



For Immediate Release:

March 13, 2020

Two days ago, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 (the current novel coronavirus) as a pandemic for two reasons: 1) the speed and scale of transmission, and 2) the concern that some countries are not approaching the threat with the level of political commitment needed to control it.

While there are currently no known cases of the COVID-19 in Aransas County, all five local governmental entities are monitoring the outbreak closely and are working with state and national health authorities on the best ways to contain the spread of the virus. WE URGE YOU TO WORK WITH US.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person:

- **between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), and**
- **through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.**

People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest). Some spread might also be possible before people show symptoms, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

The best steps our community can take reduce the threat and spread of COVID-19 is for EVERYONE to practice these important public health measures:

- **Stay home if you feel sick, except to get medical care.**
- **If you think you might have COVID-19, call and inform your doctor before your visit so they can take steps to keep other people from getting exposed or infected.** Wear a facemask before entering the facility.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds**—especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. **Use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.**
- **Sneeze or cough into your elbow away from people.**
- **Practice social distancing.** If you are over 65 and/or have a chronic disease, avoid large gatherings.
- **Avoid sharing personal household items** (drinking glasses, eating utensils, towels, etc.).
- **Clean and disinfect all “high-touch” surfaces daily** (counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, phones, keyboards, etc.).
- **If you are confirmed with COVID-19, remain under home isolation until the risk of secondary transmission to others is thought to be low by your healthcare provider and state health department.**

Please also refer to and follow the continuously updated critical COVID-19 advice and guidelines from the CDC (Center for Disease Control) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and DSHS (Texas Department of State Health Services) <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus/>.

You have our promise to continue our efforts and preparation for COVID-19. We ask that each of our community members also do their part to help keep everyone here healthy and safe. Thank you.