



# Jewish Federation OF GREATER HOUSTON

April 27 PM - Jran Email

Dear Jran Community:

Today we will cover the Governor's press conference on opening Texas, the Centers for Disease Control's new guidance on symptoms associated with COVID19, updates from the City and County, and a few other news items.

## The Governor's Strike Force to Open Texas

Today, Governor Greg Abbott released his [report to "Open Texas"](#). First, the Governor went over, generally, how the State of Texas has fared with COVID19. He stated that Texas has seen a decline in infection rates for the past week, our hospitalizations have held steady, our hospitals have all been within their capacity, and Texas has the third highest recoveries from COVID19 in America. The State of Texas has seen unemployment claims skyrocket, with over 1.9 million claims since the Stay at Home order was issued and over 1.6 million claims were processed.

Here is a breakdown of what was covered during today's press conference:

- Testing – the foundation to open Texas
  - Texas currently has the capacity to test 15,000-20,000 people per day
    - There are 300 testing sites on the [state's website](#)
  - Goal is to have 30,000 rapid tests per day across the state
- Individuals will need to take measures seriously for the Governor's plan to work
  - Requesting, but not mandating, that all individuals wear a mask when in public
  - No one can be fined for not wearing a mask (supersedes the Harris County order mandating that everyone wear a mask)
- The Governor released a "box it in" plan
  - Focus on 4 main areas of containment
    - Test (widely)
    - Isolate infected individuals
    - Find anyone who has been in contact with that individual
    - Quarantine exposed individuals for 14 days
  - Key element is contact tracing
    - State is looking to increase capacity as we re-open businesses
- The Governor will allow his Stay at Home Order to expire on April 30<sup>th</sup> as scheduled
  - Opening Texas Will Occur in Phases
    - **Phase 1:** May 1<sup>st</sup> the following establishments may open (but can remain closed if they wish), with certain restrictions (click on each one for the Governor's protocols):
      - [All retail stores and Shopping malls \(up to 25% capacity\)](#)
      - [Restaurants](#) (up to 25% capacity)
      - [Movie Theaters](#) (up to 25% capacity)
      - [Museums and Libraries](#) (up to 25% capacity, no hands-on exhibits)

- [Outdoor Sports](#) (4 people or less, golf/tennis/etc.)
- [Churches and Places of Worship](#) (must maintain 2 seats between individuals from different households)
- [Sole Practitioners/Single Person Offices](#)
- Medical professionals (prior order still applies, must reserve 50% of all beds for COVID19 patients)
- [Low COVID19 Counties](#) (can increase opening to 50% capacity)
- Phase 1 still includes restrictions on vulnerable populations and people age 65 or older, because those are the people requiring hospitalization and have the highest mortality rate under COVID19
  - Need to continue staying home
  - Should not leave the house except for essential outings
- **Phase 2: May 18<sup>th</sup>**
  - If we do not see a flare up in COVID19 cases, will expand the list of businesses allowed to open
    - Will be looking for COVID19 hot spots
  - Requirements to enter phase 2
    - Commitment of safe practices
      - Will look at the hospitalization rates and death rate to see if there are any increases to our medical system
    - Focus on protecting most vulnerable
    - Rely on doctors and medical professional's advice
  - Hope to open barber shops, hair salons, gyms and bars in Mid-May
    - These are business where it is harder to maintain social distancing
- Phase 3: no date set, will look at how the first two phases are doing
- Issues the Governor is still looking into
  - Childcare: how to ramp up childcare as people go back to work in a safe way
  - Summer camps: the state medical team is still reviewing ways for kids to attend summer camps

### **Updates from the City of Houston and Harris County**

Mayor Turner announced the new sites for the City's mobile testing unit, each with the ability to test 100 people per day. Still need to call 832-393-4220 to get a unique code:

- April 28-May 2: Kashmere Multi-Service Center
- May 5-9: Hiram Clarke Multi-Service Center
- May 12-16: Third Ward Multi-Service Center

Harris County announced a strike team to focus on testing seniors and elderly at nursing homes. This new team will review best practices at area senior care facilities since they are at high risk of infection and outbreaks.



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## **Other Updates**

Baylor University announced they will [resume classes in the fall and open dorms](#).

American Airlines will [require flight attendants to wear masks](#) beginning this Friday, expanding to customers as well.

Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher has a [small business resource guide](#) with a lot of helpful information on the Federal loan programs.

## **In other news...**

Two local mensches have [made the news](#) by transforming unused kippot to face masks for the homeless. Matthew and Jeremy Jason started “Kippahs to the Rescue” after a thoughtful Shabbat dinner. Looks like we have some work to do next Shabbat...

Take care today and I hope you find time for a little self-care,

Jackie

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