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Hood County COVID-19 Update

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According to Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Hood County currently has 19 positive COVID-19 cases. Four remain under home isolation, and the majority have recovered. DSHS approved certain businesses in Hood County to open at 50% capacity today, approving the request from Hood County Judge Ronald Massingill. All Hood County residents, businesses, and other organizations should review the latest "Open Texas" guidelines, available on the DSHS Coronavirus website, <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus/opentexas.aspx>. Risk for COVID-19 transmission remains "substantial" in Hood County and across the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Metroplex.

In coordination with Texas Department of Emergency Management and Hood County Office of Emergency Management, a team from the Texas Military Department provided two "drive through" testing opportunities for Hood County residents over the last two weeks, and they will provide another drive through test on Monday, May 11th from 10 am to 6 pm, which will be open to residents of surrounding counties as well. Registration will begin this Saturday, residents can call 512-883-2400 or register at <https://txcovidtest.org/>

Hood County COVID-19 test results to date

As of 4:00 pm on May 7th, Hood County has 19 confirmed COVID-19 cases. A total of 588 COVID-19 PCR swab tests have been reported for Hood County residents, with 22 positive results reported (some are retests), 515 negative, and 51 pending laboratory confirmation. Three have died (two from COVID-19 related illness, one from other causes), four remain under home isolation and twelve have recovered. COVID-19 antibody tests are now available in Hood County as well, but those results are not yet available through DSHS.

The Texas Military Department conducted drive through COVID-19 PCR swab testing on 124 residents on April 26th. Two tested positive, 122 tested negative. They conducted drive through testing on another 31 residents on May 5th, results are still pending.

Where did these people contract COVID-19?

Seven people are believed to have contracted the highly contagious virus from travel, five from work contacts in the DFW area, and seven contracted the illness from infected family members or other close contacts.

Hood County Has Substantial Impact from COVID-19

County and City leaders should continue to follow U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for communities with "substantial" impact or transmission of COVID-19, based upon continued spread in the DFW Metroplex and higher risk of severe COVID-19 related illness in our population.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 25% of Hood County residents are 65 years of age or older, and many more have medical conditions that increase their risk of hospitalization or death from COVID-19, influenza, or other related illness. When cases begin to decrease in DFW, risk to Hood County residents will also decrease.

"Open Texas" Provides Guidelines to Return to a New Normal in Hood County

Everyone should continue to protect themselves and their families as they return to work and community involvement. The "Open Texas Checklist for all Individuals" has minimum recommended health guidance for all of us, found at <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus/opentexas.aspx>.

"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."

Businesses and organizations should also continue to follow social distancing recommendations and principles as they consider opening or expanding services over the next few weeks, in accordance with "Open Texas" guidelines. Protect your workers and your customers, and ensure they protect themselves when they are on site.