



September 8 PM – JРАН Email

Dear JРАН Community:

Today, we will go over the major drug makers vaccine pledge, some good news in the Houston and Texas Medical Center numbers, the State’s renewed disaster declaration, a link to the Back to School Anxiety webinar, we will review lessons from The 1900 Storm in Galveston, and we will look at how security is a community-based approach.

COVID19

Yesterday was Labor Day weekend, which means we won’t know how well everyone did in avoiding large gatherings for about two weeks. It has been a hard six months and Dr. Umair Shah addresses how long we will have to social distance in this week’s “[Ask HCPH](#)” episode. You can submit questions to askHCPH@phs.hctx.net. Speaking of how long this will last, we know that a vaccine is the only path forward to a post-new normal world. Several of the top drug makers in the U.S. have [signed a pledge that they will not submit their COVID19 vaccines](#) to the FDA until safety and efficacy is shown in large clinical trials. This is a relief as news broke last week that a national vaccine might be pushed out prematurely for political reasons.

Let’s turn to the numbers in Houston. Mayor Turner is reporting 333 new cases of COVID19 and 13 new fatalities. The good news is that the positivity rate is down to 6.6%. The [Texas Medical Center \(TMC\) dashboard](#) is looking better as well. The Effective Reproduction Rate is back down to 0.88, showing that people are spreading the virus less. Daily new cases for all 9 counties of TMC institutions is down to 851, and the test positivity rate for today is 4.5%--putting us well into that green territory. What all of this tells us is that masks, social distancing, and hand washing work. Let’s continue to practice these critical elements of living with COVID19 and not fall victim to “[virus fatigue](#).”

Governor Greg Abbott has extended [the disaster declaration for COVID19](#) for all of Texas. Basically, this means any order, local or state-wide, that was set to expire when the state order ended has been extended.

For those of you who missed the JРАН/Jewish Education Department’s [Conversation Starter: Back to School Anxiety](#), you can now watch the recording online.

Hurricane Season 2020

Today is the 120th anniversary of “[The 1900 Storm](#)” that ravaged Galveston. It was a fast and furious Category 4 hurricane, much like Hurricane Laura. This serves as a reminder that major storms come in all shapes and sizes. We can see rain events like Harvey or wind events like Laura. As a result, many in Houston are renewing their call for a coastal spine, or Ike Dike, in Galveston Bay to help prevent devastating storm surges.

Security

One of the often-overlooked pieces of security is how we can become better allies for others who find themselves targets of hate. On a call Government Affairs call today, we learned that after the Tree of Life shooting, people of all faiths and backgrounds gathered to support the Pittsburgh Jewish community, eventually leading to the creation of the 412 Black-Jewish Collaborative. To this end, the Houston Federation is proud to be a supporting partner of the ADL’s upcoming webinar “[Building Bridges, Becoming Allies – Personal Accounts of How Communities Come Together When Hate Hits Home](#).” A diverse panel of experts, all targets of hate, will talk about how we can become allies for each other and build better community partnerships.

The Secure Community Network (SCN) is holding a series of “High Holidays Safety and Security Preparedness Webinars” in September. You must register in advance to attend. Those who register will receive a link to the recordings, so be sure to sign up even if you cannot make it. Here is a list of their upcoming resources:

- September 9th: [Personal Safety for Lay & Professional Leadership During the High Holidays](#)
- September 16th: [Cyber Preparedness for the High Holidays](#)

Additionally, SCN has an informative report called [Firearms and the Faithful](#). It is a thoughtful approach for those considering using congregants and lay leaders as part of their security strategy.

In Other News...

Not to be outdone by the [cast of Hamilton](#), Zoom has partnered with [Color of Change](#) to bring to you “[Zoom Where It Happens](#).” This virtual event, on Zoom (naturally), will launch tonight at 8 p.m. with “Episode 1: Golden Girls” starring Black-Jewish super mom, Tracee Ellis Ross, as Rose. Other cast mates include Regina King, Sanaa Lathan, and Alfre Woodard. Over half a million people have registered so far. Here’s hoping everyone on the cast remembers to unmute themselves...

Take care today and I hope we can turn to more of our neighbors of color to say “Thank You for Being A Friend,”

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