



# Jewish Federation OF GREATER HOUSTON

April 24 PM - Jran Email

Dear Jran Community:

Today, we will cover updates from Harris County, some clarifications about how Governor Abbott plans to reopen Texas, COVID19 lending program updates, where and how to use disinfectants, opportunities to help out, and Yom Hazikaron ceremonies/Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations.

## Updates from Harris County

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo announced a partnership with Rice University's [Texas Policy Lab](#) to look into the effectiveness of the Stay Home, Work Safe order and other measures implemented to combat COVID19 in our area. Additionally, Rice University is working on a [COVID-19 Registry](#) to help track how the virus is spreading in our community.

## Reopening the Texas Economy

Governor Greg Abbott has been on a [media tour](#) talking about what reopening the economy will look like in the coming weeks. His big announcement is expected this Monday, but he may move up the timeline. The [Strike Force to Open Texas](#) was established last week and will be advising the Governor on next steps. Here is what the Governor has stated:

- Background
  - April 9<sup>th</sup> was the high-water mark for COVID 19 positive cases in Texas
    - State has an overall [sustained downward trajectory](#) for daily new cases
    - Some pockets do not have adequate downward trajectory, need to look at a county-by-county basis
    - COVID19 has not left the geography of Texas
      - The reason why Texas has fared so well during this pandemic is due to the measures we have taken so far
      - Need to continue the process of containing the spread, do not want to see a retrenchment once we open businesses
  - Currently, we [have a 5% growth rate for COVID19 in the State](#), but some counties have higher or lower than the State's average growth rates
    - Rural counties that have no or low COVID19 cases will open more, counties with higher spread will not open as quickly
  - April 30<sup>th</sup> the state Stay at Home order expires
  - This is a year-long process
    - The Governor is looking at how we can reopen businesses in a smart and sustainable way in phases over the next year
- Announcement will open many different types of nonessential businesses
  - Will have a structure in place that ensures we don't spread COVID19, led by medical experts
  - Will not be fully open in all areas, may come with restrictions and certain standards that need to be implemented

- It is understood that when businesses open back up, there will be some additional spread of the virus, need to ensure our hospital systems can handle the new cases

### **Paycheck Protection Program and Other Lending Programs**

Yesterday, the [U.S. Treasury announced new guidance](#) (FAQ #31, last page) for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The new rule requires businesses and organizations that applied in the first or second round of the PPP to prove “current economic uncertainty makes this loan request necessary to support the ongoing operations of the Applicant.” This is a good faith certification that your PPP request was necessary. Your bank should be advising you if your organization needs to make any additional certifications regarding your application. We have reached out to the Jewish Federations of North American for further guidance, as they were instrumental in getting nonprofit and faith-based organizations included in the original CARES Act language. We will update the Jran group with more information as we receive it.

Last night, the [House passed](#) the fourth COVID19 relief package, sending the legislation to the President for signature. Of the nearly \$500 billion aid bill, \$320 billion will be used to refill the exhausted PPP funds. This bill also requires about \$60 billion PPP funds to be reserved for businesses that do not have an existing banking relationship.

There is also a program call the [Main Street Lending Program](#). This is aimed at small and medium-sized businesses. It is not forgivable, like the PPP, but comes with a low interest rate and may be a good alternative for those organizations that did not received PPP funds in the first or second round.

Organizations are also eligible to apply for the [Economic Injury Disaster Loan \(EIDL\)](#), even if you received PPP funds. Be sure to review your finances and speak with you bank about the products best suited to carry your organization though this crisis.

### **Disinfectants**

There has been a lot of talk about disinfectants the past few months and, particularly, yesterday. First, there is a growing body of recommendations that you do not need to wipe down all your food before putting away or consuming. The risk of COVID19 spread is greatest when around other customers, [not from your food itself](#). Additionally, yesterday the makers of Lysol and Dettol have put out multiple statements that [under no circumstances should one ingest or inject](#) these products into their body. People should follow the guidelines on the label of disinfectants, not other advice or suggestions.

### **Other Opportunities**

Congregation Beth Yeshurun will be hosting a community drive to collect non-perishable foods, household supplies, and new and gently used games for families in need. This will be a contactless drive at Congregation Beth Yeshurun from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. People can drive up in their cars and volunteers will take donated items from your vehicle. Donations will support clients at [Camp Impact](#) and [SEARCH](#).



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ServSafe is offering [free online food safety handling courses](#) now through April 30<sup>th</sup>. This is an important certification for people to have when volunteering to serve food to our community after a disaster. It would be great if we can get as many members of our community certified in ServSafe courses so we can be prepared for the upcoming hurricane season.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is turning its annual [Texas City Nature Challenge](#) into a collaborative effort to show the healing power of nature. You can download the iNaturalist app and participate from your phone or [sign up online](#).

IsraAID will be hosting a free Zoom [webinar on self-care and stress reduction](#) in times of crisis.

## **Yom Hazikaron Ceremonies and Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebrations**

[Masa Israel Journey](#) will be hosting a live stream of Yom Hazikaron ceremonies from Israel.

The Jewish Federations of North America will be hosting virtual Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations on YouTube and Facebook. You can find more information on the [Federation's website](#).

## **In other news...(ear buds in, volume up!)**

The Rolling Stones released a new single called "[Living in a Ghost Town](#)." Originally tracked last year, the Stones decided to reimagine it for today. Their new song is definitely an anthem for current times, racking up over 1.6 million views on [YouTube](#) since its release yesterday. I'll leave the debate over [whether the Beatles were better than the Stones](#) to you.

Take care this Shabbat,

Jackie

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