



Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

Richard F. Cortez
County Judge

David L. Fuentes
Commissioner, Precinct 1

Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu
Commissioner, Precinct 2

Joe M. Flores
Commissioner, Precinct 3

Ellie Torres
Commissioner, Precinct 4

**OFFICE OF
COUNTY JUDGE
RICHARD F. CORTEZ**

Public Affairs Division

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NEWS ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, March 23, 2020

Hidalgo County Extends Disaster Declaration; Imposes Additional Emergency Measures

EDINBURG – During an emergency meeting of the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court on Sunday morning, a declaration of local disaster made by Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez was extended until April 5. Commissioners Court also extended the ban on gatherings of 10 or more people and outlined the types of gatherings that are banned as well as critical infrastructure that may remain open.

SEE VIDEO BY COUNTY JUDGE RICHARD F. CORTEZ:

If video says "still processing," please click download to view it.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12sqOUAERZGsagm27sMhhl2bjazGD2LIJ/view?usp=sharing>

In addition, Commissioners Court implemented sweeping emergency orders aimed at mitigating the spread of COVID-19 in the county. The orders take effect immediately and include mandates that:

- All persons in Hidalgo County must abide by a stay-at-home curfew between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. This order does not apply to persons who are:
 - Part of the critical infrastructure industry.
 - Persons who work for government agencies that will remain open as determined by local government authorities.
 - Persons traveling to and from essential businesses and retail establishments.
 - Persons authorized to travel by the Emergency Management Director.
 - Law enforcement, first responders and emergency medical services personnel.
- All fees and service charges associated with telephone and online payments to Hidalgo County will not be imposed.
- All deadlines imposed by local law enforcement shall be suspended for 30 days.
- Evictions shall cease for 30 days.
- Foreclosures shall cease for 30 days.
- People are encouraged to limit in-person transactions in Hidalgo County facilities.
- Only essential and emergency matters shall be conducted in the Hidalgo County Courthouse pursuant to orders of the Texas Supreme Court.

- MORE -

Hidalgo County is home to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. We provide health and justice to the over 800,000 residents of our county. We strive to be accessible and responsive to our citizens by providing excellent public service through the values of leadership, transparency, fairness, collaboration, respect and fiscal responsibility. Follow our social media feed at www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/followus



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- All nonessential County related travel is suspended.
- All nonessential County related events are suspended.
- All county boards and advisory committees shall cease in person meetings.
- Most facilities in Hidalgo County parks will be off limits.
- Essential County operations shall remain open.
- No one is allowed to visit nursing homes; retirement or long-term care facilities unless to provide critical care.
- Schools shall temporarily close.
- Anyone testing positive for COVID-19 will be ordered to isolate themselves at home.
- Price controls remain in effect.
- Child care must comply with state standards.
- Day activity and health services facilities must comply with state standards as directed by Governor Greg Abbott's March 19 executive order of disaster.

"The Hidalgo County Commissioners Court does not take these actions lightly," Cortez said. "But we feel obligated to act decisively to limit the effects of this highly contagious strain of coronavirus. We have been saying for days that people are safest by staying home. These orders help facilitate that."

Local law enforcement is authorized to enforce this order as are local and municipal peace officers. Anyone violating any of these orders are subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 and a jail term of up to 180 days.

The emergency orders, including the list of banned operations and the list of critical infrastructure, are [now available at the Hidalgo County website](#).

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ATTACHMENTS: 1. Amended Emergency Order

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