



Jewish Federation OF GREATER HOUSTON

June 9 PM - JРАН Email

Dear JРАН Community:

Beginning this week, the JРАН emails will be sent on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If there is breaking news that falls within COVID19, securing our Jewish institutions, hurricane preparedness, or anything else that requires our network's immediate attention, we will update the JРАН community immediately.

Today, we will go over JРАН's next "Conversation Starter on Security", growth trends in COVID19, expanding Open Texas, how to check for your Economic Impact Payments, expanded SNAP benefits, hurricane season updates, and a note on possible impacts to high water vehicles used in flood rescue.

Security

JРАН will be hosting its third [Conversation Starter this Thursday at 1 p.m. on security](#). We will have Dena Marks, Senior Associate Director of the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) Southwest Regional Office, and Brad Orsini, Senior National Security Advisor for the Secure Community Network (SCN). Dena has been with the ADL since 1999 and has a wealth of knowledge on fighting extremism and Anti-Semitism here in Houston. She will be going over ADL's new strategic plan, ADL Now!, and how that will compliment the Federation's expanding role in securing our Jewish Institutions.

As SCN Senior National Security Advisor, Brad is the lead in providing security consultations, training, and direct response to critical incidents at Jewish organizations across the country. Prior to joining SCN, Brad was the Director of Security for the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburg. As a former FBI Special Agent, he brings a considerable amount of knowledge on public corruption and civil rights. Brad achieved the rank of Capitan in the United States Marine Corps and is an alum of Penn State University. Brad will go over what SCN is and the role they will be playing in securing our Jewish institutions locally and across the nation.

Please register for the webinar [here](#). We hope to see you there!

COVID19

According to [Johns Hopkins University](#), there are over 2 million confirmed cases of COVID19 in the United States and 113,000 deaths. To put this in perspective, [NRG Stadium](#)—home to the Houston Texans—seats 72,220 people.

Locally, the Greater Houston region is [reporting a major spike in COVID19 cases](#), higher than the peak we experienced in April. Although many of us are experiencing quarantine fatigue, the County Judge and Mayor are warning us that now is not the time to let our guard down. Be sure to #MaskUp, maintain six feet from others, and wash your hands.

The Texas Medical Center (TMC) is reporting a 7 day trend in positive growth in cases, with a [3.5% average growth in COVID19 related hospitalizations](#). TMC estimates that we will [exceed the base intensive care unit capacity in 5 weeks](#) if these trends continue. Now let's turn to what is opening under the most recent Open Texas order...

Governor Greg Abbott has moved Texas into [Phase III of Open Texas](#). Here's what that means:

- June 3rd
 - All businesses operating at 25% capacity will be allowed to expand to 50%
 - Bars may move to 50% so long as patrons are seated
 - Counties with less than 1,000 confirmed cases of COVID19 may open amusement parks and carnivals to 50% capacity
 - Restaurants may seat groups no bigger than 10
 - Occupancy limits have been removed for:
 - Essential businesses
 - Religious services conducted in houses of worship
 - Childcare services
 - Youth camps
 - Outdoor areas (except still at 50% occupancy: pools, water parks, libraries, museums, sporting events, rodeos)
- June 12th
 - Restaurants may expand to 75% capacity
 - Counties with 10 or fewer confirmed cases of COVID19 may expand occupancy across sectors to 75%
- June 19th
 - Counties with no more than 1,000 confirmed cases of COVID19 may open amusement parks and carnivals to 50% capacity
- Fourth of July Provisions
 - Gathering estimated to be above 500 people, the mayor or county judge may impose additional restrictions



Jewish Federation OF GREATER HOUSTON

Resources continue to pour in as cities across America open. The [J-RAN toolkit](#) is updated on a regular basis, but if you find a resource that is missing, please [let me know](#) so we can address it. Recently, we added guidance from the American Industrial Health Association on opening office spaces. Their website, [Back To Work Safely](#), has helpful guides for all sectors, including for [faith-based organizations](#).

The IRS is sending out its [Economic Impact Payments](#) pre-paid debit cards in plain envelopes from Money Network Cardholder Services. This is not a scam or junk mail. Be sure to check your mail carefully if you are expecting this payment.

Emergency [SNAP benefits](#) will continue through June 12th.

Hurricane Season 2020

Once again, the year 2020 has broken another record: we officially have the most named storms this early in hurricane season. Not exactly an accolade we want to shout from the roof tops, but here we are nine days into hurricane season with three named storms.

Tropical Storm Cristobal made landfall over Louisiana yesterday and is now a [tropical depression heading into the Midwest](#). Texas was largely spared from Cristobal's path, but it serves a good reminder for us to continue to prepare for a hurricane or flood now. Severe weather threats coupled with COVID19 will make last minute preparations challenging, to say the least.

Representative Pete Olsen wrote an [op-ed in the Houston Chronicle](#) about the role the [Federal 1033 Program](#), which allows retired military vehicles to be used by local law enforcement. Critics argue that this allows the militarization of the police, however, we have benefitted by the program because it allows old military vehicles to be used as high water vehicles in flood rescue operations. Rep. Olsen introduced [H.R. 5407](#), the *Lifting Up Our First Responders Act*, a bill that would allow the military to prioritize distribution of surplus high water rescue vehicles to communities that face a higher threat of flooding.

In Other News...(ear buds in, volume up!)

One thing I've been missing during quarantine has been visiting Houston's world class performing arts venues. Seems that I am not alone. The Royal Ballet [performed in the deserted streets of London](#) to showcase the closed venues and its impact on the arts. It is a wonderful tribute, danced to the tune of the Rolling Stones' "Living in a Ghost Town." (This is a good opportunity to [revisit the Stones vs Beatles debate](#) from last month's J-RAN email. Zoom amongst yourselves.)

Take care and I hope you continue to listen, educate, and share what you have learned about recent events,

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