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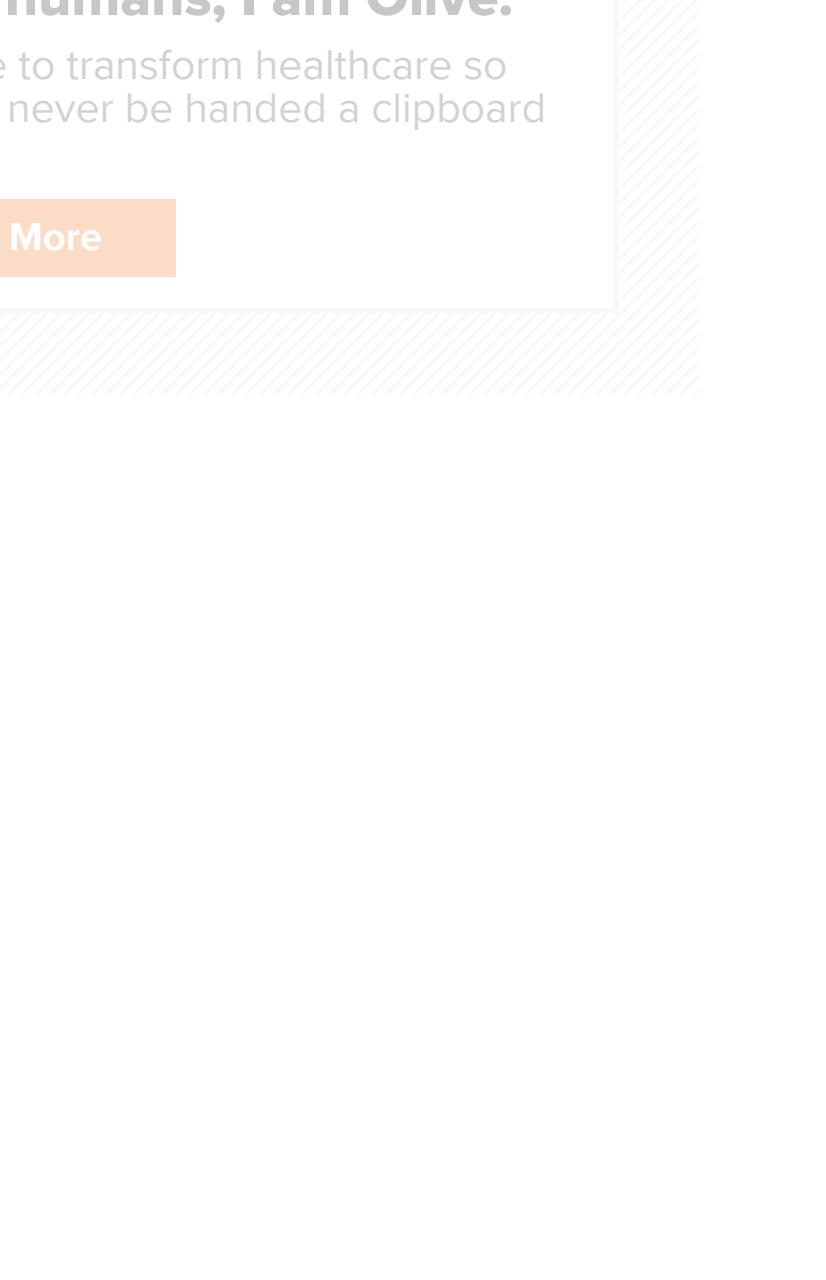
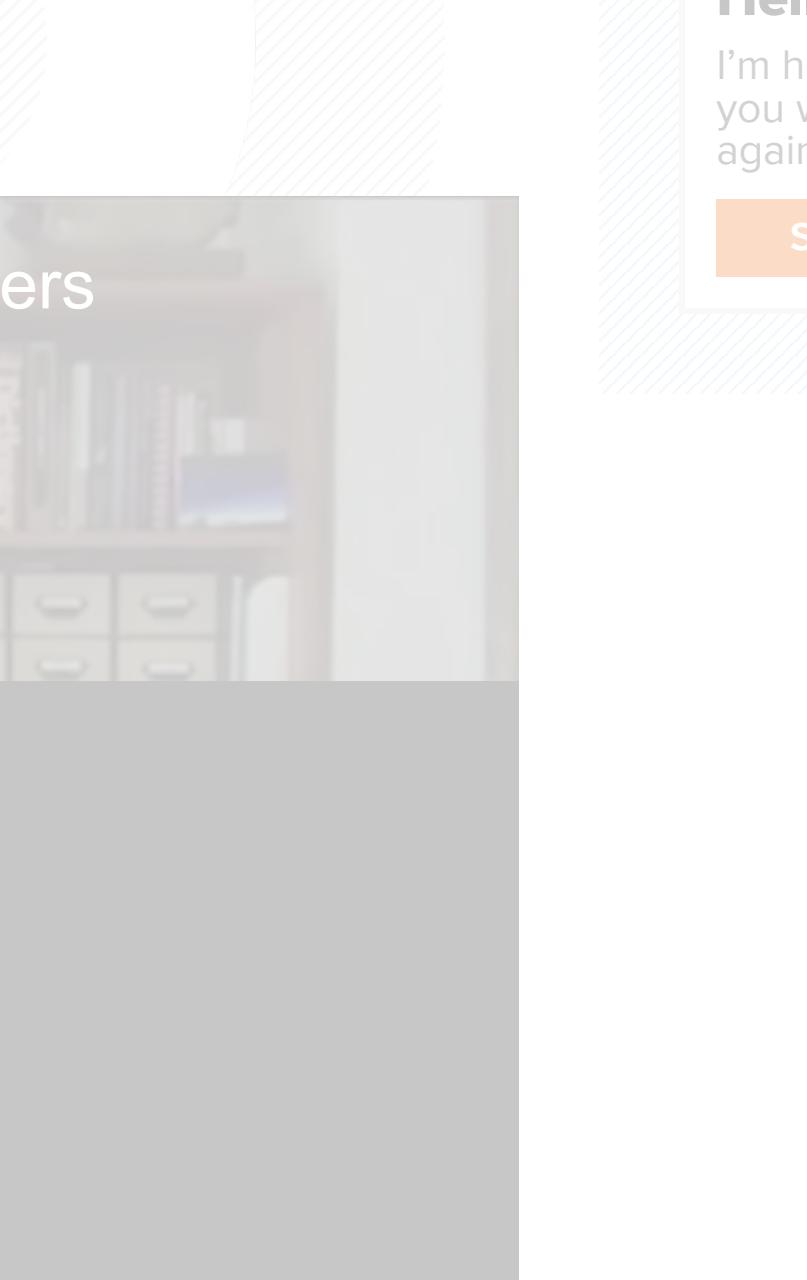
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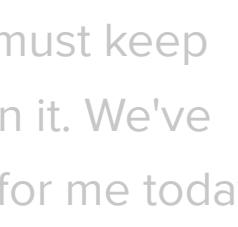
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The order was set to expire on May 8, but it's now extended until the end of May for Austin and June 15 for Travis County.

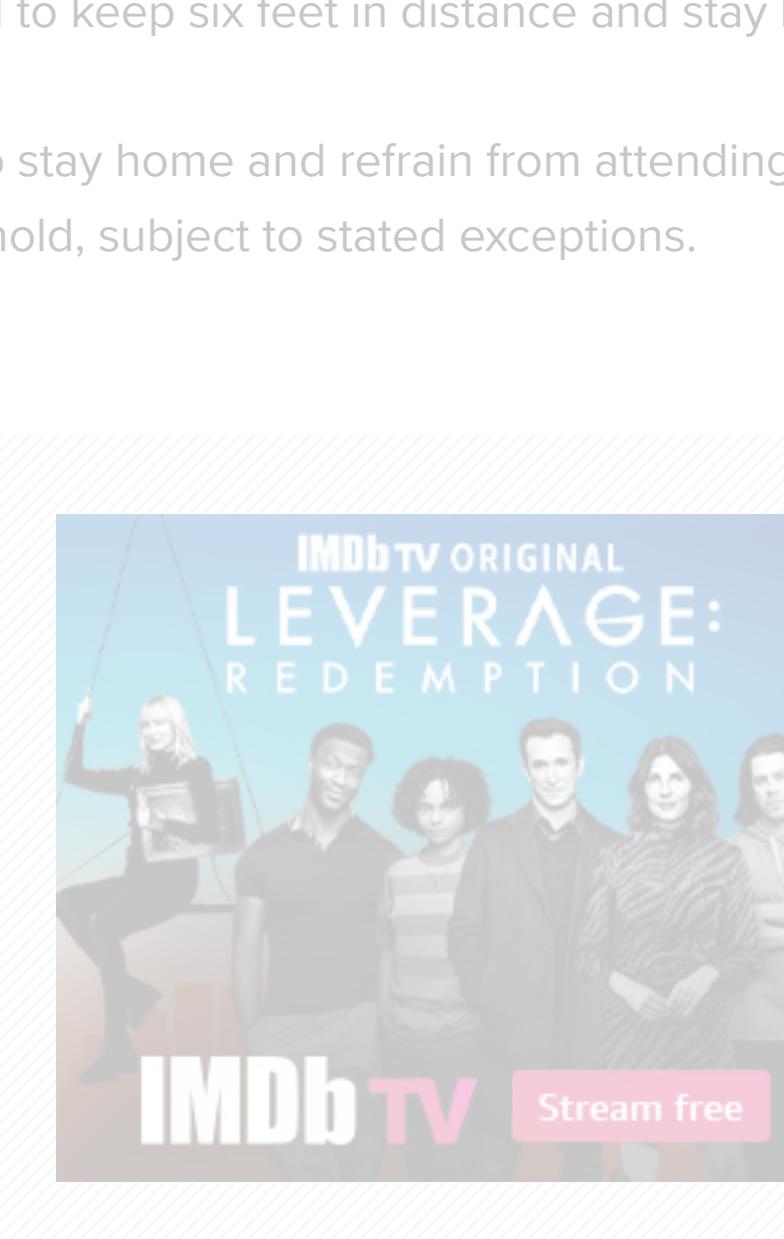
Austin, Travis County extend stay-at-home orders



Author: Rebecca Flores
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AUSTIN, Texas — Austin city leaders announced they are extending the Stay Home, Work Safe orders in Austin-Travis County. This comes as more Texas businesses begin to reopen Friday, May 8, as part of Gov. Greg Abbott's plan to reopen the state.

On Friday, May 1, Texas retail stores, restaurants, malls, movie theaters and museums were allowed to reopen with some restrictions. A week later on May 8, Gov. Abbott gave hair, nail and tanning salons the OK to also open their doors again with some restrictions.



The Austin-Travis County stay-home orders were set to expire on May 8, but Austin Mayor Steve Adler and Travis County Judge Sarah Eckhardt said Friday during a virtual press conference it is being extended until the end of May for Austin and June 15 for Travis County. The order encourages everyone to stay home and practice social distancing as much as possible, Adler said.

The mayor explained there is "not much remarkable about the new orders." They're in continuation of what the county has had in place before but they now include the reopened businesses that the governor added.

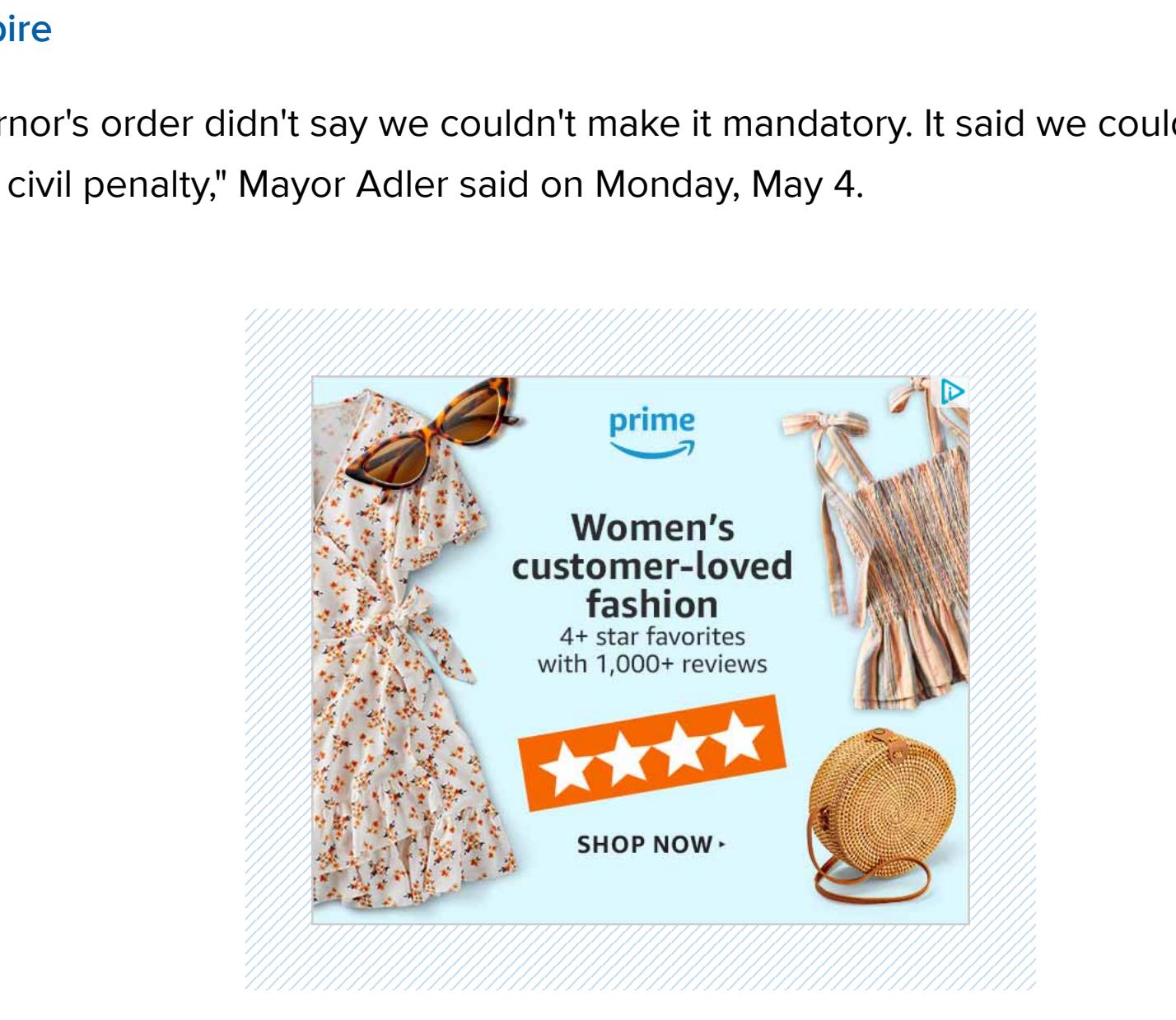
RELATED: Q&A with Austin Mayor Steve Adler on reopening of barbershops, salons and pools

The order "gives us the best chance" to avoid a second surge of COVID-19 cases, Adler added.

"This virus is as infectious today as it was a month ago — it spreads quickly," said Mayor Adler. "Everybody should be minimizing physical interactions absolutely as much as they possibly can as we dip our toe to increase commercial and social interactions. That's what this Order does."

"We have to stay the course," said Judge Eckhardt. "Even as we venture out, we must keep limiting our person-to-person contact. Our lives or someone else's life depends on it. We've seen hospitalizations begin to rise again. Every day ask yourself what's essential for me today? Who am I coming in contact with? How can I keep them safe?"

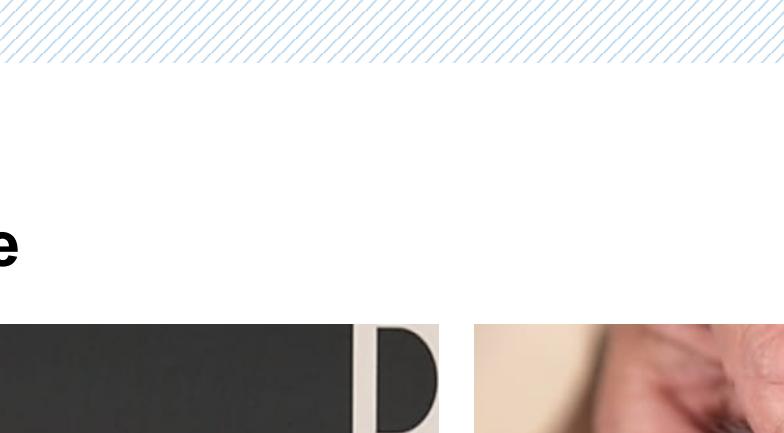
WATCH: Mayor Adler extends stay-home orders in virtual conference



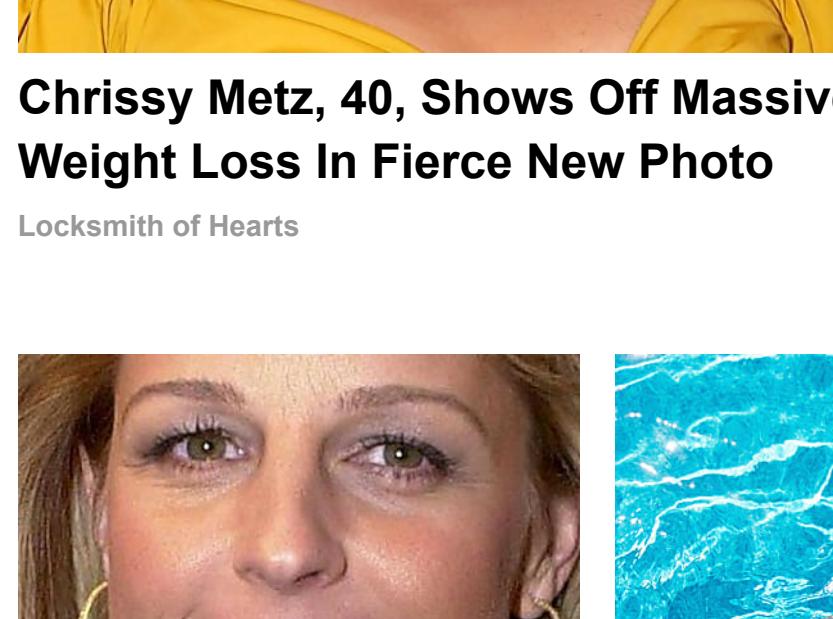
As of May 8, there are more than 2,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Austin area.

Here are a few things to know about the new orders:

- "All persons over the age of 6 shall wear" some sort of face coverings or masks if they leave their home. No civil or criminal penalty will be imposed for failure to wear one.
- Restaurants are encouraged to keep a log of customers for a month.
- The order is "substantially reliant on self-regulation."
- People are encouraged to keep six feet in distance and stay home except for essential activities.
- Individuals are asked to stay home and refrain from attending social gatherings of any size outside a single household, subject to stated exceptions.

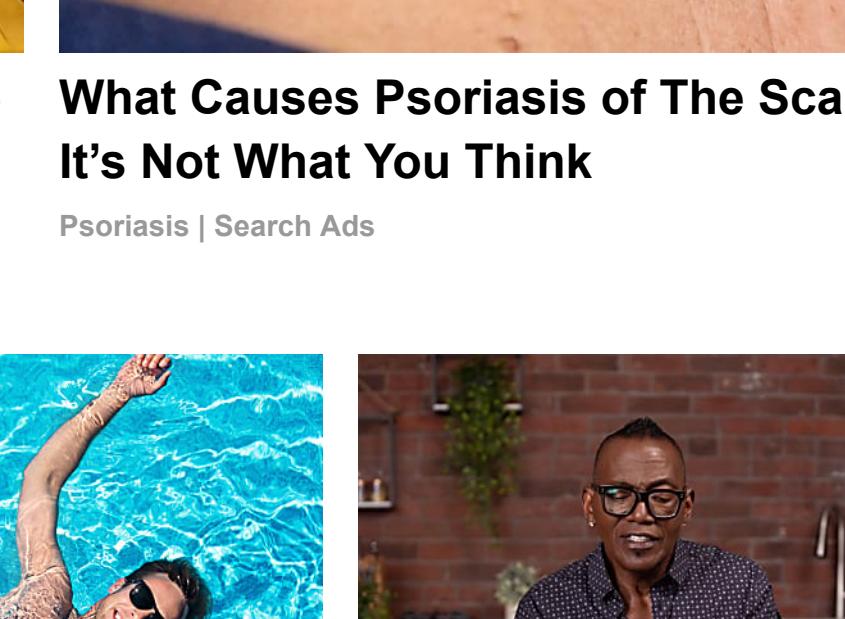


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To view the Austin order that expires on May 30, click [here](#).

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In other news on Friday, the Austin Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of the Opening Central Texas for Business Task Force, released initial recommendations from the force in regard to how to prioritize public health while reopening the economy.

Austin Chamber President and CEO Laura Huffman sent recommendations to Adler and Eckhardt earlier this week.

"This is a complex situation, and policies must adapt to account for the evolving landscape in this unprecedented time. As conditions change, the task force is committed to providing you with real-time industry-specific input, as well as general recommendations and feedback, that will help inform and guide your policymaking," Huffman said. "It is our goal to be transparent in our efforts and to lead with collaboration, innovation, and heart. With that in mind, the following document is the first work product of the task force and represents our best efforts to strike a balance between public health and reopening the economy."

To view those recommendations, click [here](#).

How can Austin extend stay home orders?

Gov. Abbott allowed the statewide stay home order to [expire on April 30](#), and local orders can't supersede state orders. Here's what means for the Austin area:

Mayor Adler and Judge Eckhardt said they can [extend local stay home orders](#) as long as they write orders that align with Gov. Abbott's orders to reopen businesses. They also can't create any penalties against individuals who disobey the stay-at-home order.

RELATED: [Here's why Austin may extend its stay-home order even though Abbott let the State's expire](#)

"The governor's order didn't say we couldn't make it mandatory. It said we couldn't have a criminal or civil penalty," Mayor Adler said on Monday, May 4.

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