



ORDER

BY

THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF CALDWELL COUNTY

BE IT KNOWN:

WHEREAS, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is recognized globally as a contagious respiratory virus; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020 Governor Abbott declared a state of Disaster in Texas due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020 Caldwell County Judge Hoppy Haden declared a state of Disaster in Caldwell County due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has continued to spread, necessitating additional emergency action to protect the health and welfare of residents of Caldwell County from the spread COVID-19; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF CALDWELL COUNTY AND PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY VESTED BY THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, A LOCAL STATE OF DISASTER IS DECLARED WITHIN CALDWELL COUNTY BASED ON THE THREAT POSED BY COVID-19 AND ORDER:

SECTION I.

This state of disaster will continue for 21 days or until continued, renewed or authorized by the Commissioners Court.

This declaration activates the Caldwell County Emergency Management Program and all other emergency statutory and ordinance powers vested in the County Judge or other County officials.

Pursuant to section 418.108(d) of the Texas Government Code, this declaration activates the recovery and rehabilitation aspects of all applicable local or interjurisdictional emergency management plans and authorizes the furnishing of all aid and assistance under the administration of such plans.

SECTION II.

BE IT ALSO PROCLAIMED that pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 418.108(g), the County Judge may control ingress to and egress from a disaster area under the jurisdiction and authority of the county judge and control the movement of persons and the occupancy of premises in that area.

Effective immediately, community gatherings of 50 persons or more anywhere in Caldwell County are prohibited effective immediately and continuing through the term of this disaster declaration, unless terminated or modified by another order or declaration.

A violation of this Disaster Declaration is punishable as a Class C misdemeanor by a fine not to exceed \$500.00 or as authorized by Texas Government Code Section 418.173 and adopted in the county emergency

management plan by a fine not to exceed \$1,000.00 or confinement in jail for a term not to exceed 180 days, whichever is greater.

For the purposes of this order, a “community gathering” is any indoor or outdoor event or convening subject to the exceptions and clarifications below, that brings together or is likely to bring together fifty (50) or more people at the same time in a single room or space. For clarity, this includes, but is not limited to, weddings, religious services, parties, funerals, sporting events, social events, conferences, and other gatherings.

This order does not prohibit gatherings of people in multiple, separate enclosed spaces (including separate cubicles) in a single building, such as school classrooms, different floors of a multi-level office, residential building or hotel, so long as 50 people are not present in any single space at the same time. This order also does not prohibit the use of enclosed spaces where 50 or more people may be present at different times during the day so long as 50 or more people are not present in the space at the same time. For any gathering covered by this subsection, the Commissioners Court strongly encourages mitigation measures such as social distancing, hand washing and increased cleaning of commonly and frequently touched surfaces.

This order does not apply to:

1. Critical infrastructure, including airport facilities and operations, transit and transit facilities;
2. Government buildings providing essential services;
3. Schools or institutes of higher learning;
4. Grocery stores and pharmacies;
5. Hospitals and medical offices and facilities; and
6. The day to day operations of organizations as daycare facilities, private sector businesses and public sector businesses;

For purposes of this order, “grocery stores” includes warehouse stores, big-box stores, gas stations and farmers markets that sell food products and household staples.

The Commissioners Court recommends strict compliance with the attached social distancing recommendations.

SECTION III.

This Order applies to all unincorporated and incorporated areas within the boundaries of Caldwell County.

Pursuant to section 418.108(c) of the Texas Government Code, this declaration of a local state of disaster shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the County Clerk.

This proclamation shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance.

ORDERED this the 18th day of March, 2020.




Hoppy Haden



Commissioner, Precinct 1



Commissioner, Precinct 2



Commissioner, Precinct 3



Commissioner, Precinct 4

ATTEST:


Caldwell County Clerk



SOCIAL DISTANCING RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Vulnerable Populations: Limit Outings

- Vulnerable populations include people who are 60 years old and older and 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 (of 50 people or more) unless it is essential. If you can telecommute, you should. Avoid people who are sick.

2) Workplace and Businesses: Minimize Exposure

- Suspend nonessential employee travel.
- Minimize the number of employees working within arm's length of one another, including minimizing or canceling large in-person meetings and conferences.
- Urge employees to stay home when they are sick and maximize flexibility in sick leave benefits.
- Permit sick employees to stay home without providing a doctor's note.
- Consider use of telecommuting options.
- Some people need to be at work to provide essential services of great benefit to the community. They can take steps in their workplace to minimize risk.

3) Large Gatherings: Cancel Non-essential Events

- Recommend cancelling or postponing large gatherings, such as concerts, sporting events, conventions or large community 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, doorknobs, and handrails; and
 - Finding ways to create physical space to minimize close contact as much as possible.

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.
- Frequent re-education of students and staff regarding personal hygiene measures (handwashing, etc.) and ensuring that appropriate signs are posted.
- Schools should equip all classrooms with hand sanitizers and tissues.
- Recommend rescheduling or cancelling medium to large events that are not essential, even if the events would otherwise comply with the Order.
- Explore remote teaching and online options to continue learning.
- Schools should develop a plan for citywide school closures and families should prepare.