



# TEXAS HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

**Mary E. González**

*State Representative, District 75*

March 25, 2020

Community Leaders,

Thank you for your continued leadership during the COVID-19 outbreak as we work together to ensure members of our community stay safe and have access to the resources they need. I have provided further updates and resources below.

Please feel free to share to this information with your teams, on social media, family, friends, and neighbors. The more people know about the actions and resources available, the more we can help people, address problems, and interrupt future panic.

My team and I will continue to send out e-mails as information becomes available. I hope this information is helpful. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,  
Mary

Mary E. González, PhD  
Texas Representative  
House District 75

## STATEWIDE UPDATES

### **The Office of the Governor**

- **The Primary Election:** The primary election that was originally scheduled for May 26<sup>th</sup> has been postponed until July 14<sup>th</sup>. Early voting begins July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- **Hospital Beds:** The governor issued an executive order to expand hospital bed capacity, which directed postponement of all surgeries and procedures that are not immediately, medically necessary. The governor also suspended certain regulations to allow for increased occupancy of hospital rooms.
- **Nurses:** The governor has waived several regulations for nurses, allowing temporary permit extensions to practice for graduate nurses and graduate vocational nurses who have yet to take the licensing exam; allowing students in their final year of nursing school to meet their clinical objectives by exceeding the 50% limit on simulated experiences; and allowing nurses with inactive licenses or retired nurses to reactivate their licenses.
- **Pharmacists:** The governor has temporarily waived regulations to allow pharmacists to conduct telephonic consultations.
- **Supply Chain Task Force:** The taskforce has secured more than \$83 million of purchase orders for essential supplies such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- **Special Event Permit Refunds:** Businesses will be refunded for permits purchased for special events that were canceled due to COVID-19.



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- **Restaurant Sales:** Restaurants are now allowed to sell bulk retail products from restaurant supply chain distributors directly to consumers, given that they remain in their original condition, packaging, or presented as received by the restaurant.
- **Health Care Fees:** Health care fees will be waived for incarcerated Texans in TDCJ facilities.

### Texas Education Agency

- Parents can visit the [meal finder](#) app to find locations near them where local school systems are offering free school meals

### Department of State Health Services

- Visit their website for [what to do if you're sick](#), [testing information](#), [symptoms](#), and [prevention tips](#) to help DSHS share facts, not fear.

### Texas Workforce Commission

- If your employment has been affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19), apply for benefits either online at any time using [Unemployment Benefits Services](#) or by calling TWC's Tele-Center at 800-939-6631 from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Central Time Monday through Friday.

## FEDERAL UPDATES

**CDC Funding:** Texas has received \$36.9 million from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as part of the state's initial allotment of funding from the first emergency coronavirus bill passed by Congress

**Declaration of Disaster:** Governor Abbott sent a letter to President Trump requesting a presidential declaration of a major disaster in Texas based on the continued impact of COVID-19.

**SBA Loans:** The US Small Business Administration (SBA) has included the entire state of Texas in its Economic Injury Disaster Declaration and granted access to its Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, which will provide long-term, low interest loans to qualifying businesses across the state. Small businesses should visit the SBA's [website](#) where they can directly apply for assistance.

## LOCAL UPDATES & PRIVATE RESOURCES

### El Paso Shelter in Place Order

- Mayor Dee Margot announced a 'stay home, work safe' order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, which will stay in effect until further notice.
- The order excludes essential businesses which include: healthcare operations; stores that sell groceries and other essential supplies; food delivery or pick up; food cultivation (agriculture); providers of basic necessities to economically disadvantaged populations; media; financial institutions; restaurants for take-out only; postal services; and childcare. Read more [here](#).

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### **CVS Prescription Delivery**

- CVS is offering free 1-2 day delivery of prescriptions and everyday essentials, visit [cvs.com](http://cvs.com) or call your local CVS pharmacy.

### **Cell & Internet Service Providers**

- ATT has waived charges for increased data usage.
- Anyone with a T-Mobile plan with data will be granted free unlimited data for the next 60 days.
- Verizon is adding 15GB of 4G LTE data to consumer and small business plans for free.
- Read more [here](#).

### **Food Banks**

- Feeding Texas has [a website](#) where people can find 21 member food banks that can provide free groceries and a place to sign up for SNAP benefits.
- The [Meals on Wheels Texas](#) website allows Texans to search for local Meals on Wheels chapters that are providing meals to elderly individuals that can be picked up or home delivered.
- The El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank has teamed up with local agencies to set up Mega Pantry distribution sites for those in need of immediate help. The “drive-through” distribution points can be found [here](#).

### **Grocery & Retailer Hours**

- Wal-Mart will host an hour-long senior shopping event every Tuesday for customers aged 60 and older.
- Albertsons has reserved time for seniors and other vulnerable shoppers Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.
- Costco has senior shopping hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 to 9 a.m. for member 60 and older.
- Walgreens has a weekly senior hour on Tuesday from 8-9 a.m. which is also open to caregivers and immediate family members.
- Target has reserved the first hour of shopping each Wednesday for vulnerable guests.
- Dollar General has designated the first hour of every day to senior shoppers.
- See other retailers that have either closed or changed hours [here](#).

### **Texas Apartment Association- Resources for Renters**

- The Texas Apartment Association (TAA) has provided resources and FAQ's on their [website](#), including information such as what to do if you cannot pay your rent, bill payment assistance, and self isolation.