

**CHAMBERS COUNTY  
EXECUTIVE ORDER  
March 24, 2020**

**EXECUTIVE ORDER OF CHAMBERS COUNTY JUDGE  
STAY SAFE ORDER / EMERGENCY MEASURES**

**Whereas**, on March 12, 2020, Chambers County Judge Jimmy Sylvia issued a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency to allow Chambers County to take measures to reduce the possibility of exposure to COVID-19 and promote the health and safety of Chambers County residents in accordance with Section 418.108 of the Texas Government Code; and

**Whereas**, on March 13, 2020, a Declaration of State of Disaster was issued by Governor Abbott to take additional steps to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to protect the health and welfare of Texans; and

**Whereas**, on March 16, 2020, President Trump acknowledged the gravity of the COVID-19 pandemic, releasing strict new guidelines to limit people's interactions, including that Americans should avoid groups of more than 10 people; and

**Whereas**, on March 17, 2020, the Chambers County Commissioners Court issued an Order at a Special Meeting of Commissioners Court approving the extension of the Declaration of Local Disaster declared by County Judge Jimmy Sylvia and signed on March 12, 2020; and

**Whereas**, the COVID-19 virus is contagious and spreads through person-to-person contact, especially in group settings; and

**Whereas**, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") recommends an "All of Community" approach focused on slowing the transmission of COVID-19 through social distancing to reduce illness and death, while minimizing social and economic impacts; and

**Whereas**, given the ongoing evaluation of circumstances related to the COVID-19 virus, the updated recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and the Texas Department of State Health Services, and the substantial risks posed by the COVID-19 virus to Chambers County residents, the following extraordinary measures must be taken to protect the public safety.

**NOW THEREFORE, I, COUNTY JUDGE FOR CHAMBERS COUNTY, TEXAS, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY VESTED BY TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE CHAPTER 418, HEREBY FIND AND ORDER:**

That the findings and recitations set out in the preamble to this ORDER are found to be true and correct and they are hereby adopted by the County Judge and made a part hereof for all purposes.



**Summary.** The virus that causes 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is easily transmitted through person to person contact, especially in group settings, and it is essential that the spread of the virus be slowed to protect the ability of public and private healthcare providers to handle the influx of new patients and safeguard public health and safety. Because of the risk of the rapid spread of the virus and the need to protect the most vulnerable members of the community, this Order requires all individuals anywhere in Chambers County, to stay at home – except for certain Essential Activities and work to provide Essential Business and Essential Government services or perform essential infrastructure construction, including housing. This Order takes effect at 11:59 p.m. on March 24, 2020 and will continue through 11:59 p.m. on April 3, 2020, subject to the limited exceptions and under the terms and conditions more particularly set forth below.

1. Effective as of 11:59 p.m. on March 24, 2020, and continuing until 11:59 p.m. on April 3, 2020:
  - a. All individuals currently living within Chambers County are ordered to stay at their place of residence except for Essential Activities as defined in this order. For the purposes of this Order, residence includes homes, hotels, motels, shared rentals, and similar facilities. To the extent individuals are using shared or outdoor spaces, they must at all times as reasonably as possible maintain social distancing of at least six feet from any other person when they are outside their residence. All persons may leave their residences only for Essential Activities, or to provide or perform Essential Governmental Functions, or to operate Essential Business, all as defined in Section 2.
  - b. All businesses operating within Chambers County, except Essential Businesses as defined below in Section 2, are required to cease all activities at facilities located within the County. For clarity, businesses may continue operations consisting exclusively of employees or contractors performing activities at their own residences (i.e., working from home). To the greatest extent possible, all Essential Businesses shall comply with the Social Distancing Guidelines attached, including maintaining six-foot social distancing for both employees and the general public.
  - c. All public or private gatherings of any number of people occurring outside a single household or living unit are prohibited, except as otherwise provided herein. Nothing in this Order prohibits the gathering of members of a household or living unit.
  - d. Individuals may go to public parks and open outdoor recreation areas. However, public playgrounds for children may increase spread of COVID-19, and therefore shall not be used.
  - e. Restaurants, microbreweries, micro-distilleries, wineries and other establishments that serve food, with or without drive-in or drive-through



services, are prohibited from serving food for consumption on the premises and may only serve food and/or alcohol by take out, delivery, or drive-through services as allowed by law.

- f. Gyms, fitness centers, and other facilities that are used or intended to be used for any type of training, martial arts, or sport shall close.
- g. Hair and nail salons, spas, licensed massage businesses and tattoo parlors, concert halls, live performance theaters, arenas, stadiums, movie theaters, game rooms, bowling alleys, arcades, indoor and outdoor flea markets and swap meets, indoor malls, indoor shopping centers, and bingo halls shall close.
- h. Religious and worship services may only be provided by video and teleconference. Religious institutions must limit in-person staff to those necessary for preparing for or conducting video or teleconference services, and all individuals must follow the Social Distancing Guidelines, including the six-foot social distancing.
- i. All elective medical, surgical, and dental procedures are prohibited anywhere in Chambers County. Hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, dental offices, and other medical facilities are directed to identify procedures that are deemed "elective" by assessing which procedures can be postponed or cancelled based on patient risk considering the emergency need for redirection of resources to COVID-19 response.

## 2. **Definitions:**

- a. For purposes of this Order, individuals may leave their residence only to perform any of the following **"Essential Activities"**:
  - i. To engage in activities or perform tasks essential to their health and safety, or to the health and safety of their family or household members (for example, obtaining medical supplies or medication, visiting a healthcare professional, or obtaining supplies needed to work from home).
  - ii. To obtain necessary services or supplies for themselves and their family or household members, or to deliver those services or supplies to others (for example, food, pet supplies, and any other household consumer products, obtaining supplies needed to work from home, and products necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences).



- iii. To engage in outdoor activity, provided the individuals comply with social distancing requirements of six feet (for example, walking, biking, hiking, running, or fishing).
  - iv. To perform work providing essential products and services at an Essential Business or to otherwise carry out activities specifically permitted in this Order.
  - v. To care for a family member or pet in another household.
- b. For purposes of this Order, “**Essential Businesses**” means:
- i. **Essential Critical Infrastructure.** Work necessary to the operations and maintenance of the 16 critical infrastructure sectors identified by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security National Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA), provided that they carry out those services or that work in compliance with social distancing requirements of six feet to the extent possible. *See Attachment 1* (CISA’s Guidance on Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce). Essential Businesses providing essential infrastructure should implement screening precautions to protect employees and all activities shall be performed in compliance with the attached social distancing guidelines.
  - ii. **Essential Government Functions.** All services provided by local governments and municipalities located in Chambers County needed to ensure their continuing operation to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the public, including law enforcement, jail operations and other services. Further, nothing in this Order shall prohibit any individual from performing or accessing “Essential Government Functions”. All Essential Government Functions shall be performed in compliance with social distancing requirements of six feet to the extent possible.
  - iii. **Essential Healthcare Operations.** Healthcare operations, including hospitals, clinics, dentists, pharmacies, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, other healthcare facilities, healthcare suppliers, mental health providers, substance abuse service providers, blood banks, medical research, laboratory services, or any related and/or ancillary healthcare services. Home-based and residential-based care for seniors, adults, or children are also considered healthcare operations. Healthcare operations also include veterinary care and all health and welfare services provided to animals. This exemption shall be viewed broadly to avoid any impacts to the delivery of healthcare. Healthcare operations do not include fitness and exercise gyms and similar facilities. Healthcare



operations do not include elective medical, surgical, and dental procedures as established in accordance with Subsection 1(i) of this Order.

- iv. **Essential Retail.** Food service providers, including grocery stores, warehouse stores, big box stores, bodegas, liquor stores, gas stations and convenience stores, farmers' markets that sell food products and household staples. Food cultivation, including farming, fishing, and livestock. Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food, goods or services directly to residences. Restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food, but only for delivery or carry-out. Schools and other entities that typically provide free services to students or members of the public on a pick-up and take-away basis only. The restriction of delivery or carry-out does not apply to cafes and restaurants located within hospital and medical facilities. Laundromats, dry cleaners, and laundry service providers. Gas stations, auto supply, auto and bicycle repair, hardware stores, and related facilities. Businesses that supply products needed for people to work from home.
- v. **Providers of Basic Necessities to Economically Disadvantaged Populations.** Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals.
- vi. **Essential Services Necessary to Maintain Essential Operations of Residences or Other Essential Businesses.** Trash and recycling collection, processing and disposal, mail and shipping services, building cleaning, maintenance and security, warehouse/distribution and fulfillment, storage for essential businesses, funeral homes, crematoriums and cemeteries. Plumbers, electricians, exterminators, yard maintenance crews and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operations of residences and Essential Businesses. Professional services, such as legal or accounting services, when necessary to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities. Businesses that supply other Essential Businesses with support or utilities needed to operate. Caregivers and helpers who provide services to seniors and disabled individuals.
- vii. **News Media.** Newspapers, television, radio, and other media services.

- viii. **Childcare and Adult Care Services.** Childcare and adult care facilities providing services that enable employees exempted in this Order to work as permitted.
  - ix. **Transportation.** Transportation services, including public transportation services, Uber, Lyft, and taxicabs, that enable persons to travel to or from employers, service providers, or businesses exempted in this Order. People riding on public transit must comply with the six-foot social distancing requirements to the greatest extent feasible.
  - x. **Labor union functions.** Critical labor union functions, including the maintenance of health and welfare funds and checking on the well-being and safety of members.
  - xi. **Covered Businesses.** For the purposes of this Order, Covered Businesses include any for-profit, non-profit, or educational entities, regardless of the nature of the service, the function they perform, or its corporate or entity structure.
3. These infection control precautions apply to all Essential Businesses: (1) practice social distancing by requiring patrons, visitors, and employees to be separated by six (6) feet, to the extent feasible; (2) provide access to hand washing facilities with soap and water or hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol; (3) post a sign in a conspicuous place at the public entrance to the venue instructing members of the public not to enter if they are experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness, including fever or cough; and (4) adhere to other general communicable disease control recommendations by public health authorities.
4. Grocery stores, supermarkets, warehouse stores, hospital, and medical facilities are experiencing high levels of demand for a large number of products, requiring more deliveries from manufacturers and distribution centers to serve their customers. A number of Texas cities and local associations have implemented restrictions on delivery hours to stores to mitigate truck noise and traffic. Due to the need to deliver products as quickly and efficiently as possible during this critical timeframe, this Order hereby suspends all delivery hour restrictions for transport to or from any entity involved in the selling or distribution of food products, medicine, or medical supplies in Chambers County for the next sixty (60) days.
5. Due to the public health emergency, the Office of the Chambers County Judge hereby advises the Chambers County Justices of the Peace to suspend eviction hearings and writs of possession for at least the next sixty (60) days to prevent renters from being displaced.



6. If someone in a household has tested positive for coronavirus, the household is ordered to isolate at home until cleared by a public health authority or medical provider.
7. Nursing homes, retirement, and long-term care facilities are instructed by this Order to prohibit nonessential visitors from accessing their facilities unless to provide critical assistance or for end-of-life visitation.
8. Additionally, the Office of the Chambers County Judge and the Local Health Authority instruct employees to remain at home if sick. County offices are operating with restricted access. Only personnel pre-authorized by the County Judge, in consultation with the Chambers County Public Health Department, are allowed in the County Courthouse, Emergency Operations Center, or other county buildings and facilities.

9. **PRICE CONTROLS**

A person shall not sell any of the following goods or services for more than the price the person charged for the goods or services on March 12, 2020 in ANY area within Chambers County:

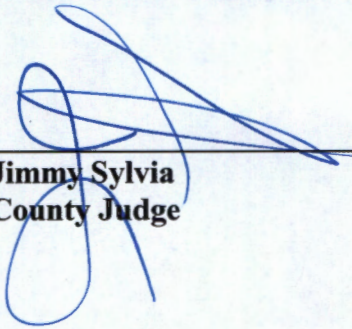
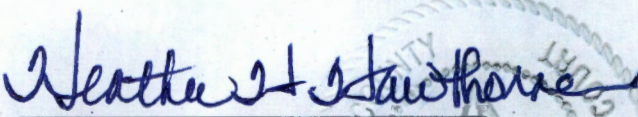
- (a) groceries, beverages, toilet articles, ice;
  - (b) construction and building materials and supplies, and earthmoving equipment and machinery;
  - (c) electrical and gas generating and transmission equipment, parts and accessories;
  - (d) charcoal briquettes, matches, candles, lamp illumination and heat unit carbides, dry batteries, light bulbs, flashlights, and hand lanterns;
  - (e) hand tools (manual and power), hardware and household supplies, and equipment rental;
  - (f) automotive parts, supplies, and accessories;
  - (g) plumbing and electrical tools and supplies;
  - (h) apartment, duplex, multi-family dwelling, rooming house, hotel and motel rental;
  - (i) gasoline, diesel oil, motor oil, kerosene, grease, and automotive lubricants;
  - (j) restaurant, cafeteria, and boarding-house meals;
  - (k) services of roofing and building contractors, plumbers, electricians, mechanics, tree surgeons, and automobile wrecker companies;
  - (l) medicine, pharmaceutical, and medical equipment and supplies;
  - (m) blankets, quilts, bedspreads, bed linens, mattresses, bedsprings, bedsteads, towels, and toilet paper; and
  - (n) furniture and clothing.
10. This Order shall be effective until 11:59 p.m. on April 3, 2020 or until it is either rescinded, superseded, or amended pursuant to applicable law.
  11. Pursuant to Annex U, Section V.A.6. of the Chambers County Emergency Operations Plan, and in accordance with Tex. Gov't Code § 418.173, any law



enforcement agency based in Chambers County is hereby authorized to enforce this order and the failure to comply with this order is an offense punishable by a fine that does not exceed \$1,000.00 or confinement in jail for a term that does not exceed 180 days.

12. Chambers County will post this Order on its website. In addition, the owner, manager, or operator of any facility that is likely to be impacted by this Order is strongly encouraged to post a copy of this Order onsite and to provide a copy to any member of the public asking for a copy. If any subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Order or any application of it to any person, structure, gathering, or circumstance is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, then such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portions or applications of this Order.

**This Executive Order shall take effect at 11:59PM on March 24, 2020, ORDERED THIS 24th DAY OF March 2020.**

  
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**Jimmy Sylvia**  
**County Judge**  
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**Attest: Heather Hawthorne**  
**County Clerk**