



## **Media Release**

### **Coronavirus**

### **(COVID19)**

**March 12, 2020**

1 pm, Thursday, March 12, Central Texas Council of Governments, Belton, Texas – Bell County Judge David Blackburn, Bell County Public Health District Director Dr. Amanda Robison-Chadwell, and Bell County Public Health Authority Dr. Janice Smith are issuing the following statements relative to the current situation involving the coronavirus (“COVID19”):

As of 1 pm today, there are no confirmed cases of COVID19 in Bell County. We fully recognize, and expect, that situation to change. However, at this time, and with no confirmed COVID19 cases in Bell County, we are continuing to urge residents to follow the federal and state and local health district guidelines with regard to mitigation of the COVID19 virus ... which is to continue to be vigilant in their personal hygiene practices and to stay home if they get sick. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose with unclean hands. Cover your mouth when you cough. Cover your nose when you sneeze. Frequent hand washing is one of the best measures to take for prevention and mitigation of the spread of COVID19. Collectively, these measures can be very effective and are the best ways to prevent being ill from being exposed to COVID19.

At this time, there are no other measures or actions, other than what has just been stated, being recommended by the Bell County Public Health District (“BCPHD”). Bell County would encourage all to follow these recommendations.

When the first case in Bell County has been confirmed, BCPHD anticipates adding to the above recommendations ‘social distancing’. So, in addition to practicing the personal hygiene measures mentioned above, BCPHD will recommend that people practice keeping an area of approximately 6 feet between each other. COVID19 is spread via air droplets. These air droplets, when expelled from the human body, have a radius of approximately 3 to 6 feet before falling to the ground or to a surface. By providing some distance between you and another person, you are mitigating the potential transmission of the virus. People should also avoid what are called “high touch” surfaces whenever possible and wash hands thoroughly if touching such surfaces is unavoidable. Examples of such surfaces include door handles, table tops, grocery cart handles or elevator buttons.

If multiple cases of COVID19 occur in Bell County, across a broad geographic spectrum of the County, then BCPHD will recommend additional measures to mitigate the spread of the virus. Additional recommendations and measures that BCPHD and Bell County will consider could include restrictions on mass gatherings and the movement of people.

Bell County and BCPHD continue to monitor the situation and is in daily contact with federal and state officials for situational awareness and direction. BCPHD is also working with local health care providers and emergency management officials, as well as others in the public and private sector to educate and inform local residents about COVID19.

Due to an expected increase in media requests and a desire to communicate effectively with our media partners we will be standing up a Joint Information Center (JIC) that will convene on Friday’s at 1:00pm each Friday at the Council of Governments building located at 2180 N Main Street in Belton.

Point of Contact: Paul Romer, [promer@beltontexas.gov](mailto:promer@beltontexas.gov) 254.933.5889



## Bell County COVID19 Action Plan

### Stage 1 (no confirmed cases of COVID19)

- Stay home if you are sick
- Avoid contact with persons who are sick
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unclean hands
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and throw the tissue away
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces with a disinfectant
- Don't travel to areas with active community spread of COVID19
- Wash your hands with soap and water regularly and use hand sanitizers with at least 60% of alcohol content when soap and water are not available

### Stage 2 (a confirmed case of COVID19)

- All of Stage 1 measures
- Actively practice 'social distancing' ... whenever possible maintain 6 feet distance from other persons
- Avoid physical contact with other persons in social and workplace settings

### Stage 3 (community spread of COVID19)

- All Stage 1 & Stage 2 measures
- Bell County &/or BCPHD may issue orders restricting and/or prohibiting mass gatherings and/or movement of people

### Resources :

National : Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC")  
[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

State: Texas Department of Health and Human Services ("DSHS")  
[www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus)

Bell County: Bell County Public Health District ("BCPHD")  
[www.bellcountyhealth.org](http://www.bellcountyhealth.org)  
Bell County  
[www.bellcountytexas.com](http://www.bellcountytexas.com)