



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) JUNE 30, 2020 UPDATE

- In the week since my last update, there have been an additional four confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the City limits (for a total of 25) with 16 recovered. There have been two additional confirmed cases within one mile of the City limits (for a total of 15) with 7 recovered. These are the official numbers from the Department of State Health Services, and we have found that reporting may lag the confirmed positive test by three to four days. It may not be in your neighborhood, but COVID-19 isn't going away in Gatesville, or Coryell County.
- The confirmed cases during June in the City limits of Gatesville were one each: 30-39 year old male; under-10 male; 20-29 year old male, 40-49 year old male, and an 80+ year old female.
- While the numbers in Gatesville are not necessarily encouraging, in just the last five days, Texas has seen an increase of 28,069 confirmed cases. In just the last day, the number of confirmed cases increased by 2,687. Statewide, 5.39 per 1,000 persons have tested positive for COVID-19; in Coryell County 4.21 per 1000 persons have tested positive. While our overall number of positive cases appears low compared to what is going on in the rest of Texas, given that we are a smaller, rural county our rate per 1,000 persons being only slightly below the State average paints a different picture.
- Governor Abbott began to loosen restrictions on May 22nd, and accelerated the lifting of restrictions on June 3rd until pulling them back on June 29th.
- In his latest Executive Order (GA-28, June 26th) the Governor stated: *"Nothing in this executive order or the DSHS minimum standards precludes requiring a customer to follow additional hygiene measures when obtaining services. Individuals are encouraged to wear appropriate face coverings, but no jurisdiction can impose a civil or criminal penalty for failure to wear a face covering."*
- This morning, the Mayor and I met with the local, district, and regional leadership of HEB to be briefed on a corporate decision that effective tomorrow (July 1st) all HEB stores in Texas will ask customers to wear a face covering when shopping in their stores. This is completely consistent and legal under the Governor's latest order. A major factor in HEB's decision is that 76 of their associates statewide daily are testing positive for COVID-19. As their absenteeism increases, it puts a strain on HEB's ability to man their stores. HEB will initially provide masks for those customers who don't have one. I encourage you to please comply with HEB's request, because quickly driving down the community spread of COVID-19 will help ensure our local grocery store can continue to serve the residents of Gatesville at their current operating schedule. HEB's FAVOR service is still operating in Gatesville.
- GA-28 also requires that any gathering in excess of 100 people must be approved by the Mayor. On June 23rd, the Mayor and City Council decided to proceed with the City's fireworks display on Saturday, July 4th – more on that in a future update.
- Thanks to everyone who is simply doing the right thing in these difficult times. I believe that the Governor is giving us and all residents of Texas the personal freedom to do our part to reverse the very negative trends of the past two weeks. If that doesn't have the desired effect, then I think it is clear what will come next. When we were following the safety protocols before the end of May, the spread of COVID-19 slowed down. I simply ask that if you are sick or at risk, please stay home. Get back to washing your hands frequently, and if you are out in public and cannot maintain a 6-foot physical distance, cover your face. We are truly in this together – we can reverse these trends – and we can do better at showing we care about our neighbors.

Bill Parry
City Manager