

COVID-19 RESPONSE: RE-OPENING POLK COUNTY, TEXAS

The best way to prevent infection is to take steps to avoid exposure. We have seen this work in Texas, where Texans are taking actions to stop infections.

Based on our current understanding, the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread:

- * Mainly from person to person;
- * Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet); and
- * Via respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes; these droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly inhaled.

People are thought to be most contagious early in their illness, but COVID-19 can be spread to others by infected persons even before they show any symptoms at all.

This is why we must remain cautious—to avoid further spread or a new outbreak.

As we begin to open Texas, we must continue to follow these critical health guidelines:

- * Stay home if you can.
- * Wash your hands often and for 20 seconds; if soap and hot are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- * Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue away.
- * Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- * Disinfect surfaces, buttons, handles, doorknobs, and other places touched often.
- * Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Continue to practice social distancing, avoid crowds, and limit physical contact. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also recommends using simple cloth face coverings in public to help slow the spread of the virus.

Every Texan is part of the solution. You can protect yourself, your family, and your community.

Special Guidance for Texans Over 65—People 65 years or older, especially those with medical issues like heart disease, diabetes, cancer, or a weakened immune system, are at a higher risk for getting very sick or dying from COVID-19.

- * **Stay home if you can**—Minimize face-to-face contact with others. Avoid young children. If someone is assisting you, you and your family members or caretaker should wear cloth face masks. Remember a family member or caretaker can give you the virus even if they don't appear to have symptoms. Try grocery or restaurant delivery, mail order prescriptions, and phone appointments with your doctor. **Call 2-1-1 if you need help with essentials.** Reach out to friends, family, or neighbors who can deliver essential items.
- * **Help save lives**—If you must go out, wear a cloth face mask, and stay six feet away from others. Wash your hands often and for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Disinfect surfaces, buttons, handles, knobs, and other places touched often. Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, or eating utensils with others. If you have mild symptoms (difficulty breathing, or a rapidly worsening cough or fever), call your healthcare provider. If symptoms are severe, call 9-1-1.
- * **Check in**—Check in regularly with neighbors, friends, and family by calling, texting, emailing, video chatting, or even writing letters. Walking, gardening, digital books, games, and online religious services are great ways to stay active and connected.

Additional Resources

- * **CDC Guidelines:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- * **Prevention Steps:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-gettingsick/index.html>
- * **Symptoms And Testing:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptomstesting/index.html>
- * **What To Do If You Are Sick:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
- * **Advice For Caregivers:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>
- * **Cleaning And Disinfecting Your Home:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html>

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GUIDELINES FOR ALL TEXANS

We are each called upon to be Texans: to act responsibly as we re-engage in the economy, to continue following all health precautions and sanitizing guidelines, and to care for our vulnerable neighbors. **Lives depend on our actions.**

MINIMUM STANDARD HEALTH PROTOCOLS

In accordance with Governor Abbott's executive order GA-18, the following are the **minimum** recommended health protocols for all individuals in Texas. These minimum health protocols are not a limit on the health protocols that individuals may adopt. Individuals are encouraged to adopt additional protocols consistent with their specific needs and circumstances to help protect the health and safety of all Texans.

The virus that causes COVID-19 can be spread to others by infected persons who have few or no symptoms. Even if an infected person is only mildly ill, the people they spread it to may become seriously ill or even die, especially if that person is 65 or older with pre-existing health conditions that place them at higher risk. Because of the hidden nature of this threat, everyone should rigorously follow the practices specified in these protocols, all of which facilitate a safe and measured reopening of Texas. The virus that causes COVID-19 is still circulating in our communities. We should continue to observe practices that protect everyone, including those who are most vulnerable.

Please note, public health guidance cannot anticipate every unique situation. Individuals should stay informed and take actions based on common sense and wise judgment that will protect health and support economic revitalization.

CHECKLIST FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS

- * Maintain at least 6 feet separation from other individuals not within the same household. If such distancing is not feasible, other measures such as face covering, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation should be rigorously practiced.
- * Self-screen before going into a business for any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19:
 - ⊘ Cough
 - ⊘ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - ⊘ Chills
 - ⊘ Repeated shaking with chills
 - ⊘ Muscle pain
 - ⊘ Headache
 - ⊘ Sore throat
 - ⊘ Loss of taste or smell
 - ⊘ Diarrhea
 - ⊘ Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
 - ⊘ Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19
- * Wash or disinfect hands upon entering a business and after any interaction with employees, other customers, or items in the business.
- * Consistent with the actions taken by many individuals across the state, consider wearing cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth) when entering a business, or when within 6 feet of another person who is not a member of the individual's household. If available, individuals should consider wearing non-medical grade face masks.
- * **Individuals aged 65 or older are at a higher risk of COVID-19. To the extent possible, avoid being within 6 feet with individuals aged 65 and older. Individuals aged 65 and older should stay at home as much as possible.**
- * Avoid being in groups of more than 5 individuals.

We have shown that Texas can continue our efforts to contain COVID-19 while also adhering to safe standards that will allow us to begin the process of opening this great state. We will be measured and cautious. Only with your help and with all of these measures in place can we begin to open businesses with careful adherence to health protocols. By coming together, we can prevent the spread of COVID-19 and we can get Texas back to work.

COVID-19 RESPONSE: RE-OPENING POLK COUNTY, TEXAS

CHECKLIST FOR ALL EMPLOYERS

- * Train all employees on appropriate cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette.
- * Screen employees before coming into the business—Send home any employee who has any of the following new or worsening symptoms of possible COVID-19:
 - ⊘ Cough
 - ⊘ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - ⊘ Chills
 - ⊘ Repeated shaking with chills
 - ⊘ Muscle pain
 - ⊘ Headache
 - ⊘ Sore throat
 - ⊘ Loss of taste or smell
 - ⊘ Diarrhea
 - ⊘ Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
 - ⊘ Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19
- * Do not allow employees with the new or worsening signs or symptoms listed above to return to work until:
 - * In the case of an employee who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to work when all three of the following criteria are met:
 - * at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications); and the individual has improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; or
 - * In the case of an employee who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, the individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to work until the individual has completed the same three-step criteria listed above; or
 - * If the employee has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to work before completing the above self-isolation period, the individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis.
 - * Do not allow an employee with known close contact to a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 to return to work until the end of the 14 day self-quarantine period from the last date of exposure (with an exception granted for healthcare workers and critical infrastructure workers).
- * Have employees wash or sanitize their hands upon entering the business and between interactions with customers.
- * Have employees maintain at least 6 feet separation from other individuals. If such distancing is not feasible, other measures such as face covering, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation should be rigorously practiced.
- * If an employer provides a meal for employees, employers are recommended to have the meal individually packed for each employee.
- * Consistent with the actions taken by many employers across the state, consider having all employees wear cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth). If available, employees should consider wearing non-medical grade face masks.

Health Protocols for your Facilities:

- * Regularly and frequently clean and disinfect any regularly touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, tables, chairs, and restrooms.
- * Disinfect any items that come into contact with customers.
- * Make hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar disinfectant readily available to employees and customers.
- * Place readily visible signage at the business to remind everyone of best hygiene practices.
- * For employers with more than 10 employees and/or contractors present at one time, consider having an individual wholly or partially dedicated to ensuring the health protocols adopted by the employer are being successfully implemented and followed.

Additional information resources for businesses:

- * **CDC Guidelines:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- * **ADA:** https://www.ada.gov/emerg_prep.html
- * **OSHA:** <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

COVID-19 RESPONSE

RE-OPENING POLK COUNTY, TEXAS—MAY 1

Pursuant to Executive Order GA-18, issued on Monday, April 27, 2020, by Governor Gregg Abbott, and effective at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, May 1, 2020, the following businesses may re-open under Phase I with minimum standard health protocols. Detailed guidelines from the state are available online at gov.texas.gov/OpenTexas.

ALL ESTABLISHMENTS LIMITED TO 25% OF TOTAL PERMITTED OCCUPANCY—INCLUDING EMPLOYEES

RETAIL STORES

- * All retail stores may open. Consider having all employees wear cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth) and having an employee control access to the store to keep occupancy below 25%.

RESTAURANTS

- * Parties must be kept at least six feet apart while seated and while waiting to be sat; no parties of more than six people may be permitted.
- * Make hand sanitizing station available upon entry to the restaurant.
- * Do not leave condiments, silverware, flatware, or glassware on unoccupied tables.
- * Offer condiments upon request and in single use (non-reusable) portions.
- * Use disposable menus.
- * If a buffet is offered, restaurant employees serve food to customers.
- * Have employees maintain at least 6 feet separation from other individuals. If such distancing is not feasible, measures such as face covering, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation should be rigorously practiced. Consider having all employees wear cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth) and having an employee control access to the restaurant, including opening doors for customers.

MUSEUMS & LIBRARIES

- * Maintain at least six feet of separation from other individuals that are not from the same household.
- * Interactive displays must remain closed.

OUTDOOR SPORTS PARTICIPANTS

- * No more than four (4) participants at one time—no contact sports
- * Maintain a minimum of six feet between participants (unless from same household)
- * Golf Courses—sanitize golf carts between uses—one individual per golf cart (unless from same household)

CHURCH / PLACES OF WORSHIP

- * Use alternate rows for seating
- * Maintain at least six feet of separation between parties in any rows, except where two or more members of same household sit adjacent to one another.
- * Arrange special seating areas or offer separate services designated for “vulnerable” attendees.

No changes were made to how essential businesses operate. Executive Order GA-18 does not apply to “essential” businesses that have been able to operate during the Stay-at-Home order. The State of Texas has established a list of 17 essential business classifications. To see the full list, visit tdem.texas.gov.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL RETAILERS: Grocery Stores—Warehouse stores—Hardware stores—Big Box stores selling essential household staples—Nurseries—Businesses that sell essential office supplies needed to work from home—Auto parts & repair stores—Bicycle repair & sales stores—RV repair & sales stores.

EXAMPLES OF PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES: Public or private gatherings regardless of size—Going to a bar—Going to a gym—Going to a barber shop/hair salon—Going to a nail salon—Going to a tanning salon—Most nursing home visits—Going to a massage establishment—Going to a public swimming pool—Going to a bowling alley / video arcade—Going to a tattoo or piercing studio.

COVID-19 RESPONSE: RE-OPENING POLK COUNTY, TEXAS—MAY 8, 2020

Pursuant to Executive Order GA-18, issued on Monday, April 27, 2020, by Governor Gregg Abbott, and effective at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, May 8, 2020, the following businesses may re-open under Phase I with minimum standard health protocols. Detailed guidelines from the state are available online at gov.texas.gov/OpenTexas.

ALL ESTABLISHMENTS LIMITED TO 25% OF TOTAL PERMITTED OCCUPANCY—INCLUDING EMPLOYEES

BARBER SHOPS / COSMETOLOGY / HAIR SALONS / NAIL SALONS / TANNING SALONS

These facilities may all open on Friday, May 8, 2020, but must follow the specific guidelines provided by the Governor's Office.

Facilities must ensure at least 6 feet social distancing between work stations. Because of the proximity between individuals in these facilities, stringent compliance with these protocols is strongly recommended. Facilities may adopt additional protocols consistent with their specific needs and circumstances to help protect the health and safety of all employees, independent contractors, and customers.

Public Guidance can not anticipate every unique situation. Facilities should stay informed and take actions based on common sense and wise judgment that will protect health and support economic revitalization. Be mindful of federal and state employment and disability laws, workplace safety standards, and accessibility standards to address the needs of both workers and customers.

- * Notify employees & contractors of COVID-19 protocols and require them to sign a statement of acknowledgement.
- * Screen employees & contractors before they enter the facility & consider implementing the same policy for clients.
- * Provide resources and a work environment to promote personal hygiene for employees, contractors & clients.
- * Remove unnecessary items, such as magazines, to limit exposure between clients.
- * Do not allow clients to bring extra people inside the facility (including children).
- * Encourage contactless payment & facial coverings to the greatest extent possible.

Checklist for Barber Shops: <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Barber-Shops.pdf>

Checklist for Barber Shop Customers: <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Barber-Shop-Customers.pdf>

Checklist for Cosmetology / Hair Salons: <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Cosmetology-Hair-Salons.pdf>

Checklist for Cosmetology / Hair Salon Customers: <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Cosmetology-Hair-Salon-Customers.pdf>

Checklist for Nail Salons: <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Nail-Salons.pdf>

Checklist for Nail Salon Customers: <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Cosmetology-Hair-Salon-Customers.pdf>

Checklist for Tanning Salons: <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Tanning-Salons.pdf>

Checklist for Tanning Salon Customers: <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Tanning-Salon-Customers.pdf>

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