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Press Release – COVID-19 Update

May 12, 2020, 6 pm

According to Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Hood County now has a total of 22 documented positive COVID-19 cases. Three more cases were added in the last 48 hours. At least three remain under home isolation, and the majority have recovered. Risk for COVID-19 transmission remains "substantial" in Hood County and across the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Metroplex. 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>. Hood County businesses that meet "Open Texas" guidelines are currently allowed to operate at 50% capacity, rather than 25%, according to the DSHS website.

In coordination with Texas Department of Emergency Management and Hood County Office of Emergency Management, a team from the Texas Military Department successfully tested 182 Hood County residents with "drive through" COVID-19 PCR swab tests over the last three weeks, free of charge.

Hood County COVID-19 test results to date

As of 6:00 pm on May 12th, Hood County has 22 confirmed COVID-19 cases. A total of 643 COVID-19 PCR swab tests have been reported for Hood County residents, with 26 positive results reported (some are retests), 538 negative, and 79 pending laboratory confirmation. Three have died (two from COVID-19 related illness, one from other causes), at least three 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 58 residents on May 5th and May 11th, results are still pending.

Where did these people contract COVID-19?

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

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

<https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus/opentexas.aspx>

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 everyone.

"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 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.