

All:

I wanted to give each of you an update on where things stand in Collin County with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Governor Abbott's Executive Orders control and dictate the services, businesses and safety protocols in place to open Texas. These Executive Orders override any orders of counties and cities. The Executive Orders currently in effect are GA-10, GA-13, GA-17, GA-19, GA-20, and GA-21 (superseding GA-18 which opened Texas Phase I). I expect that the Governor will issue a new Executive Order today or this weekend implementing his vision for opening Texas Phase II. The link to get current information regarding the Governor's current Orders is <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus/execorders.aspx>.

We have been busy. We have been working with all of our elected officials and department heads to keep Collin County open while also keeping our employees and Collin County citizens safe. To ensure this, we are having County employees work from home if it possible and practical. As you might expect, our County Health Services department and its staff and volunteers have been at the forefront of the pandemic. They are constantly monitoring, contacting, interviewing and tracing all of the active COVID-19 cases in the County.

Our Sheriff and his department quickly locked down our jail and implemented recommended safety protocols. These swift measures have allowed our jail to continue to be COVID-19 free. Our Judges are finding creative ways to continue to provide critical services to our businesses and citizens, including video conferencing for hearings. Later this month, one of the first ever jury trials (a civil trial) will be heard via video conferencing. New procedures and policies are being developed to allow such a trial to occur (at the state and local levels) and if successful, it could allow more jury trials to be set and heard during this pandemic.

On Monday, we adopted the "Collin CARES" recovery plan to assist families and governments impacted by COVID-19. The County's plan provides direct financial assistance to each qualifying household for housing, utilities, and groceries; as well as funding for COVID-19 testing, personal protective equipment, and cities' COVID-19 costs and recovery efforts.

The funds come from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), which provided more than \$171 million in federal aid to Collin County. The funding provides direct relief for families and governments who have been financially impacted by COVID-19, beginning from March 1 through the end of the year.

Under the Collin CARES plan, Collin County will be providing:

- \$3 million for COVID-19 testing for uninsured individuals
- \$5 million for personal protective equipment (PPE)
- \$45 million for housing (rent and mortgage), utilities, and food assistance
- \$5 million to help re-stock local food pantries
- \$50 million to cities for COVID-19 costs and recovery efforts
- \$40 million for County COVID-19 costs

Collin Cares will provide up to \$2,500 in monthly financial assistance to each qualifying household, with a maximum of four months of eligibility. Dallas residents who live in Collin County must apply for assistance through the City of Dallas, which has also received relief funds under the CARES Act.

Under Collin CARES, uninsured Collin County residents can now get free testing and physical evaluations for COVID-19 through a voucher system, where the county will be billed directly by local healthcare providers. The testing service includes FDA-approved COVID-19 testing and a medical evaluation during office or drive-through visits only. The voucher does not cover any prescriptions. Only uninsured Collin County residents are eligible. So far, [PrimaCare Urgent Care](#) (1-855-750-2544) and [CommunityMed Urgent Care](#) (972-808-6761) have already agreed to accept the Collin CARES voucher. We are urging residents to call their health providers first to see if they will accept the Collin CARES vouchers. Online forms and more information are posted on the [Collin CARES page](#). For those who can't access or print the online forms, please check for its availability with the test provider.

For the insured and underinsured, Congress has waived deductibles for COVID-19 testing. These residents should contact their insurance provider for more information. For a list of all testing sites, the State of Texas has an interactive map [posted online](#).

Last but not least, we have scheduled free drive-through COVID-19 testing clinics in McKinney on May 20 and in Plano on May 21. This is a joint effort between Texas Military Department, North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council, Texas Department of Emergency Management, Collin County, Collin College and the City of Plano. All tests are by appointment only. People can register by phone (512-883-2400) at least 24 hours before the test dates or they can register online now at <https://txcovidtest.org>. Each test date is limited to 100 people and officials will call those tested with the results. To be eligible, residents must have one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19.

Additional program details will be released soon and will be shared at www.collincountytexas.gov.

Take care, be safe and we will survive this.

Duncan

Important Links:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) page regarding COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>
- The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) page regarding COVID-19: <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>
- County Health Services Website: Current information, and past news releases, on the developing COVID-19 virus outbreak will be archived on our county website, located here: <https://www.collincountytexas.gov/Pages/default.aspx>