



Jewish Federation OF GREATER HOUSTON

March 23 NOON - Jran Email

Dear Jran Community:

Today, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo held a [press conference](#) to brief the public on the status of social distancing and the county's testing sites. I will go over the press conference, what a "stay-at-home" order may look like, a call to action for Congress, Walker County's curfew, and one interesting thing I learned today. I anticipate more developments later this afternoon, so I will keep this email brief.

There is no "stay-at-home" order currently, but are still requiring social distancing:

- Will not be called "shelter in place" because it does not describe what is being asked
 - Shelter in place typically is used during hurricanes or other natural disasters
 - Requires people not to leave their homes
 - Stay-at-home will allow people to leave for essential services
 - Harris County and the City of Houston are still assessing what services are considered "essential" before making a determination of a stay-at-home order
- Harris County has opened two testing sites, bringing the total public sites to three (City of Houston has one):
- Each site has the capacity to test 250 people per day
 - Must complete an online assessment at www.ReadyHarris.org
 - Can also call 832-927-7575
 - 3 step process:
 - Online screening (or by phone if no internet access)
 - Phone assessment
 - In-person test (will be given unique code)
 - Only people who are symptomatic will be tested
 - Priority testing will go to
 - First responders
 - Health care workers
 - People 65+
 - People at higher risk due to existing medical conditions

There have been a lot of questions around what a stay-at-home order will require. Looking at other large cities, here is my best guess of what we can expect

- Can still go out for essential activities
 - Can leave to get medical supplies
 - Exercise (so long as you social distance)
 - Go to the doctor for medical services
 - Can still get groceries/household supplies
 - Essential retail may remain open: examples may include HEB, Target, pet food stores, gas stations, etc
- Basically, this will not be a shelter in place like what we experienced during Hurricane Harvey. People will still be able to run essential errands as needed.

Walker County, Texas (Huntsville), has [issued a curfew from midnight to 5 am](#). Not a lot of people know why or what it is supposed to accomplish. I would not expect a curfew for Houston or Harris County any time soon.

The U.S. Congress is still negotiating the massive COVID19 stimulus bill (we are talking \$2 trillion—the largest stimulus bill we have ever seen). The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) has a call to action to [urge Congress to include the nonprofit sector in these aid packages](#). You can find sample language from JFNA [here](#).

Finally, an interesting story. The U.S. Navy will be deploying two hospital ships, one to Los Angeles and one to New York, in order to help free up hospital space in those areas. When I read about this, my first thought was “we have Naval hospital ships?” If you want a break from the normal COVID19 chatter, I suggest [reading about these fascinating boats, the USNS Comfort and USNS Mercy](#).

Take care and learn something new today,

Jackie

Jackie Fisherman | Director of Government Affairs

Jewish Federation of Greater Houston

5603 S. Braeswood Blvd. | Houston, TX 77096

Main: 713.729.7000 ext 325

jfisherman@houstonjewish.org | www.houstonjewish.org