



Jewish Federation OF GREATER HOUSTON

April 20 PM - Jran Email

Dear Jran Community:

Today, we will go over the Houston area's new recovery czars and what it takes for a full recovery, according to the experts; federal stimulus measures; and community happenings.

Houston Area Recovery – First Steps

Today, the County Judge and Mayor announced their Recovery Czars. Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo appointed [State Representative Armando Walle](#) (Aldine) and Mayor Sylvester Turner appointed [Marvin Odum](#), who led the Mayor's recovery efforts after Hurricane Harvey.

Both the County Judge and Mayor have been steadfast in their agreement that we cannot open the City or County until there is a significant increase in testing. Here is what that means, according to the Mayor:

- Currently, Houston public testing sites have the capacity to test 1,000 per day. The City is meeting that capacity by 3 p.m. everyday
- Need to increase that to 3,000-5,000 tests per day in order to fully understand and track carriers of COVID19
- Need to also have tracing capabilities so can catch those who might have been infected in a timely manner

It is important to note that neither the Mayor nor the County Judge have set a timeline to opening the Houston economy. Rather, they have stated that testing, therapeutic treatments, and a vaccine are all components to a full recovery. Both have also stressed that opening will be done slowly and in stages.

Dr. Persse, the Houston Health Authority, noted that testing is crucial because data is showing that 20-50% of people infected with COVID19 are either asymptomatic (showing no signs) or pre-symptomatic (showing signs several days after test). These [silent spreaders of COVID19](#) are contributing to the rise in infections, some of which require hospitalization. Those hospitalizations then tax our medical system, and some infections become fatal. The number one concern from the County and City is to preserve life and not break the medical system we have in place.

- One [study in China](#) showed that 75% of people with COVID19 had no symptoms
- About [50% of the cases on the Diamond Princess](#) cruise ship were asymptomatic

The new studies showing that people can be carriers of COVID19 without ever developing symptoms has led to the new recommendations that all people wear a face mask when out in public.

- There is not a current Houston mandate because the Mayor believes that face masks are not readily available to all people, of particular concern is for [individuals who cannot afford to get one](#)
- Face masks are to protect others from you potentially being a carrier, not to protect you from others

Yesterday, during a press conference, President Trump announced that the Greater Houston area had a [decline in COVID19 cases](#), however, that is not the case according to the Mayor and County Judge. During both Mayor Turner and County Judge Hidalgo's press conferences, they announced a flattening of the curve, but not a decline. Judge Hidalgo stated that there were 47 new cases and 3 deaths yesterday and Mayor Turner announced 107 new cases and no new deaths. You can see the case count [here](#).

Johns Hopkins University released [guidance for Governors](#) for phased re-opening based on the American Enterprise Institute's [guidelines](#). There are 4 phases to opening:

1. Slow the spread – current stage
 - a. Social distancing
 - b. Diagnostic testing
 - c. Functioning health care system
 - d. Increase supply of personal protection equipment (PPE)
 - e. Covid19 surveillances
 - f. Large scale contact tracing and isolation
 - g. Public to wear masks (where we are now)
2. State-by-state reopening
 - a. Case-based interventions
 - b. Relax social distancing
 - c. Special care for vulnerable populations
 - d. Develop therapeutic remedies
 - e. Identify those who are immune
3. Establish immune protection and lift physical distancing
 - a. Produce vaccine or therapeutic remedies
 - i. Prioritize when limited
 - ii. Mass distribution when supply is abundant
 - b. Global vaccine
 - c. Surveys to determine population immunity
4. Rebuild our readiness for next pandemic
 - a. Scale up development of future vaccines
 - b. Fortify health care system
 - c. Establish a national infectious disease forecasting center
 - d. Establish governance

Dr. Umair Shaw, executive director of Harris County Public Health, is answering questions about COVID19. You can submit your questions to askhcph@phs.hctx.net. Today, he answered a question about [whether warm weather will slow the transmission of COVID19](#).



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Coronaviruses do have seasonal variations and have been known to slow down in hot weather. However, this is a new virus, so we don't know.

Stimulus Measures

Today, [millions of stimulus checks will be sent via U.S. mail](#). Most individual stimulus payments were direct deposited into accounts last week, but some were not.

Last week, the CARES Act ran out of the \$349 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program. Tomorrow at 1 p.m. CT the Jewish Federations of North America will host a Zoom call to provide an update on the fourth stimulus package. Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Ben Cardin (D-MD) will be on the call to answer questions. You can register [here](#).

Did your organization apply for the Paycheck Protection Program? I would love to know what your experience was like. Please [let me know](#) if you applied for funds and how much you received.

Other Community Happenings

Wednesday, the ADL will be hosting a webinar on how to protect children from online harassment. You can register [here](#). This is of importance as we move our K-12 education online.

Tomorrow, the Greater Houston Partnership will host a webinar on layoff and furloughs. You can register [here](#).

Our own Lisa Klein will be hosting a webinar tomorrow at 1 p.m. titled "Creating Networks for Support, Collaboration, and Strength." You can register [here](#).

Mayor Turner announced the "[Take Us to Your Table](#)" campaign to encourage restaurant to-go to help the ailing service sector. The Texas Restaurant Relief Fund is helping to hire local restaurants to deliver meals to the Texas Medical Center and first responders.

[H-E-B has added Chef Hugo Ortega's restaurants](#), Backstreet Café and Hugos, to its in-store to-go meals. I know what I'm having for dinner in 7-10 days (or whenever I can get an H-E-B curbside window).

Senator Ted Cruz and Senator Kristin Gillibrand have launched the [#CombatCOVID19Challenge](#) as a way to encourage acts of kindness and support. Sen. Cruz challenged Mayor Turner and Mattress Mack and both stepped up...who will you challenge?

Resources

- The Jewish Federation of Greater Houston's COVID19 resource page can be found [here](#).
- Harris County has a list of resource [here](#).
- The Harris County COVID19 Case tracker can be found [here](#).
- Volunteer Houston Continues to update their COVID19 resource page [here](#).
- Houston City Council Member Abbie Kamin is keeping a list of local resources [here](#).
- Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher has developed a small business resource guide. You can find it [here](#).
- The University of Houston has developed a resource book for the Houston area. You can find it [here](#).

In other news...

Ask and you shall receive! Last week, I asked you to [send me fun things you are doing](#) and Congregation Emanu El was first to reply! Check out this [cute clip of the Emanu El Volunteer Choir singing "I Whistle a Happy Tune"](#)...via Zoom (is there any other way?). I dare you not to smile! Keep on sending me uplifting stories or things you are doing, otherwise I am going to turn to your social media accounts...and I might just find someone on your staff doing a [weekend weather update](#) (Camp Young Judaea).

Take care this week,

Jackie

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