

ORDER NO. _____

AN ORDER OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF LIBERTY COUNTY, TEXAS APPROVING AND ADOPTING PUBLIC HEALTH PROTOCOLS FOR WORKPLACE OPERATIONS AND ACCESS TO COUNTY BUILDINGS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

WHEREAS, Liberty County, Texas (“County”) is a county of the State of Texas, having been duly created and organized under the constitution and laws of Texas, and further, the Liberty County Commissioners Court (“Commissioners Court”) is the governing body of said County; and

WHEREAS, it is recognized by the national and international public health professions that a novel coronavirus currently exists called Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (currently designated in those professions as SARS-CoV2) which causes the disease now recognized worldwide as “COVID-19;” and

WHEREAS, the symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild to severe illness and cause further complications including death, and further, the COVID-19 virus is highly contagious and primarily is transmitted between people in close contact through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has been declared an epidemic and global pandemic by the World Health Organization, and further, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (an administrative agency of the United States Department of Health and Human Services) advised that person to person contact presents great risk of COVID-19 transmission between humans; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of Texas has issued prior and active disaster declarations for the State of Texas regarding the existing COVID-19 pandemic, pursuant to Chapter 418 of the Texas Government Code and other authority, containing among other things (1) provisions stating that COVID 19 is recognized globally as a contagious respiratory virus and is an imminent threat to all counties in Texas, (2) provisions stating that COVID-19 was recognized by the Texas Department of Health Services as a public health disaster within the meaning of Chapter 81 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, and (3) certain conduct restrictions and prohibitions designed to improve public health and prevent or decrease the transmission of COVID-19 in Texas; and

WHEREAS, on May 18, 2020, the Governor of Texas, pursuant to Chapter 418 and other authority, issued Executive Order No. GA-23 (“EO-GA-23”), regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency, and has expanded EO-GA-23 by proclamation on May 26, 2020, copies of which are attached as **Exhibit A** and incorporated by reference, said order being effective on a statewide basis beginning May 18, 2020 and continuing through June 3, 2020, and relating to the expanded reopening of Texas in response to the COVID-19 disaster; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners Court by this order and other applicable authority, desires in the public interest to approve, adopt, and implement public health protocols for workplace operations and access to County buildings and offices described herein regarding the pending COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency, among other things to (1) prevent or decrease the transmission of COVID-19 in Liberty County, Texas, and (2) protect the public, including County staff, from the devastating effects of COVID-19 on public health, community welfare, and the local economy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED by the Liberty County Commissioners Court, for and on behalf of said County and in the public interest, as follows:

- (1) Unless otherwise designated, the past, present, or future tense shall each include the other, the masculine, feminine, or neuter gender shall each include the other, and the singular and plural number shall each include the other, where necessary for a correct meaning.
- (2) The caption and preliminary recitals of this order, and all attached documents, are incorporated by reference.
- (3) Pursuant to and consistent with EO-GA-23, and the expansion of EO-GA-23 by proclamation (see attached **Exhibit A**), it is ordered that the activity prohibited by EO-GA-23, and the authorized activity described for reopening in EO-GA-23, are hereby approved, adopted, and enacted for Liberty County, Texas to protect public health, prevent or decrease the transmission of COVID-19, and assist the expanded reopening of services as part of the Governor's plan to reopen Texas in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and disaster.
- (4) In accordance with EO-GA-23 (see attached **Exhibit A**), it is ordered that the active minimum recommended health protocols and guidance documents issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services ("DSHS") for certain individuals, businesses, entities, and places are hereby approved, adopted, and enacted as guidance for Liberty County, Texas, as described by form, scope, and effective/revised starting dates in EO-GA-23 and the DSHS website at www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus. Any future orders issued by the office of the Governor of the State of Texas, amending, supplementing, replacing or rescinding EO-GA-23 is hereby adopted on their effective date.
- (5) Department Heads and Elected Officials of the County shall make decisions regarding the provision of services and operations of his/her office, taking into consideration this order, EO-GA-23, and the minimum recommended health protocols related to employees posted on the DSHS website. Each County department or office shall post guidelines regarding the operations or procedures on the County's website.
- (6) Courtroom protocols and operational procedures shall be at the discretion of the

presiding judge of each court, taking into consideration this order, EO-GA-23, and the minimum recommended health protocols related to employees posted on the DSHS website. A copy of the current protocols and operational procedures applicable to local courts shall be posted on the doors of the courtrooms and at the entrance to the courthouse.

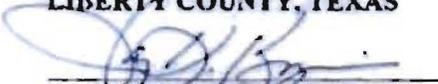
- (7) The County will continue to provide essential services to the public, but will do so in a manner that may limit or reduce public access to certain County services, offices, and staff due to the COVID-19 pandemic, using public health guidelines, authority, and references described in EO-GA-23 and this order. No person shall enter the Liberty County Courthouse unless:
 - a. The person has an appointment pre-arranged with a County department within the facility they are attempting to enter. County departments must notify Courthouse Security in advance of the names of people who have appointments.
 - b. The person is an employee of the County;
 - c. The person is delivering mail or packages with a courier or delivery service;

- (8) The following procedures related to the provision of government services by Liberty County, Texas to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic, shall apply only to the Liberty County Courthouse located at 1923 Sam Houston Street, Liberty, Tx:
 - a. Any individual, including members of the public or County employees, will be required to have his/her temperature screened prior to entering a County building or office. Access to the building or office will be denied if an individual's temperature is greater than or equal to 100.00 degrees Fahrenheit.
 - b. Individuals who are allowed entry to a County building or office after a temperature screen should social distance the recommended 6 feet separation from other individuals while inside. If individuals cannot distance 6 feet apart, other protective measures should be practiced including face coverings, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness and sanitation.
 - c. Face coverings are strongly recommended while inside County buildings or offices. Face coverings will be made available for members of the public. Individuals attending court shall be required to follow all rules of court, including any requirements to wear face coverings.
 - d. Individuals who are granted entry to the Courthouse shall be given a wristband indicating that the person has successfully passed a screening. Individuals who wear those wristbands may then access any County facility or building otherwise permitted to the public without being required to screen again.

- (9) For the safety of the public, all authorized interaction occurring between the public and the officials, employees, and representatives of the County, for or relating to the provision of services, will occur in compliance with the public health guidance described by the active and applicable executive orders issued by the Governor of Texas. The denial of public access to services will occur if an unreasonable risk of COVID-19 transmission or exposure exists pursuant to the public health guidance policies described in said executive orders and this order.
- (10) This order shall take effect immediately from and after its passage.
- (11) This matter was ordered, approved, and adopted at a public meeting held in compliance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, the Texas Open Meetings Act.

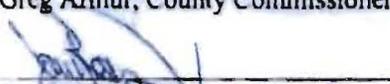
ORDERED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED on the 9th day of June, 2020.

**THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF
LIBERTY COUNTY, TEXAS**


Jay H. Knight, County Judge


Bruce Karbowski, County Commissioner, Precinct 1


Greg Arthur, County Commissioner, Precinct 2


James Reaves, County Commissioner, Precinct 3


Leon Wilson, County Commissioner, Precinct 4

ATTEST:


Lee Hajduk Chambers, County Clerk

EXHIBIT A
(EO-GA-23, Dated May 18, 2020)



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

May 18, 2020

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE
1:30 PM O'CLOCK

MAY 18 2020

Secretary of State

The Honorable Ruth R. Hughs
Secretary of State
State Capitol Room 1E.8
Austin, Texas 78701

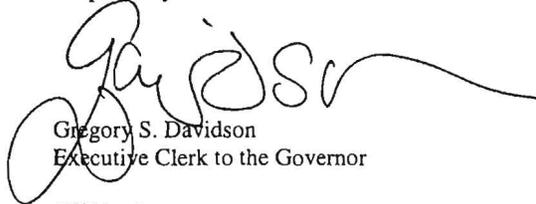
Dear Secretary Hughs:

Pursuant to his powers as Governor of the State of Texas, Greg Abbott has issued the following:

Executive Order No. GA-23 relating to the expanded opening of Texas in response to the COVID-19 disaster.

The original executive order is attached to this letter of transmittal.

Respectfully submitted,



Gregory S. Davidson
Executive Clerk to the Governor

GSD/gsd

Attachment

Executive Order

BY THE
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF TEXAS

Executive Department
Austin, Texas
May 18, 2020

EXECUTIVE ORDER
GA 23

Relating to the expanded opening of Texas in response to the COVID-19 disaster.

WHEREAS, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, issued a disaster proclamation on March 13, 2020, certifying under Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code that the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) poses an imminent threat of disaster for all counties in the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, I issued proclamations renewing the disaster declaration for all counties in Texas on April 12 and May 12, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Dr. John Hellerstedt, has determined on March 19, April 17, and May 15, 2020, that COVID-19 represents a public health disaster within the meaning of Chapter 81 of the Texas Health and Safety Code; and

WHEREAS, I have issued executive orders and suspensions of Texas laws in response to COVID-19, aimed at protecting the health and safety of Texans and ensuring an effective response to this disaster; and

WHEREAS, I issued Executive Order GA-08 on March 19, 2020, mandating certain obligations for Texans in accordance with the President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America, as promulgated by President Donald J. Trump and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on March 16, 2020, which called upon Americans to take actions to slow the spread of COVID-19 for 15 days; and

WHEREAS, I issued Executive Order GA-14 on March 31, 2020, based on the President's announcement that the restrictive Guidelines should extend through April 30, 2020, in light of advice from Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Birx, and also based on guidance by DSHS Commissioner Dr. Hellerstedt and Dr. Birx that the spread of COVID-19 can be reduced by minimizing social gatherings; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order GA-14 superseded Executive Order GA-08 and expanded the social-distancing restrictions and other obligations for Texans, aimed at slowing the spread of COVID-19 and protecting public health and safety; and

WHEREAS, after more than two weeks of having in effect the heightened restrictions like those required by Executive Order GA-14, which had saved lives, it was clear that the disease still presented a serious threat across Texas that could persist in certain areas, but also that COVID-19 had wrought havoc on many Texas businesses and workers affected by the restrictions that were necessary to protect human life; and

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WHEREAS, on April 17, 2020, I therefore issued Executive Order GA-17, creating the Governor's Strike Force to Open Texas to study and make recommendations on safely and strategically restarting and revitalizing all aspects of the Lone Star State—work, school, entertainment, and culture; and

WHEREAS, also on April 17, 2020, I issued Executive Order GA-16 to generally continue through April 30, 2020, the same social-distancing restrictions and other obligations for Texans according to federal guidelines, but also to offer a safe, strategic first step to Open Texas; and

WHEREAS, I subsequently issued Executive Orders GA-18 and GA-21 on April 27 and May 5, 2020, respectively, to expand the services that are reopened in Texas; and

WHEREAS, as normal business operations resume, everyone must act safely, and to that end Executive Orders GA-18 and GA-21, as well as this executive order, provide that all persons should follow the health protocols recommended by DSHS, which whenever achieved will mean compliance with the minimum standards for safely reopening, but which should not be used to fault those who act in good faith but can only substantially comply with the standards in light of scarce resources and other extenuating COVID-19 circumstances; and

WHEREAS, in coping with the COVID-19 disaster, and especially as services are being reopened in Texas, government officials should look for the least restrictive means of combatting the threat to public health; and

WHEREAS, on May 7, 2020, I issued Executive Order GA-22 to remove confinement in jail as an available penalty for non-compliance with any state or local executive order issued in response to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Texas must continue to protect lives while restoring livelihoods, both of which can be achieved with the expert advice of medical professionals and business leaders; and

WHEREAS, the "governor is responsible for meeting ... the dangers to the state and people presented by disasters" under Section 418.011 of the Texas Government Code, and the legislature has given the governor broad authority to fulfill that responsibility; and

WHEREAS, under Section 418.012, the "governor may issue executive orders ... hav[ing] the force and effect of law;" and

WHEREAS, under Section 418.016(a), the "governor may suspend the provisions of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business ... if strict compliance with the provisions ... would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with a disaster;" and

WHEREAS, under Section 418.017(a), the "governor may use all available resources of state government and of political subdivisions that are reasonably necessary to cope with a disaster;" and

WHEREAS, under Section 418.018(c), the "governor may control ingress and egress to and from a disaster area and the movement of persons and the occupancy of premises in the area;" and