared to the seasonal flu; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control recommends that citizens stop handshaking, clean hands at the door, schedule regular hand washing, avoid touching faces and cover coughs and sneezes, disinfect surfaces like doorknobs, tables, desks, and handrails regularly, and increase ventilation by opening windows or adjusting air conditioning; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control recommends the use of videoconferencing for meetings when possible, and adjusting or postponing large meetings or gatherings; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control recommends citizens stay home if they are feeling sick or when they have a sick family member in their home; and

WHEREAS, households with vulnerable seniors and those with underlying health conditions should conduct themselves as if they were a significant risk to the person with underlying conditions; and

WHEREAS, the identification of “community spread” cases of COVID-19 in the United States could have signaled that transmission of the virus is no longer limited to those who traveled to China, or had contact with travelers who have visited China; and

WHEREAS, a large gathering of unidentifiable individuals without necessary mitigation for the spread of infection may pose a risk of the spread of infectious disease; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control recommends restricting gatherings over 50; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Texas Disaster Act of 1975, the mayor is designated as the emergency management director of the City of Prairie View, and may exercise the powers granted to the governor on an appropriate local scale; and

WHEREAS, a declaration of local disaster and public health emergency includes the ability to reduce the possibility of exposure to disease, control the risk, promote health, compel persons to undergo additional health measures that prevent or control the spread of disease, including isolation, surveillance, quarantine, or placement of persons under public health observation, including the provision of temporary housing or emergency shelters for persons misplaced or evacuated and request assistance from the governor of state resources; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 virus spreads between people who are in close contact with one another through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes; and

WHEREAS, the continued worldwide spread of COVID-19 presents an imminent threat of widespread illness, which requires emergency action; and

WHEREAS, a declaration of local disaster includes the ability to take measures to reduce the possibility of exposure to disease, control the risk, and promote the health and safety of Prairie View residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Prairie View will work collaboratively with Waller County to ensure that all appropriate and necessary measures are taken to limit the development, contraction and spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, by this Declaration of Public Health Emergency, I declare all rules and regulations that may inhibit or prevent prompt response to this threat suspended for the duration of the incident; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the authority granted to the Mayor under the Texas Disaster Act of 1975, I authorize the use of all available resources of state government and political subdivisions to assist in the City's response to this situation; and

WHEREAS, I, David Allen, the Mayor of the City of Prairie View, Texas have 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 CITY OF PRAIRIE VIEW:

1. That a local state of disaster and public health emergency is hereby declared for the City of Prairie View, Texas pursuant to §418.108(a) of the Texas Government Code.
2. Pursuant to §418.108(b) of the Government Code, the state of disaster and public health emergency shall continue for a period of not more than seven days from the date of this declaration unless continued or renewed by the City Council.
3. Pursuant to §418.108(c) of the Government Code, this declaration of a local state of disaster and public health emergency shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the City Secretary.
4. Pursuant to §418.108(d) of the Government Code, this declaration of a local state of disaster and public health emergency activates the City of Prairie View emergency management plan.
5. Pursuant to §418.020(c) of the Government Code, this declaration authorizes the City to commandeer or use any private property, temporarily acquire, by lease or other means, sites required for temporary housing units or emergency shelters for evacuees, subject to compensation requirements.
6. Pursuant to §122.006 of the Health and Safety Code, this declaration authorizes the City to take any actions necessary to promote health and suppress disease, including quarantine, examining and regulating hospitals, regulating ingress and egress from the City, and fining those who do not comply with the City's rules.
7. The City Secretary is directed to give prompt and general publicity of the issuance of this

DECLARATION.

8. This proclamation shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance.
9. The Chief of Police and any other person designated by the Mayor may update restrictions set out in Exhibit A as necessary to respond to the evolving circumstances of this outbreak during the duration of this Declaration and any extension by the City Council without the issuance of a new Declaration.
10. As Mayor, I further reserve all other authority and powers conferred by state law to respond as necessary to this situation.

ORDERED this 18 day of March, 2020.



MAYOR DAVID ALLEN
City of Prairie View, Texas



Exhibit "A"

Declaration regarding Public and Private Gatherings and Other Matters

- I. Declaration Regarding Public and Private Gatherings:
 - a. This Exhibit "A" incorporates and adopts, except as where noted below, the Centers for Disease Control ("CDC") Interim Guidance for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) dated March 15, 2020 and updated March 16, 2020.
 - b. 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.
 - c. 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 and outdoor gatherings within an enclosed space of ten (10) persons or more anywhere in the City of Prairie View beginning at 0800 on March 19, 2020 and continuing for seven (7) days, unless extended consistent with requirements of state law.
 - d. For all other gatherings, it is strongly recommended that social distancing protocols established by the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and found within the "Implementation of Mitigation strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission" issued by the CDC on or around March 15, 2020, and updated March 16, 2020, including canceling, rescheduling, or virtually attending events with more than ten (10) persons.
 - e. Further, organizations that serve high-risk populations (defined below) should follow CDC guidance for social distancing including canceling gatherings of more than ten (10) people.
 - f. Definitions and further guidance:
 - i. For purposes of this Declaration, a "Mass Gathering" is any event or convening, subject to the exceptions and clarifications below, that brings together ten (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, theater, stadium (indoor or outdoor), arena or event center, meeting hall, conference center, large cafeteria, or any other confined indoor or confined outdoor space.
 - ii. A Mass Gathering includes events in confined outdoor spaces, which means an outdoor space that (1) is enclosed by a fence, physical barrier, or other structure and (2) where people are present and they are within arm's length of one another for extended periods.

iii. This Declaration also does not prohibit use of enclosed spaces where ten or more people may be present at different times during the day, so long as ten or more people are not present in the space at the same time. For any gathering covered by this subsection compliance with Social Distancing Recommendations, including providing hand sanitizer and tissues and increasing cleaning of commonly touched surfaces is strongly encouraged.

iv. For purposes of clarity, a Mass Gathering does not include the following: (1) public or private school and places of worship; (2) museums (so long as visitors are generally not within arm's length of one another for extended periods); (3) Spaces where ten or more persons may be in transit or waiting for transit such as bus stops; (4) office space, hotels, or residential buildings; (5) 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; (6) hospitals, medical facilities and shelters; and (7) 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 "f" is subject to the prohibition on Mass Gatherings if the space holds ten or more people.

v. "High-risk Populations" include people who are:

1. 60 years old and older;
2. People with certain health conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, kidney disease and weakened immune systems;
3. People who are pregnant or were pregnant in the last two weeks.
4. People experiencing homelessness.

II. 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 additionally restricts the following commercial activities as stated below, anywhere in the City of Prairie View beginning at 0800 on March 19, 2020 and continuing for seven (7) days, unless extended consistent with requirements of state law:

- a. A restaurant with or without drive-in or drive-through services; drive-in restaurant; drive-through restaurant or microbrewery, micro-distillery, or winery may only provide take out, delivery, or drive-in or drive-through services as allowed by law.

- b. A bar, lounge, or tavern; private club; personal service use for gym or health studio; inside commercial amusement: commercial amusement (inside); or theater shall close.
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- III. 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 additionally requires all commercial activities anywhere in the City of Prairie View beginning at 0800 on March 19, 2020 and continuing for seven (7) days, unless extended consistent with requirements of state law to comply with all sanitation recommendations as provided by the CDC guidelines .
 - IV. Municipal Court settings shall be continued and reset, and no in person pleas will be accepted.
 - V. All public events scheduled to be held at the Prairie View City Hall within the next 7 days shall be rescheduled.
 - VI. A curfew shall be in imposed beginning at 9 p.m. March 19, 2020 and continuing for seven (7) days, unless extended consistent with requirements of state law. Such curfew shall require that all residents remain indoors during the hours of 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. except in the case of emergency or required work.
 - VII. The Chief of Police and any person designated by the Mayor may update restrictions set out in this Exhibit as necessary to respond to the evolving circumstances of this outbreak during the duration of the next 7 days and any extension by the Prairie View City Council.