

**STATE OF TEXAS**                   §  
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**COUNTY OF ROCKWALL** §

**ORDER OF COUNTY JUDGE DAVID SWEET**

DATE ORDER ISSUED: March 24, 2020

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, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 418.108, Rockwall County Judge David Sweet issued a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency, due to a novel coronavirus now designated SARS-CoV2 which causes the disease COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2020, Judge Sweet issued a subsequent Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency, superseding his declaration of March 17, 2020, in furtherance of his authority to protect the safety and welfare of the public by slowing the spread of the virus; and,

WHEREAS, the on-going evaluation of circumstances related to the virus and the updated recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and the Texas Department of State Health Services warrant issuance of the following Order of County Judge David Sweet, in furtherance of his authority to protect the safety and welfare of the public by slowing the spread of the virus; and

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2020, Rockwall County Commissioners Court issued an Order Extending Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency that affirmed the activation of the Rockwall County Emergency Management Plan and extends the Declaration of Local Disaster until rescinded by order of the Commissioners Court.

THEREFORE, Rockwall County Judge David Sweet deems the following Order is necessary to protect the safety and welfare of the public:

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 health care 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 Rockwall County to remain at home, except for certain essential activities and work to provide essential business and government services or perform essential public infrastructure construction, including housing, utilities, computer services, internet services, and road construction and repair. This Order takes effect at 11:59 p.m. on March 24, 2020

and will continue through 11:59 p.m. on April 15, 2020, subject to the limited exceptions and under the terms and conditions more particularly set forth below.

**NOW THEREFORE, I, COUNTY JUDGE OF ROCKWALL COUNTY, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY VESTED BY THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE CHAPTER 418 HEREBY ORDER THAT:**

1. Effective as of 11:59 p.m. on March 24, 2020, and continuing until 11:59 p.m. on April 15, 2020, unless terminated or modified by subsequent Order:
  - (a) All individuals currently living within Rockwall County, including but not limited to all cities and municipalities located within the boundaries of Rockwall County are ordered to remain at their place of residence. For the purposes of this Order, residences include 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, to provide or perform Essential Governmental Functions, to operate Essential Businesses, or otherwise as set out below.
  - (b) In order to more effectively control movements of persons and the occupancy of certain premises, all businesses operating within Rockwall County, except those set out below, are required to cease all activities at facilities located within the County. To the greatest extent possible, all 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 more than 10 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) Restaurants with or without drive-in or drive-through services and microbreweries, micro-distilleries, or wineries may only provide take out, delivery, or drive-through services as allowed by law.
  - (e) Religious and worship services may only be provided by video, audio and teleconference. Religious institutions must limit in-person staff to ten (10) people or less when preparing for or conducting video, audio or teleconference services, or when providing other necessary church-related functions and all individuals must follow the Social Distancing Guidelines including the six foot social distancing.
  - (f) All elective medical, surgical, and dental procedures are prohibited anywhere in Rockwall County. Hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, dental offices, and other medical facilities are directed to identify procedures that are deemed "elective" based on patient risk and with consideration to 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 health care 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 supply, and any other household consumer products, and products necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences).
  - iii. To engage in outdoor activity, including work-related activity, provided the individuals comply with social distancing requirements of six feet (for example, walking, biking, hiking, running, landscaping, and gardening).
  - 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 Healthcare Operations.** These include 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 includes 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(f) of this Order.
  - ii. **Essential Government Functions.** All services provided by local governments needed to ensure the continuing operation of the government agencies to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the public. 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 Critical Infrastructure.** Work necessary to the operations and maintenance of the 16 critical infrastructure sectors as identified by the National Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) including public works construction, residential and commercial construction and sales, airport operations, water, sewer, gas, electrical, oil refining, roads and highways, public transportation, solid waste collection and removal, internet, and telecommunications systems (including the provision of essential global, national, and local infrastructure for computing services,

business infrastructure, communications, and web-based services), financial institutions, defense and national security-related operations, essential manufacturing operations provided that they carry out those services or that work in compliance with social distancing requirements of six feet, to the extent possible. Essential Businesses providing essential infrastructure should implement screening precautions to protect employees and all activity shall be performed in compliance with social distancing guidelines attached.

- iv. **Essential Retail, Production and Manufacturing Facilities.** These include food service providers, including grocery stores, food manufacturers, food providers, warehouse stores, big-box stores, bodegas, 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 and sales, hardware stores, and related facilities, and; 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.** These include 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, mechanics, electricians, exterminators, 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, stock brokers, realtors, financial advisors, title companies and insurance services; businesses that supply other essential businesses with support or supplies needed to operate.
- vii. **Supplies for Essential Businesses, Critical Infrastructure and Essential Government Functions.** These include businesses that supply other Essential Businesses, Critical Infrastructure, and Essential Government Functions with support or supplies necessary to operate, including but not limited to computers, computer components, audio and

- video electronics, hardware, paint, electrical and plumbing material, sanitary equipment, and food and beverages.
- viii. **News Media.** These include newspapers, television, radio, and other media services.
  - ix. **Childcare Services.** These include childcare facilities providing services that enable employees exempted in this Order to work as permitted.
3. Any manufacturer who retools so that a substantial part of their business is for the purpose of manufacturing and producing ventilators, personal protection equipment and other related supplies may apply for an “essential business” exemption under this Order.
  4. Businesses consisting exclusively of employees or contractors may continue operations only if they maintain social distancing and at least a six foot separation between individuals. Other individuals may not come onto the premises.
  5. If any member of a household tests positive for coronavirus, all members of the household not admitted to a hospital or other similar healthcare facility are **ORDERED** to isolate at home and cannot attend work, school, or any other community function until directed by a healthcare authority.
  6. Nursing homes, retirement, and long-term care facilities are instructed by this order to prohibit non-essential visitors from accessing their facilities unless to provide critical assistance or for end-of-life visitation.
  7. This Order shall be effective until 11:59 p.m. on April 15, 2020, or until it is either rescinded, superseded, or amended pursuant to applicable law.
  8. Rockwall County shall promptly provide notice of this Order by posting this Order on their 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.

**ORDERED** on this the 24<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.

  
David Sweet  
Rockwall County Judge

Filed with the Rockwall County Clerk on this the 24<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.

  
Shelli Miller  
Rockwall County Clerk



## Social Distancing Recommendations

### 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 to gatherings unless it is essential. Stay home. Avoid people who are sick.

## **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) Cancel Non-essential Events**

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

## **4) Schools: Safety First**

- Do not have your child attend school 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 cancelling 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.

## **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 Rockwall County residents to reduce their risk of getting sick, as with seasonal colds or the flu, still applies to prevent COVID-19:

- 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.
- Try 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.

You can also prepare for the disruption caused by an outbreak. Preparedness actions include:

- Prepare to 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 if they get COVID-19.
- 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 common household cleaning products.