



May 1, 2020

SPECIAL EDITION - 8



Texas began reopening today with restaurants, movie theaters, retailers, malls, libraries, and museums across Texas opening their doors to customers who are ready to once again participate in activities outside the home. The Governor has set specific parameters for the purpose of public safety, which I have outlined below.

I strongly believe that Texans deserve the option to re-engage in the marketplace, and will do so to the extent they feel safe. All Texas businesses are essential, and I look forward to a swift reopening of the remainder of our economy.

In this newsletter, you will find state and federal updates. Thank you for allowing me to serve you. Together, as Texans, we will emerge stronger than ever. Stay safe, and stay well.



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 29,229 confirmed cases of COVID-19 out of 351,775 tests.
- There are 724 confirmed cases of COVID-19 involving Collin County residents out of 8,032 tests, and
- There are 3,531 confirmed cases of COVID-19 involving Dallas County residents out of 29,327 tests.

STATE OF TEXAS UPDATES

Governor's Executive Order

The spread of the virus has slowed during April, so Governor Abbott allowed his Stay and Home orders to expire this week and issued a new [Executive Order](#) allowing businesses to begin reopening in phases starting today (Friday, May 1, 2020). In [Phase One to Open Texas](#), Governor Abbott also establishes minimum standard health protocols for businesses that are reopening.

First permitted* to reopen at 25% capacity are:

- Retail stores,
- Restaurants,
- Movie theaters,
- Malls
- Museums, (hands on exhibits must remain closed) and
- Libraries (hands on exhibits must remain closed)

In addition, other **reopenings announced last week** include:

- State parks (in effect Monday, 4/27). Visitors are required to:
 - Wear masks,
 - Stay 6 feet apart from those who are not in their party, and

- Limit parties to 5 or fewer
- Certain nonessential surgeries at hospitals (in effect as of Wednesday, 4/29), as long as:
 - Those surgeries don't deplete the hospitals' supplies of personal protective equipment, and
 - Facilities to keep at least 25% of their capacity available for the treatment of patients with COVID-19.

The **second phase of business reopenings** could be as early as mid-May, as long as two weeks of data confirm no flare-up of COVID-19. The next phase includes:

- Allowing businesses to expand their occupancy to 50%.
- (Hopefully) reopening barbershops, hair salons, bars, and gyms.

The Governor's new order "supersedes all local orders" including:

- Ordering businesses to remain closed that are permitted to open under the latest Executive Order.
- Imposing a fine or penalty for not wearing a mask (encouraged by statewide rules but not mandated).

Governor's Open Texas Report

Governor Abbott released his [Report to Open Texas](#) on Monday, April 27, which provides the following information:

- Guidelines for All Texans
- Long-term care COVID-19 mitigation plan
- Testing guidelines
- Information on Texas' tracing program
- Specific Steps for reopening Texas Businesses including
 - Health protocols for individuals
 - Health protocols for employers and employees
 - Health protocols by business sector for customers, employers, and employees including

1. restaurants,
 2. retailers,
 3. movie theaters,
 4. museums,
 5. libraries,
 6. churches/places of worship,
 7. outdoor sport participants, and
 8. single person offices
- Health protocols for low-COVID19 Counties

Texas Health Trace

Texas launched the Texas Health Trace [web portal](#) that includes a self-checker to help people identify their possible risk of COVID-19 and provide instructions on what to do next. Once someone completes the self-checker, they can choose to register, which will put them in touch with a public health contact tracer, who will follow up with them to:

- Help them find testing, as appropriate.
- Provide advice on steps they can take to keep from spreading the virus.
- Connect them with additional resources.

If someone has already tested positive, they can enter their information into Texas Health Trace and request follow-up for contact tracing or other support or resources.

Texas Health Trace also provides support for contact tracing case management and data management, allowing for the confidential storage of information, as well as collaboration between the state and local health departments.

Please see attached document on contact tracing for more information.

Testing

The Governor's Supply Chain Strike Force continue to focus efforts on expanding testing through:

- DSHS laboratory expansion and outreach.
- Increased testing at senior living facilities.
- Broadened public health testing criteria.

- Acquisition of collection and laboratory supplies through the private supply chain and from the federal government.
- Continuation of the Mobile Testing Teams operated as a partnership of TDEM, DSHS, and the Military Department.

Texas Driver License Offices Update

The date for reopening Texas driver license (DL) offices has not yet determined. As their physical offices remain closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas Department of Public Safety wants to remind Texans of the many ways to conduct their DL transactions without having to go into a DL office. In fact, a large percentage of customers who come into DL offices don't have to. These customers can, instead, conduct their transaction online or by phone. DPS encourages Texans to check the expiration date on their card and call 1-866-DL-RENEW (1-886-357-3639) or visit [Texas.gov](https://www.texas.gov) to see if they are eligible to conduct their transaction online.

Childcare for Frontline Workers

Governor Abbott's Frontline Childcare Task Force created the [Frontline Child Care](https://frontlinechildcare.texas.gov/) site to help parents of essential employees find child care facilities for their children.

<https://frontlinechildcare.texas.gov/>

FEDERAL UPDATES

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[Payroll Protection Program \(PPP\)](#)

Another \$310 billion was authorized by federal leaders last month for the Payroll Protection Program (PPP), and the program reopened this week. The Texas Senate Business and Commerce Committee, on which I serve, recently released a

document that provides quick facts about the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) to lay out the requirements simply for those interested in applying for funds.

- Businesses with fewer than 500 employees may apply, including nonprofits, veterans organizations, independent contractors and self-employed individuals;
- Loan amounts are calculated based on two months of the average monthly payroll costs from the last year plus an additional 25% of that amount and are capped at \$10 million; and
- Borrowers may apply for both the PPP and the SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan.

The loan will be fully forgiven if the following requirements are met:

- Funds are only used for:
 - Payroll costs, including benefits (75% of the loan must be used for this purpose).
 - Interest on mortgages incurred before February 15, 2020.
 - Rent agreements signed before February 15, 2020.
 - Utilities, if service began before February 15, 2020.
- Employee and compensation levels are maintained or returned to previous levels meaning:
 - Full-time employee headcount must be the same as on February 15, 2020.
 - Employees who had an annual salary of less than \$100,000 in 2019 may not have their salary reduced by more than 25%.
 - Both of these conditions must be met by June 20, 2020.

If the above conditions are not met, the following loan terms will apply:

- Payments are deferred for 6 months;
- Payments are due 2 years after the loan start date; and
- The loan has a 1% fixed interest rate.