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Denton County Commissioners Court
Judge Andy Eads

New mandates to preserve public health and safety

March 22, 2020 — Denton County Judge Andy Eads has issued a new executive order for a disaster declaration for public health emergency to preserve public health and safety.

“Today, we are taking further stringent steps to reduce the risk of infection across Denton County as part of a regional approach to reducing the spread of COVID-19,” said Denton County Judge Andy Eads.

“However, we cannot ask our businesses to bear the brunt of these actions and not do our own part. It is incumbent upon all of us to stay at home, if possible, and take common sense steps to limit our interactions with others outside of our respective homes,” he said.

“We are taking the impacts of these mandates and the financial consequences very seriously,” Judge Eads said. “We must all take personal responsibility and demonstrate a shared sacrifice that will hopefully only be for a short time.”

Denton County Public Health officials have confirmed a total of 30 cases of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Denton County as of Sunday evening.

“Locally, we have severe shortages of medical supplies,” Judge Eads said. “Temporarily reducing our activities reduces our cases and reduces our shortages.”

The new executive order is effective as of 11:59 p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2020. The order:

- Restricts all community gatherings across Denton County to 10 people or fewer
- Orders that the public or patrons cannot occupy bars, lounges, taverns, commercial amusement establishments, bingo halls, theaters, gyms, private clubs, hair and nail salons and barber shops, estheticians and related personal care businesses, spas, massage parlors, tattoo and piercing parlors, tanning salons, residential meeting spaces, event centers, hotel meeting spaces and ballrooms, outdoor plazas and markets, malls and retail stores that do not sell essential household goods
- Allows the following entities to continue doing business as long as they enforce social separation: grocery stores, stores selling essential household goods, convenience and package stores,

pharmacies and drug stores, daycare facilities, medical facilities, non-profit service providers, homeless and emergency shelters, office buildings, essential government buildings, airports and transit facilities, transportation systems, residential buildings and hotels, and manufacturing and distribution facilities. In all such locations, there must always be sufficient space for all people to be six feet apart to control infection. Where possible, a tracking list of individuals present, and their contact information shall be maintained.

- Restricts worship services for in-person services, provided that staff can work on site to produce audio/video services for transmission to the public.
- If someone in a household has tested positive for coronavirus, the remaining household members are ordered to isolate at home for a period of 14 days. Members of the household cannot go to work, school or any other community function.

This order will be effective until March 30, 2020, unless it is either rescinded or amended pursuant to applicable law.

“We call on businesses that remain open to be very strict on social distancing,” Judge Eads said, adding that he is requesting all retail suppliers use commonsense rationing of household products and groceries that are in limited supply.

“We acknowledge this is a dilemma, and that everything done prior to a pandemic will appear like an overreaction and alarmist. Everything done after will seem inadequate,” he said.

Information regarding COVID-19 can be found at [CDC.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19) and [DentonCounty.gov/COVID19](https://www.dentoncounty.gov/COVID19).