



Jewish Federation OF GREATER HOUSTON

April 30 PM - Jran Email

Dear Jran Community:

Today, we will go over an opportunity to bulk purchase personal protective equipment, the Federation's emergency appeal, updates from the City and County, what Jewish institutions have announced so far, clarity on Open Texas from the Greater Houston Partnership, fall plans from Texas' largest university systems, and Baby Yoda (read to the end!).

Gearing Up for Opening Our Doors

The Federation is looking into creating a cooperative for personal protective equipment (PPE) as we start to look forward to opening our doors again. If your organization would like to be part of a bulk order for 3 ply masks, hand sanitizer, gloves, or other PPE, please [fill out this survey](#) so we can assess community needs and begin to negotiate the lowest rate available for our organizations. Each organization would be responsible for purchasing their own PPE; this is an effort to negotiate the lowest price and quickest delivery through a bulk purchase. If you have contacts that supply basic PPE, please [email me](#).

The Federation will be hosting a ***Conversation Starter on Thursday, May 7th at 11 a.m.*** to discuss best practices for when the times comes to open our doors. Please save the date and an invite will be sent around soon. This is free and open to our agencies.

Jewish Federation Emergency Appeal

The Federation has [launched an emergency appeal](#) to help our community through this difficult time. Funds will be used to provide urgent basic needs to individuals and families, support community organizations, and help ensure the continuity and viability of Jewish life in Houston. You can make a donation at HoustonJewish.org.

Updates from the City and County

During [today's press conference](#), Mayor Turner announced that the City of Houston will continue remote working through the month of May. The City's testing sites are all up and running today and are open to anyone who would like to receive a test. The lab backlogs are getting better, with some labs turning around results in 24-48 hours and the larger labs taking about 5-8 days. The Mayor stated that we need to continue social distancing and wearing masks. Houston's [positive COVID19 numbers are low](#), especially compared to other large cities in America, due to the measures we have taken so far. However, the Mayor warns that the virus is like a fire, that while we may be on our way to putting out the flames, the virus continues to smolder and can flare up if we are not careful.

The Mayor is asking for those limited businesses that can open tomorrow under the Governor's order to please adhere to the 25% occupancy rule and follow best practices. Dr. David Persse clarified that 25% occupancy does not mean closing off 75% of your space, rather it means reconfiguring your business so that there is enough social distancing between patrons. The Houston Fire Department will be enforcing the 25% occupancy requirement on a complaint basis and is asking for voluntary compliance.

Harris County has created a [\\$15 million pandemic relief fund](#) for low income and vulnerable populations. The County will release more details soon.

Jewish Institution Update

The [Union for Reform Judaism](#) announced that all summer sessions and trips, including Greene Family Camp, will be cancelled. URJ cited the many risks and unknowns associated with the COVID19 outbreak making it hard to determine the best ways to safely open summer camps. We will keep you posted as we hear more information from other area Jewish camps and childcare programs.

Chabad of Texas [sent a letter](#) out today announcing that, although they are allowed to open tomorrow under the Governor's order, all Chabad centers in Texas will remain closed for in-person activities and the organization will reevaluate in mid-May. Online and virtual programs will resume as usual.

Update from the Greater Houston Partnership

During the Greater Houston Partnership's (GHP) weekly update, Bob Harvey provided some good news from the Texas Medical Center (TMC). He stated that according to today's numbers, TMC is reporting that the nine-county region that makes up Greater Houston is seeing a sustained decline in new cases. All area hospitals are within their capacity and our area has a sufficient supply of tests. TMC would like to have more contact tracers available, but other than that, we are in a good position to slowly begin opening businesses.

GHP was clear to point out that the Governor's [Open Texas](#) order is still a stay at home order. We are still required to minimize social gatherings and contact. Only limited businesses are allowed to re-open, but under very specific guidance. Dine-in establishments, movie theaters, shopping malls, golf courses, and individuals working in an office. All establishments must operate at 25% capacity with social distancing in place. The Governor's order supersedes all local orders—none can be more restrictive or permissive.



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GHP released their [15 work-safe principles](#) today, guiding businesses on how to safely re-open. Bob Harvey was sure to point out that re-opening needs to be measured and calculated. If customers do not feel safe, they will not go back, and worse, we can see a retrenchment.

Texas Universities to Open in the Fall

Texas A&M announced that they plan to [open all system campuses and dorms](#) in the fall. It is expected that the University of Texas System and other public universities in the state will do the same. The big question will be: will A&M have anyone to play in football?

In other news

Disney theme parks may be closed, but beginning today you can get an [official Disney face mask](#). All profits will be donated to MedShare.org. As if releasing Frozen II early on Disney Plus wasn't enough...now whose grabbing that Baby Yoda drinking coffee mask?

A great evening, I hope you have,

Jackie

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