



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 RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, August 19, 2020

Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez extends Shelter at Home Order for another 25 days

EDINBURG – In his capacity as the county's Emergency Management Director, Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez has extended the county's Shelter at Home order for another 25 days. The new order goes into effect on Thursday, August 20, 2020 at 12:01 a.m. and remains in effect until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, September 13, 2020.

"This deadly virus is still a threat and we cannot let our guard down. Staying home, limiting contact and keeping travels to only essential activities has proven to work," said Judge Cortez. "We are asking the public to continue to practice these safety measures so that we may continue to slow the spread of COVID-19."

The new orders include additional safety measures for commercial covered entities and establishments such as bars, flea markets, and farmers markets.

The order includes the following directives:

1. All individuals currently living within Hidalgo County, Texas are ORDERED to SHELTER-AT-HOME in their residence. It is highly encouraged and recommended that all commercial businesses operating within Hidalgo County, except essential covered businesses should cease all activities at facilities that may not be provided by curbside, drive-through, or take-out services.
2. ALL persons over the age of 65, are strongly encouraged to stay home as much as possible and maintain appropriate physical distance from any member of the household who has been out of the residence in the last 14 days.
3. There will be a curfew for all persons aged eighteen (18) and over from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. The only exceptions are for a medical emergency, to provide covered essential services, or any other purpose permitted under this Order. All persons seventeen (17) and younger must be accompanied by a parent or guardian when participating in essential activities.
4. To the greatest extent possible, all travel during the SHELTER-AT-HOME and CURFEW within the jurisdiction of Hidalgo to County should be limited to obtaining or performing essential covered services. Travel should be limited to no more than two (2) persons per vehicle for persons obtaining essential services, and four (4) persons per vehicle for essential healthcare or government functions.

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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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5. Every person in the County of Hidalgo shall wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when inside a commercial entity or other building or space open to the public, or when in an outdoor public space; wherever it is not feasible to maintain six feet (6) of physical distancing from another person not in the same household (see order for exemptions).
6. Any outdoor gathering of ten (10) or more people is prohibited unless the Mayor of the City in which the gathering is held, or the Hidalgo County Judge in the case of a gathering in an unincorporated area, approves of the gathering. Outdoor areas or outdoor venues shall operate at no more than fifty percent (50%) as underlined in the order.
7. All commercial covered entities operating within Hidalgo County shall remain at fifty percent (50%) of the total listed occupancy limit. It is highly encouraged and recommended that services be provided by curbside, drive-thru, or take-out.
8. All bars and similar establishments that receive more than fifty-one percent (51%) of their gross receipts from the sale of alcoholic beverages MUST remain closed, but may open for delivery and take-out, including alcoholic beverages.
9. Bar areas within restaurant establishments must follow Minimum Standard Health Protocols relevant to operations of the business or entity services and must not permit customers to loiter at the bar or in common areas, only provide services to seated individuals in "bar" areas, discouraging activities that enable close physical contact in the "bar" areas.
10. Commercial covered entities, including flea markets and farmers markets, must develop and implement "Health and Safety Practices" that require employees and customers to follow additional hygiene measures, including wearing facial coverings over mouth and nose.
11. Employers of covered entities should follow Minimum Standard Health Protocols relevant to operations of the business or entity services such as training all employees on appropriate cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette, not allow employees with known close contact to a positive for COVID-19 to return to work until the end of a fourteen (14) day self-isolation period, and/or conducting temperature checks or health screenings of employees.
12. Restaurant covered entities shall limit services to curbside, drive-thru, and takeout in compliance with the SHELTER-AT-HOME CURFEW.

In accordance with Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-29, following a verbal or written warning for a first-time violation of this face covering, a person's second violation shall be punishable by a fine not to exceed \$250. Each subsequent shall be punishable by a fine not to exceed \$250 per violation.

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Attachment: Signed Order.

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