

COVID-19 Update – March 20, 2020

The Texas Department of State Health Services is tracking cases of the new coronavirus that causes COVID-19. DSHS will update the state case count each day by noon Central Time. Numbers are current as of 8 p.m. the day before reporting.

On March 19, 2020, Dr. John Hellerstedt, commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services, declared a public health disaster in Texas, because COVID-19 “has created an immediate threat, poses a high risk of death to a large number of people, and creates a substantial risk of public exposure because of the disease’s method of transmission and evidence that there is community spread in Texas.”

[Read the full text of the declaration.](#)

People Tested

Total	5,277
Public Labs	1,168
Private Labs	4,109*

**Number does not include the total tested by all private labs.*

Texas COVID-19 Cases¹

Total Statewide Cases	194
Deaths	5

To see county totals, scroll table below.

County of Residence²	Number of Cases³
Bell	2
Bexar	12
Bowie	1
Brazoria	3
Brazos	2
Cameron	1
Collin	12
Crane	1
Dallas	22
Denton	6
DeWitt	1

County of Residence ²	Number of Cases ³
El Paso	3
Ellis	2
Fannin	1
Fort Bend	11
Galveston	4
Gregg	1
Harris	24
Hays	4
Hockley	1
Johnson	2
Lavaca	1
Lubbock	1
Matagorda	3
McLennan	7
Medina	1
Montgomery	4
Rusk	1
Smith	5
Tarrant	5
Travis	21
Webb	1
Wichita	1
Williamson	8
Pending County Assignment	19

¹DSHS will update the state case count each day by noon Central Time.

²Patient may be undergoing treatment in facilities in other counties.

³Does not include repatriation cases.

[Read the full text of the declaration.](#)

Why are these case counts different from what local jurisdictions are reporting?

The numbers include confirmed and presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 reported by local and regional public health jurisdictions to DSHS and are listed by the person's county of residence. They do not include residents of other states who were repatriated from China or a cruise ship on a U.S. government flight to JBSA-Lackland in San Antonio.

The numbers reported here may differ from what's being reported at the local level for two reasons. Local jurisdictions receive the initial laboratory results and may report them publicly before reporting those cases to DSHS. Some jurisdictions may report cases diagnosed or treated in their area, even if the person lives in another county.

Occasionally, a county's case count could go down. This would happen if a person was initially reported by one county, but the disease investigation determined they are actually a resident of another county or state.

How can Texans slow the spread of COVID-19?

- The next two weeks are critical in slowing the spread of COVID-19. Texans must act now.
- Stay home as much as possible, especially if you are sick, older, and/or have a medical condition.
- If you are sick, stay home except to access medical care. If you are able to take care of yourself, stay home. If you need to see your doctor, call ahead.
- Avoid gatherings of more than 10 people and non-essential trips into public.
- Cancel events of more than 10 people.
- Limit close contact (at least six feet) with other people. Employers should allow alternative work options as much as possible.

What else can people do to protect themselves and others?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Who is at highest risk of severe illness from COVID-19?

Minimizing exposure is especially important for people who are 65 or older or who have an underlying health condition like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or cancer. People in those groups have a higher risk of developing severe disease if they do get COVID-19, and the safest thing for them during an outbreak will be to stay home as much as possible and minimize close contact with other people. To get ready, they should talk to their doctor about getting additional prescription medications and have enough household items and groceries on hand to stay home as needed.

DSHS has additional information on the COVID-19 for the public, health care professionals, health departments and labs at dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus.