

Matagorda County Emergency Operation Center Press Release

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For immediate Release:

From the Matagorda County Emergency Operation Center:

Again today, MCHD officials are reporting no new positive COVID-19 cases.

The latest report from the Palacios Community Medical Center stayed the same, with nine negative cases with one pending case.

The total number of recovered cases are 18

There continues to be 4 patients being cared for in a hospital setting that have tested positive for COVID-19.

The current number of positive cases in Matagorda County is 51.

- **18 recovered cases**
- **3 deceased**

For a dashboard of all positive cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Matagorda County or if you would like more information on the cases please visit:

<https://www.matagordaregional.org/covid19>

Please keep those that are effected with this virus, their families in your prayers. We understand they are scared and going through uncertain times.

Yesterday Governor Abbott issued Executive Order GA-16 which outlined his plan for a limited opening of retail businesses in Texas as well as Executive Order GA-17 which created the Governor's Strike Force to Open Texas.

Executive Order GA-16 defined "Re-opened services" as retail services that are not "essential services" but that may be provided through pickup, delivery by mail or delivery to the customer's doorstep in strict compliance with the requirements of the Department of State Health Services, DSHS.

This Order is effective on Friday, April 24, 2020. Some important elements of the Governor's latest Order are:

- Executive Order GA-14 previously issued by the Governor and the stay at home order issued by Judge McDonald on April 2nd are STILL in effect!
- The limited re-opening of retail businesses must strictly follow the guidelines of the DSHS.

- The most important of those requirements issued by the DSHS is that customers may purchase items from a retail location for pickup, delivery by mail or delivery to the customer's doorstep, but MAY NOT enter the premises,
- The Governor's previous Executive order still is in effect and still includes that people shall avoid bars, restaurants, food courts, gyms, massage establishments, tattoo and piercing studios and cosmetology salons.
- Texans still shall not visit nursing homes, supported living centers, assisted living facilities or long-term care facilities unless to provide critical assistance.

"I think it is very important to emphasize that the Governor's Order today states that he is suspending Sections of the Texas Government Code, specifically sections 418.1015(b) and 418.108, and also other relevant statutes to ensure that local officials do not impose restrictions that are inconsistent with his Executive Order issued today," said Palacios Mayor Glen Smith.

The Mayor continued, "In other words, any orders issued by Texas Counties or Cities are limited in their scope and must abide by the guidelines that the Governor has established in Executive Order GA-16."

"We have made great strides in defeating COVID-19, however, we are not done yet. The Governor's Strike Force to Open Texas, which he established yesterday, will be making recommendations in the coming weeks to further restart all aspects of life in Texas including work, entertainment and culture," said Matagorda County Judge Nate McDonald.

Bay City Mayor Robert Nelson added, "Continue to stay at home unless absolutely necessary to obtain or provide essential services or limited re-opened services. When obtaining or providing those services, continue to practice personal distancing and follow the guidelines that have been provided by your Federal, State and Local officials and the CDC."

After the Governor's address, Judge McDonald met with County Commissioner Kent Pollard, and they decided to open access to the Matagorda County beaches as of Friday April 24th, 2020 at 8 am. The Judge also announcement, with consultation with the Port of Bay City Chairman Mike Griffith the openings of the boat ramps, the fish cleaning station, and the restrooms at the Matagorda Harbor effective, again on Friday April 24th 2020 at 8am. The Judge made it clear that County Officials expect all orders to be followed that have been issued by Governor Abbott:

- Order No. 1: In accordance with the Guidelines from the President and the CDC, every person in Texas shall avoid social gatherings in no groups of more than 10 people.

In addition we must follow the directions from the Department of State Health Services, as well as the CDC, they recommend, no groups of more than 10 people and practice social distancing.

If you have questions for the Emergency Management Team, please email covid19@co.matagorda.tx.us Visit the Matagorda County web site for any posted releases. <http://www.co.matagorda.tx.us/page/matagorda.Emergency>