



Paul Pape
Bastrop County Judge

STATEMENT ANNOUNCING AMENDED COVID-19 ORDER

Today I have amended my Bastrop County COVID-19 Order #1 to include additional measures as we continue the fight to slow the spread of this deadly virus.

As of now, we have announced, and posted, that 18 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Bastrop County, including 1 fatality. Our sincere condolences go out to the family of this 58-year-old gentleman.

We know that there are more cases, perhaps many more, in our County. With more testing, the number of confirmed cases will rise.

The good news from the President's advisors is that the mitigation efforts being put forth are working. Social distancing is slowing the spread of the virus. According to the Center for Disease Control, the next step is for all of us to wear a simple face covering when out in public. This will help in a couple of ways. First, it will prevent the spread of droplets while speaking, or from a cough or sneeze. Second, and I think just as important, it signifies that we all know we are in an unprecedented health crisis pandemic and that we are doing our little part in the fight to slow it down.

In my amended order, called Bastrop County COVID-19 ORDER #1 A, effective at 11:59 p.m., on April 9, 2020, I am closing all of the Bastrop County Parks. Yesterday, Governor Abbott announced the closing of all state parks and historical sites. Each of our mayors, Mayor Schroeder of Bastrop, Mayor Cannon of Elgin and Mayor Saunders of Smithville, have also closed their city parks. This action is to prevent gatherings in these public places and reduce the potential spread of the virus to others.

The second part of my amended Order addresses the CDCs recommendations on mitigation efforts. I am therefore ordering that all persons follow the CDC guidelines to Prevent Getting Sick, including social distancing and face coverings. These guidelines are published on the CDC website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/>

These guidelines must be followed by every person in Bastrop County in three specific scenarios:

1. When entering any government or public building, or conversing with a governmental official, staff, or employee in person; or,

2. When with other members of the public outside of a household (i.e, office, store, business, sidewalk, parking lot, etc); or,
3. Pursuant to Section 3.3 of this Order, all employees or staff of any business when open to the public.

The CDC is clear that a face covering can be as simple as a bandana or as fancy as a custom-designed masterpiece sewn together by Grandmother. The point is that it must cover the nose and mouth at all times.

I appreciate the efforts being put forth by so many retailers and store owners to do their part in this battle. Most if not all have developed and implemented the safeguards I put in place last week. I'm confident that they will continue to support us in our efforts to slow the contagion of this virus.

I am also very proud of and thankful for the team of over 50 local and community leaders working in our Emergency Operations Center. These men and women are the best in the business. They are meeting needs, answering questions, and developing resources to deal with whatever may come. They are a like a fine-tuned machine, working under my direction, along with our deputy director of Emergency Management Christine Files and our Local Health Authority Dr. Desmar Walkes.

In closing, our message is clear and simple: Stay Home Bastrop County. If you must go out for essential goods or services, practice proven mitigation – social distancing and face covering. We are in this together and together we will conquer this foe and build a better world for our future. May God bless you and may God bless Bastrop County. - Judge Paul Pape