



July 16 PM - Jran Email

Dear Jran Community:

Today, we will cover COVID19 updates, some mild tropical weather heading our way, and the importance of continuing to take security seriously.

### COVID19

Cases [continue to climb](#) in Harris County and our medical system continues to operate in surge capacity. Unfortunately, as medical experts predicted, the death rate in our area is climbing at a quick pace. For the first time during the pandemic, [Harris County is reporting daily death tolls in the double digits](#) consistently. The City of Houston alone is reporting fatalities in the double digits for the first time.

The State of Texas [broke a new record](#) in confirmed daily cases with over 10,700 yesterday. Today, state-wide cases reached just under 10,300.

Face masks are continuing to be the way to go, with [a new study showing that wearing a mask can indeed prevent](#) the transmission of COVID19. This is good news as schools and businesses continue to look for ways to keep their staff and customers safe going into the fall.

HISD released their guidelines for fall, but many teachers and parents are still on edge. Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control, [stated in a recent interview](#) that the fall and winter will be the biggest test for America.

The presidents of [Texas' 10 largest school districts have sent a letter to Governor Abbott](#) asking for increased flexibility as they plan the fall semester. Worries about funding, attendance, and sick children attending school were top concerns. Teachers in Houston also have concerns about returning to in-class instruction, with [14% saying they do not feel safe with in-person instruction](#).

Mayor Turner and Judge Hidalgo [continue to ask Governor Abbott for a new two week Stay Home](#), Work Safe order.

Houston has been selected as a [vaccine trial site](#) for another one of the fast-tracked COVID19 vaccines. There are many vaccines showing promise around the world and [Dr. Anthony Fauci is rooting for all of them](#).

Recent studies are showing that high levels of [isolation and mental health deterioration that was expected from the stay-at-home orders never materialized](#). People have found ways to stay connected, whether it be on Zoom, driveway happy hours, or neighbors reaching out to neighbors.

### **Hurricane Season 2020**

We might be feeling the effects of some [tropical weather this weekend](#) as rain returns to our region. But fear not, Harris County Office of Emergency Management does not expect any of the rain fall to amount to flooding conditions. Be aware as you make your way around this weekend.

### **Security**

Anti-Semitism continues to rise in America. We have seen recent high profile incidents such as DeSean Jackson's social media posts and one [former NYPD commissioner](#) is urging America's Jewish community to take cues from our European neighbors in protecting out spaces. Ray Kelly stated that budget cuts due to the COVID19 health crisis along with an erosion of confidence in local police following the death of George Floyd make it imperative that Jewish organizations take security seriously.

A good place to start is by registering for our first [JLAN Training on countering an active threat](#). Brad Orsini, senior national advisor for the Secure Community Network, will be presenting on best practices that you will be able to use at work and in everyday life. Brad is the former security director for the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh where his trainings have been credited in saving lives during the Tree of Life tragedy. A former FBI Special Agent and Captain in the Marines, Brad is uniquely qualified in security training.

### **In Other News...**

[Pandemic gardening is a thing](#) I hope stays for a while. Sales at local gardening stores are significantly up as people turn to relieve their stress by growing fresh herbs and heirloom vegetables. Outdoor activities are a good way to get out of the house and change the scenery for a bit. For those of us without a pool, it's a nice way to get some sun with the family and you can count it toward your child's science and nutrition education (not officially, but in your heart)! So, go buy some seeds and get to work on your fall spread.

Take care today and let me know if you need some tomatoes,

Jackie

**Jackie Fisherman** | Director of Government Affairs

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