



## TARRANT COUNTY

### EXECUTIVE ORDER OF COUNTY JUDGE B. GLEN WHITLEY

(Amended by Commissioners Court action on March 24, 2020)

(Modified by the County Judge on March 27, 2020)

(Modified by the County Judge on April 3, 2020)

(Modified by the County Judge on April 21, 2020)

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Texas Government Code § 418.108, Tarrant County Judge B. Glen Whitley issued a Declaration of Local Disaster due to Public Health Emergency on March 13, 2020 due to imminent threat of widespread illness from COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, the County Judge has determined that extraordinary measures must be taken to mitigate the effects of this public health emergency and to facilitate the efficient, rapid, and cooperative response to the emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, the County Judge issued a Declaration of Local Disaster due to Public Health Emergency on March 13, 2020 and the County Commissioners issued a Renewal of Declaration of Local Disaster due to Public Health Emergency on March 17, 2020, and on March 18, 2020, the County Judge issued a First Amended Declaration of Local Disaster due to Public Health Emergency. The County Judge issued a Second Amended Declaration of Local Disaster due to Public Health Emergency to implement additional measures to ensure the protection of the residents of Tarrant County on March 21, 2020. County Commissioners issued a Renewal of Second Amended Declaration of Local Disaster due to Public Health Emergency on March 24, 2020.

**WHEREAS**, to remain consistent with the declaration of the Texas Department of State Health Services and the executive orders issued by Governor Greg Abbott and to harmonize to the extent possible, the executive orders of Governor Greg Abbott, the Tarrant County Judge and the mandates contained in the declarations of the Mayors of the Cities of Fort Worth, Arlington and the other cities of Tarrant County, the County Judge issues this Executive Order.

**THEREFORE**, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Chapter 418, Be It Proclaimed and **ORDERED** by the County Judge that:

1. That a state of disaster and public health emergency has been declared for Tarrant County, pursuant to § 418.108(a) of the Texas Government Code.
2. That this Executive Order shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the County Clerk, pursuant to § 418.108(c) of the Texas Government Code.
3. That the Tarrant County Emergency Operations Plan has been activated and implemented, pursuant to § 418.108(d) of the Texas Government Code.
4. That this Executive Order authorizes the County to take any actions necessary to promote health and suppress disease, including quarantine, evacuation, regulating ingress and egress from a disaster area and controlling the movement of persons and the occupancy of premises, pursuant to § 418.108(f), (g) of the Texas Government Code.

5. All persons currently residing within the incorporated and unincorporated territory of Tarrant County shall stay at their place of residence, except as allowed by this Order. All persons may leave their residences only for Essential Travel, Essential Services, and Essential Activities, to work in or access Essential Businesses, Government Service, or Essential Critical Infrastructure, or to perform Minimum Basic Operations, as defined below.

To the extent individuals are using shared or outdoor spaces, they must maintain Social Distancing and minimize in-person contact with people who are not in the same household.

Nothing in this Executive Order is intended to restrict "essential services" as such term is defined in Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-14 (Order GA-14), nor is it intended to allow gatherings prohibited by Order GA-14. To the extent that the Texas Division of Emergency Management approves additions to "essential services", those additions will be treated as an Essential Business in Tarrant County. Nothing herein is intended to impose restrictions inconsistent with Order GA-14 or any other order issued by the Governor currently in effect relating to COVID-19 (a COVID Order). To the extent that this Executive Order conflicts with a COVID Order, the provisions in a COVID Order prevail.<sup>1</sup>

6. All businesses operating in Tarrant County, except Essential Businesses as defined herein, shall not allow members of the public to occupy business premises. Non-essential businesses may continue Minimum Basic Operations, as outlined below, so long as the businesses strictly adhere to the following: (1) minimize in-person contact with people who are not in the same household; (2) maintain Social Distancing; (3) utilize remote teleworking to the greatest extent possible; and (4) minimize the number of employees needed to operate at a basic level.

Minimum Basic Operations allows the minimum necessary activities to:

- a. Maintain the value of the business's inventory or equipment, process payroll and employee benefits, maintain the premises and the security of the premises, equipment or inventory, including the care and maintenance of livestock or animals;
  - b. IT or other operations that facilitate employees working from home; and
  - c. Facilitate online or call-in sales; and/or perform in-store repair services.
7. It is ordered that a restaurant with or without drive-in or drive-through services; drive-in restaurant; drive-through restaurant; or microbrewery, micro-distillery, or winery may only provide take out, delivery, curbside pickup or drive-in or drive-through services as allowed by law. Social Distancing is required.
  8. All public or private gatherings of any number of people occurring outside a single household or living unit are prohibited, except as otherwise provided herein. Nothing in this Executive Order prohibits the gathering of members of a household or living unit nor does it prohibit any gathering expressly permitted by Order GA-14 or any subsequent Order by Governor Abbott.
  9. Licensed health care professionals and all licensed health care facilities shall refer to Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-15 for direction on permissible activities.
  10. If someone in a household has tested positive for COVID-19, the household is ordered to isolate at home. Members of the household cannot go to work, school, or any other community function until cleared by a medical professional but may seek medical services as needed from medical personnel and facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> All questions relating to a COVID Order shall be directed to the Texas Division of Emergency Management via email at [EssentialServices@tdem.texas.gov](mailto:EssentialServices@tdem.texas.gov). Information is also available at [www.tdem.texas.gov/essentialservices](http://www.tdem.texas.gov/essentialservices).

11. Nursing homes, retirement, and long-term care facilities are to prohibit non-essential visitors from accessing their facilities unless to provide critical assistance or for end-of-life visitation.
12. Individuals experiencing homelessness are strongly urged to obtain shelter and maintain Social Distancing when feasible. If a homeless person is sheltered and exhibits symptoms or is diagnosed, the shelter's isolation center shall be deemed the residence of the homeless person solely for the purpose of complying with the requirements of this Executive Order. Medical personnel shall make the decision whether any other shelter residents shall be required to isolate based on potential exposure. Available shelters, to the maximum extent practicable, must use COVID-19 risk mitigation practices in their operations.

13. Definitions:

- a. Social Distancing means maintaining at least 6 feet distance from other individuals, frequently washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, using hand sanitizer, covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not the hands), regularly disinfecting high touch surfaces, and not shaking hands.
- b. Minimum Basic Operations include the following, provided the businesses strictly adhere to the following: (1) minimize in-person contact with people who are not in the same household; (2) maintain Social Distancing; (3) utilize remote teleworking to the greatest extent possible; and (4) minimize the number of employees needed to operate at a basic level.

Minimum Basic Operations allows the minimum necessary activities to:

- Maintain the value of the business's inventory or equipment, process payroll and employee benefits, maintain the premises and the security of the premises, equipment or inventory, including the care and maintenance of livestock or animals;
  - IT or other operations that facilitate employees working from home; and
  - Facilitate online or call-in sales; and/or perform in-store repair services.
- c. Essential Activities includes any of the following:
    - i. To engage in activities or perform tasks essential to their health and safety, or to the health and safety of their family or household members (for example, obtaining medical supplies or medication, visiting a health care professional, or obtaining supplies need to work from home).
    - ii. To obtain necessary services or supplies for themselves and their family or household members, or to deliver those services or supplies to others (for example, food, pet and livestock supplies, and any other household consumer products, and products necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences). It is strongly recommended that households, to the greatest extent possible, send only one person to businesses for the purpose of picking up food or other essential items.
    - iii. To engage in outdoor activity, provided the individuals comply with Social Distancing (for example, walking, biking, hiking, golfing, or running).
    - iv. To perform work providing essential products and services at an Essential Business or to otherwise carry out activities specifically permitted in this Executive Order.
    - v. To care for a family member or pet in another household.
  - d. Essential Businesses:
    - i. Essential Health Care Services. Healthcare operations, including hospitals, clinics, doctors, dentists, pharmacies, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, other healthcare facilities, healthcare suppliers, home healthcare services providers, mental health providers, substance abuse providers, blood banks, medical research, or any related and/or ancillary healthcare services, veterinary care provided to animals. Home-based care for seniors, adults, or children. Residential facilities and shelters for seniors, adults, and children. Healthcare operations do not include fitness and exercise gyms and similar facilities.
    - ii. Essential Government Functions. All services provided by local, state and federal governments needed to ensure the continuing operation of the government

agencies to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the public. All Essential Government Functions shall be performed in compliance with Social Distancing, to the extent possible.

- iii. Essential Critical Infrastructure. Pursuant to the direction of Governor Abbott, everything listed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in its current guidance issued by the National Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA).
- iv. Essential Retail. Food service providers, including grocery stores, warehouse stores, liquor stores, bodegas, gas stations, convenience stores, and farmers' markets and other retail stores that sell food products and household staples, pet and feed stores. Businesses not open to the public that ship or deliver groceries, food, goods or services directly to residences. Restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food, but only for delivery, take out, drive-in, drive-through, curb side pickup, or carry out. Schools and other entities that typically provide free services to students or members of the public on a pick-up and take-away basis only. The restriction of delivery or carry out does not apply to cafes and restaurants located within hospital and medical facilities. Laundromats, dry cleaners, and laundry service providers. Businesses that provide for the delivery of, or preparation of vehicles. Businesses that supply products needed for people to work from home, including businesses providing mail and shipping and post office box. Businesses that supply products necessary for essential repairs and maintenance of a home or business. Hotel, motels, and shared rental units, except that all bars, cafes, or restaurants in hotels, motels, and shared rental units are closed except for pick-up and room service.
- v. Providers of Basic Necessities to Economically Disadvantaged Populations. Social services and charitable organizations that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals; that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise vulnerable individuals.
- vi. Essential Services Necessary to Maintain Essential Operations of Residences or Other Essential Businesses. Trash and recycling collection, processing and disposal, mail and shipping services, building cleaning and maintenance, auto repair, warehouse/distribution and fulfillment, and storage for essential businesses. Plumbers, pool services, yard maintenance and landscapers, security services, electricians, exterminators, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operations of residences, Essential Activities, and Essential Businesses. Professional services, such as legal or accounting services.
- vii. News Media. Newspapers, television, radio, and other media services.
- viii. Financial Institutions. Banks and related financial institutions, consumer lenders, alternative financial services companies, sales and finance lenders, credit unions, appraisers, and title companies. As much business as possible shall be conducted with web-based technology to limit in-person contact.
- ix. Real Estate Transactions: Services related to current real estate transactions. As much business as possible shall be conducted with web-based technology to limit in-person contact. This order does not prohibit showings so long as CDC guidance is strictly followed.
- x. Childcare Services. Childcare facilities providing services that enable employees who perform Essential Activities or work for an Essential Business to work as permitted.
- xi. Animal Shelters, Zoos, and Other Businesses that Maintain Live Animals. Businesses that maintain and care for live animals are not permitted to allow any visitors or patrons but may continue to operate to the extent necessary to provide the necessary care for the animals. Nothing in this section shall prohibit a non-

- employee from entering the premises to perform a health care services or another Essential Business service.
- xii. Construction. Construction under a valid permit issued by a governmental entity.
  - xiii. Funeral Services. Funeral homes, crematoriums and cemeteries may operate.
  - xiv. Wedding Services. Weddings may be held, but not more than ten persons may be present at any one time. Social Distancing is required. Weddings may not be held inside a County building.
  - xv. Worship Services. Religious services conducted in churches, congregations, and houses of worship are permitted if they cannot be conducted from home or through remote services, so long as Social Distancing is maintained, and existing guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are followed. Religious services held outdoors whereby individuals remain in their vehicles are strongly encouraged.  
Order GA-14 orders that religious services "should be conducted consistent with the Guidelines from the President and the CDC..."<sup>2</sup>
  - xvi. Moving Services and Supply. Businesses that provide residential and/or commercial moving services and necessary moving supplies.
- e. Essential Travel. For the purposes of this Executive Order, Essential Travel includes travel for any of the following purposes.
- i. Any travel related to the provision of or access to Essential Activities, Essential Governmental Functions, and Essential Businesses Essential Critical Infrastructure, Minimum Basic Operation;
  - ii. Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons;
  - iii. Travel to or from educational institutions for purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, and any other related services;
  - iv. Travel to return to a place of residence from outside the jurisdiction;
  - v. Travel required by law enforcement or court order;
  - vi. Travel by church staff or clergy for the purpose of production of remote delivery of religious services and other ministries requiring travel;
  - vii. Travel related to attending a funeral service; or
  - viii. Travel required for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside the County. Individuals are strongly encouraged to verify that their transportation out of the County remains available and functional prior to commencing such travel.
- f. Essential Services. Essential Services means services, by whomsoever rendered, and whether rendered to the government or to any other person, the interruption of which would endanger life, health or personal safety of the whole or part of the population.

**14.** This Executive Order does not restrict business operations delivering Essential Services, pursuant to Attorney General Ken Paxton's Opinion No. KP-0296 and CISA.

**15.** That any certified peace officer or other person with lawful authority is hereby authorized to enforce the provisions of this Executive Order in accordance with the authority granted under the Texas


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<sup>2</sup> Texas Attorney General's Guidance for Houses of Worship During the COVID-19 Crisis "...guidance from the CDC currently recommends that if a community is experiencing substantial community spread of COVID-19, then the houses of worship in that community should cancel all in-person gatherings of any size. But if a community is experiencing moderate to substantial spread, then the CDC recommends a reduction of activities in coordination with local health officials, possible smaller gatherings incorporating social-distancing measures, cancelation of activities with 10 or more people when high-risk populations attend in person (including those over 65 and those with underlying medical conditions) and use of creative means to deliver faith-based services. For more information, houses of worship should consult CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html>." For updates about the level of community spread, see [Coronavirus.TarrantCounty.com](https://www.CoronavirusTarrantCounty.com).

Disaster Act of 1975. Any person who violates this Executive Order may be subject to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or confinement for a period not exceeding 180 days.

16. That this Executive Order incorporates the attached table, Disaster Restrictions, as if set forth verbatim herein. In the event of a conflict, the text within this Executive Order prevails.
17. The sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses and phrases of this Executive Order are severable and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Executive Order should be declared invalid by the final judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences paragraphs and sections that can be given effect without the invalid provision, and to this end, the provisions of this Executive Order are severable.
18. This Executive Order is issued in accordance with and incorporates by reference any declaration of disaster previously issued and adopted by Tarrant County. In the event of a conflict between this Executive Order and a prior declaration or order pertaining to COVID -19, this Executive Order prevails.
19. This Executive Order shall take effect at 11:59 p.m. on April 21, 2020, and shall remain in effect until April 30, 2020, unless terminated or modified by a subsequent Order.

**ORDERED** this the 21st day of April 2020.

  
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B. Glen Whitley, County Judge

**Guide to Disaster Restrictions**  
**Executive Order Issued April 3, 2020**

*For additional information, refer to the Executive Order*

Locations / Activities	Restrictions
Persons residing in Tarrant County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay at place of residence</li> <li>• Practice Social Distancing</li> <li>• Leave residence only for Essential Activities, or to work at Essential Businesses, Essential Travel, Essential Governmental Services, Essential Critical Infrastructure, or to perform Minimum Basic Operations</li> <li>• Comply with Guidelines from the President and the CDC</li> </ul>
All businesses except Essential Businesses	No public occupancy permitted Minimum Basic Operations allowed Social Distancing required Minimum number of employees Minimize in-person contact
Public or Private Gatherings occurring outside a single household or living unit	Prohibited, with limited exception
Food Establishments Including those at schools, hotels, motels Excluding those at hospitals	In-house dining/shopping – no public occupancy Drive-in, drive-through, take out, and delivery is permitted. Social Distancing is required
Worship Services	As of April 3, 2020, the Tarrant County public health officer identifies substantial community spread/transmission; therefore, the CDC states that houses of worship should cancel all in-person gatherings of any size.
Elective medical, surgical, and dental procedures	Prohibited, with limited exception
Nursing homes, retirement, and long-term care facilities	Prohibit non-essential visitors unless to provide critical assistance or for end-of-life visitation
<u>Essential Travel, summary:</u> Allowed to carry out activities specifically permitted in this Executive Order.	Individuals may leave shelter to perform Essential Activities Must practice Social Distancing

<p><u>Essential Businesses, summary:</u> those listed on CISA hospitals clinics doctors dentists pharmacies urgent care facilities pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, other healthcare facilities healthcare suppliers mental health providers substance abuse service providers blood banks medical research laboratory services home-based and residential-based care for seniors, adults, or children veterinary care laundromats, dry cleaners, laundry service gas stations auto-supply &amp; repair, bicycle repair car dealerships (includes the sale of all vehicles) car rental hardware stores businesses that supply products needed for people to work from home social services, charitable organizations trash and recycling collection, processing and disposal mail and shipping services building cleaning, maintenance security services warehouse/distribution and fulfillment storage for essential businesses funeral homes, crematoriums, cemeteries weddings plumbers electricians pool service, yard maintenance, landscaping exterminators legal or accounting news media financial institutions real estate transactions childcare services businesses that maintain live animals construction moving services and supply firearm and ammunition suppliers shooting ranges</p>	<p>Allowed to remain open</p> <p>Social Distancing required</p> <p>Essential Businesses providing essential infrastructure should implement screening precautions to protect employees and all activity shall be performed in compliance with Social Distancing and compliance with the Guidelines from the President and the CDC.</p>
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<p>hotels manufacturing</p> <p><u>Essential Critical Infrastructure, summary:</u> Work necessary to the operations and maintenance of the critical infrastructure sectors as identified by the most current guidance issued by the National Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA).</p>	
<p><u>Minimum Basic Operations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- operations necessary to maintain security, upkeep, and maintenance of premises, equipment or inventory, including but not limited to the care and maintenance of livestock or animals;</li><li>- IT or other operations that facilitate employees working from home;</li><li>- Teleworking is required, if possible</li><li>- Facilitate online or call-in sales or in-store repair services;</li><li>- in-person contact of any kind between people who are not in the same household must be minimized.</li></ul>	<p>Operations allowed for non-essential businesses</p> <p>Social Distancing required</p> <p>Number of employees are kept to a minimum</p> <p>Minimize in-person contact with people who are not in the same household</p>
<p><u>Essential Services:</u></p> <p>-Business operations the interruption of which would endanger life, health or personal safety of the whole or part of the population.</p>	<p>Allowed to remain open</p> <p>Business operations providing Essential Services should implement screening precautions to protect employees and all activity shall be performed in compliance with Social Distancing and in compliance with the Guidelines of the President and CDC.</p>