

JOINT STATEMENT OF BASTROP COUNTY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS  
(Includes Bastrop County, City of Bastrop, City of Elgin, City of Smithville)

March 30, 2020

Today Bastrop County Judge Paul Pape announced an Order for Bastrop County residents asking everyone to Stay Home and Stay Safe from COVID-19. The order will be effective on March 31, 2020 at 11:59 PM and is set to expire on April 30, 2020 at 11:59 PM.

Judge Pape is joined by Mayor Connie Schroeder of Bastrop, Mayor Chris Cannon of Elgin, and Mayor Scott Saunders, Jr. of Smithville, in announcing this Order and requesting everyone in the county to Stay Home and Stay Safe.

“Today Dr. Desmar Walkes, our Local Health Authority, announced three (3) additional positive cases of COVID-19 in Bastrop County. This brings our total to six (6),” said Judge Pape. “I am thankful to our residents for the tremendous voluntary compliance for social distancing and staying at home. Keep it up.”

The Order requires those who may have COVID-19 to seek pre-arranged medical care. It also addresses those who have tested positive, or who have a presumptive positive diagnosis by a medical doctor, to self-isolate as well as their family members.

The Order also addresses limited social gatherings, merchant plans for keeping shoppers safer from the virus, and limits on some purchases. It requires merchants and store owners to develop and implement procedures to limit the spread of the virus to the employees and shoppers. It also addresses some specifics of social gatherings. Finally, to help merchants and prevent over-buying, the Order places mandatory limits on the sale or purchase of certain kinds of items.

Together Bastrop County officials stress the importance of staying at home and practicing proper personal hygiene to slow the spread of COVID-19.

## Bastrop County COVID-19 ORDER #1

Effective: March 31, 2020; 11:59 p.m.

WHEREAS, a novel coronavirus now designated SARS-CoV2, which causes the disease 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is primarily 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; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 418.108, the Bastrop County Judge issued a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency on March 16, 2020, activating the Bastrop County Emergency Management Plan to protect the safety and welfare of the public; and,

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, President Trump released strict guidelines to limit people's interactions during the COVID-19 pandemic, including that Americans should avoid being in groups of more than 10 people and other social distancing measures; and,

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2020, Governor of Texas Greg Abbott issued Executive Order GA 08, limiting the size of gatherings anywhere in the state to 10 or fewer people, closing all dine-in restaurants and bars, and closing all schools temporarily; and,

WHEREAS, the on-going evaluation of circumstances related to the virus, along with updated recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and the Texas Department of State Health Services warranted the Bastrop County Judge's original Declaration be amended; and,

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2020, the Bastrop County Judge issued Bastrop County Declaration of Disaster Due To Public Health Emergency, First Amended, that authorizes the County Judge to issue written Orders or Directives to promote public health and welfare and to suppress the spread of the virus, and extends the Declaration of Disaster indefinitely until rescinded by order of the County Judge upon the recommendation of the County Health Authority and briefing of the County Commissioners Court,

THEREFORE, under the authority of Texas Government Code, Section 418.108, the Bastrop County Judge issues this **Bastrop County COVID—19 Order #1**:

- 1.0 This Order is **effective** as of 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2020 and will lapse at 11:59 p.m. on April 30, 2020, unless extended or terminated by the Bastrop County Judge.
- 2.0 **Stay Home – Stay Safe.** This Order asks every resident of Bastrop County to stay home and stay safe, to the fullest extent possible.
- 3.0 General Orders to slow the spread of COVID-19.
  - 3.1 All **persons who are sick** with symptoms that may indicate COVID-19 (such as fever of 99.6 or higher, dry cough, tightness in lungs) shall remain at home, except to seek pre-arranged medical care or emergency medical treatment.

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## Bastrop County COVID-19 ORDER #1

- 3.2 Anyone **tested positive** for COVID-19, or anyone issued a presumptive positive diagnosis by a Medical Doctor and ordered to self-isolate, shall self-isolate under this Order and all the members of their household are Ordered to self-isolate at home for a minimum of fourteen (14) days, unless released by a Medical Doctor. No member of such household may go to work, school, daycare, social or religious gathering, shopping, or to any other community function until released by a Medical Doctor.
- 3.3 Each business serving the public shall **develop and implement protocols** to limit the spread of the virus for shoppers, including daily checking and monitoring the health of all staff and employees, general sanitation, and social distancing. Businesses must also designate a person on each shift to monitor and enforce the protocols. Records of these actions must be made available to the Local Health Authority upon request.
- 3.4 All **social gatherings and** worship and other religious services (including weddings and funerals) of more than ten persons are prohibited. Worship and other religious services may be provided by 1) video and teleconference, 2) a drive-in service that avoids all contact of individuals other than those in a family unit in a closed vehicle, or 3) compliance with ten or fewer persons in the same venue. *When preparing or conducting video or teleconference services, groups must limit in-person staff to ten people and all such individuals must at all times follow the Social Distancing Guidelines, Appendix A.*
- 3.5 Due to increased demand for certain products, a **mandatory limit** is placed on the sale or purchase of the following items, per store visit: The greater of the number listed below or the number of items in a single package: (a) toilet tissue, two (2) rolls; hand sanitizer, two (2) items; face tissue, two (2) boxes; sanitizing wipes, two (2) items. This regulation does not apply to a single purchase representing more than one household, with proof there of (such as a photo ID), or for licensed group caregivers.
- 4.0 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 portion shall be **severed** and shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions or applications of this Order.
- 5.0 Bastrop County and the media shall promptly **publicize** this Order by posting and publication.
- 6.0 Pursuant to Texas Local Government Code, **penalties** for violating this Order are as follows: LGC 418.173. Penalty for Violation of Emergency Management Plan
- (a) A state, local, or interjurisdictional emergency management plan may provide that failure to comply with the plan or with a rule, order, or ordinance adopted under the plan is an offense.
- (b) The plan may prescribe a punishment for the offense, but may not prescribe a fine that exceeds \$1,000 or confinement in jail for a term that exceeds 180 days.

**Bastrop County COVID-19 ORDER #1**

BE IT SO ORDERED, this the 30<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.

Signed:



Paul Pape  
Bastrop County Judge

Attest:



Rose Pietsch  
Bastrop County Clerk

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Rose Pietsch  
Bastrop County Clerk

# Bastrop County COVID-19 ORDER #1

## APPENDIX A

### Personal Hygiene and Social Distancing Guidelines

#### 1) Vulnerable Populations: Limit Outings

- Vulnerable populations include people who are:
  - 60 years old and older.
  - People with certain health conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, kidney disease and weakened immune systems.
- For vulnerable populations, don't go out unless it is essential. Stay home. Avoid people who are sick or who may have the virus.

#### 2) Workplace and Businesses: Minimize Exposure

- Suspend nonessential employee travel.
- Ensure employees practice social distancing and do not work within **six feet** of one another.
- Urge essential employees to stay home when they are sick and maximize flexibility in sick leave benefits.
- Do not require a doctor's note for employees who are sick.
- Maximize telecommuting options.
- Persons who need to be at work to provide essential services of great benefit to the community must take steps in their workplace to minimize risk.

#### 3) Non-essential Activities

- Cancel non-essential activities.
- If sick, do not attend any events or gatherings.
- For events that aren't cancelled, we recommend:
  - Having hand washing capabilities, hand sanitizers and tissues available.
  - Frequently cleaning high touch surface areas like counter tops and hand rails.
  - Finding ways to implement social distancing.

#### 4) Schools: Safety First

- Do not have your child attend school or any daycare if sick.
- If you have a child with chronic health conditions, consult the child's doctor about school attendance.
- Schools should equip all classrooms with hand sanitizers and tissues.
- Recommend rescheduling or canceling events that are not essential.
- Explore remote teaching and online options to continue learning.
- Schools should develop a plan for citywide school closures, and families should prepare for further closures.

#### 5) Transit: Cleaning and Protection

- Increase cleaning of vehicles and high touch surface areas.
- Provide hand washing/hand sanitizers and tissues in stations and on vehicles.
- Ensure social distancing practices are implemented to the full extent possible.

## Bastrop County COVID-19 ORDER #1

### 6) Health Care Settings: Avoid as possible, protect the vulnerable

- Long-term care facilities should have a COVID-19 plan in accordance with CDC or state guidelines.
- Long-term care facilities should restrict all visitation except for certain compassionate care situations, such as end of life situations.
- The general public should avoid going to medical settings such as hospitals, nursing homes and long-term care facilities, even if you are not ill.
- If you are ill, call your health care provider ahead of time, and you may be able to be served by phone.
- Do not visit emergency rooms unless it is essential.
- Follow guidance and directions of all facilities.

### 7) Everyone: Do your part

The best way for all residents to reduce their risk of getting sick, as with seasonal colds or the flu, still applies to prevent COVID-19:

- Maintain at least six feet distance from others.
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Throw the tissue in the trash.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Use alternatives to shaking hands, like an elbow bump or wave.
- If you have recently returned from a country, state or region with ongoing COVID-19 infections, monitor your health and follow the instructions of public health officials and CDC guidance.
- There is no recommendation to wear masks at this time to prevent yourself from getting sick.

### 8) You can also prepare for the disruption caused by COVID-19. Preparedness actions include:

- Work from home if that is possible for your job and your employer.
- Make sure you have a supply of all essential medications for your family.
- Prepare a child care plan if you or a caregiver are sick.
- Make arrangements about how your family will manage school closures.
- Plan for how you can care for a sick family member without getting sick yourself.
- Take care of each other and check in by phone with friends, family and neighbors that are vulnerable to serious illness or death.
- Keep common spaces clean to help maintain a healthy environment for you and others. Frequently-touched surfaces should be cleaned regularly with disinfecting sprays, wipes or household cleaning products.

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