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Hood County COVID-19 Interim Update - 7-29-2020, 8 am

UPDATED Texas Workforce Commission and DSHS recommendations for repeat COVID testing (7-23-2020): COVID-19 testing is NOT required or recommended for most for people to return to work or regular activities following mild COVID-19 illness.

Criteria include at least ten days since the onset of symptoms consistent with coronavirus illness (or date of positive test if no symptoms), complete RESOLUTION of those symptoms, and more than 24 hours fever free without the use of fever reducing medication.

Download the letter here: <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus/docs/LettertoTXEmployers.pdf>

Hood County testing update:

399 total COVID-19 cases have been detected in Hood County residents since mid-March (58 new cases since my 7-23 report). We currently have 137 active cases hospitalized or under isolation, and an 8.8% positive test rate.

There are differences between local county reports and DSHS website numbers because of delays in processing local cases to DSHS and their need to ultimately deconflict multiple reporting sources across the state.

We now have eight COVID positive deaths reported for Hood County residents, three new deaths of severely ill hospitalized patients reported since last week.

Texas DSHS updated their criteria on Monday, 7-26, to report all deaths with COVID-19 listed as a diagnosis on the official death certificate as COVID-positive. That does NOT mean the deaths were COVID-related.

I can confirm that at 5/8 (63%) were COVID-related (death directly complicated or caused by COVID-19 related illness). 6/8 (75%) were 60 years or older.

36 local COVID-19 PCR nasal swab tests (looking for active COVID-19 infection) are waiting for laboratory results.

- 399 total cases in Hood County confirmed by positive PCR nasal swab tests with local clinics, hospitals, or DSHS
- 137 active cases (positive COVID-19 PCR nasal swab test reported within last 10 days, some remain symptomatic longer than 10 days)
- 79 additional cases were self-reported through Texas Health Trace website (I cannot confirm these)
- 5 current confirmed hospitalizations, all other active cases have been directed to self-isolate at home
- 8 total deaths (5 COVID-related, two more were COVID-positive at time of death, but died of unrelated causes, one is currently unknown)
- 186 have recovered, based on DSHS reports or time since testing, per CDC/DSHS protocols
- 5 additional tested positive for previous COVID infection by IgG antibody tests (considered recovered)
- 545 positive PCR nasal swab tests reported in Hood County (some repeated, some for residents of other counties)
- 8.8% positive PCR nasal swab test rate
- 82 additional cases detected in residents of surrounding counties, reported to DSHS and their county health authorities

Hood County remains at SUBSTANTIAL risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Prevention is Key!

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

- Social distancing is best - if you need to get close to others, "mask up"
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>
- COVER coughs and sneezes with a mask or a sleeve
- Wash or sanitize hands and surfaces often

Review the Department of State Health Services "Open Texas," Hood County, and City of Granbury websites for the latest Executive Orders, reports and guidance on COVID-19:

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

<https://co.hood.tx.us/772/Infectious-Diseases>

<http://granbury.org/996/COVID-19-Coronavirus>

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines for workers in specific industries regulated by OSHA:

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/covid-19-faq.html>

UPDATED CDC guidelines for COVID testing and return to work for healthcare workers (7-17-2020):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/testing-healthcare-personnel.html>

UPDATED CDC guidelines for COVID testing and return to work for non-hospitalized patients (7-20-2020):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>