



Hays County, Texas

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March 14, 2020

Hays County Reports First COVID-19 Case, Reminds Residents to Maintain Health Practices

Hays County Courthouse, San Marcos, TX (March 14, 2020) – Hays County officials today reported its first presumptive case of COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus.

The patient traveled to multiple cities along the West Coast of the United States and is believed to have been exposed while traveling. Upon arrival back to Central Texas, the patient notified the Hays County Local Health Department about their symptoms. The patient was admitted to a local hospital and is currently recovering there. At no time did they expose any Hays County residents to this disease. The Hays County Local Health Department is working with the Department of State Health Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to notify the passengers that were potentially exposed while on the plane with the patient.

“As this is a pandemic disease, we fully expected to see cases in Hays County and have been preparing for this situation,” County Judge Ruben Becerra said. “We have been working with local and state officials to ensure that protocols are established and followed, and that we have access to additional resources should they be necessary.”

Hays County Epidemiologist reminded citizens that most persons who contract the disease will have low to moderate fever, a cough, and congestion, typically treated with over the counter medications as there is no specialized treatment for COVID-19 as there is with Influenza. The majority of persons who contract this disease will not need to seek medical care. Residents with these symptoms should self-quarantine until they are fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 48 hours.

“Residents with underlying health conditions or a weakened immune system and persons over 65 tend to be hardest hit by COVID-19 and should consult their health care provider if they are experiencing symptoms, as should persons with high fevers or shortness of breath.

Good hygiene practices are essential:

Prevention Tips:

1. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds several times a day, including between your fingers and underneath your nails. Handwashing is considered the best way to remove germs and dirt, and hand sanitizers should be used only when handwashing is not available. The hand sanitizers should be at least 60 percent alcohol to be effective.
2. Avoid handshaking and high-fives
3. Avoid touching your face – especially your eyes, nose, and mouth
4. Stay home when you feel sick
5. Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue then put the tissue in the trash, or use the crook of your elbow if a tissue isn't available
6. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household disinfectant cleaning spray or wipe. Clean cell and desk phones, computer keyboards, door handles, and work surfaces often.
7. Face masks are not considered an effective way to prevent someone from catching a virus unless you have close, frequent contact with a sick person; however, they are an option for sick people to use to keep from spreading the virus.
8. Avoid travel to areas that have been designated high-risk areas because of multiple verified cases of Corona
9. Individuals are encouraged to avoid large gatherings. This includes, but is not limited to concerts, plays, sporting events, gymnasiums, dances, and restaurants. Recreation activities that can be practiced in private are encouraged. This virus spreads by person-to-person transmission just like the flu, so limiting human contact can help prevent COVID-19 from spreading.

Judge Becerra reminded residents to rely on qualified information sources for additional information such as the [Hays County website](#), the [Texas Department of State Health Services](#), and from the [Centers for Disease Control](#) which offers information in Spanish and Chinese as well as English.

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