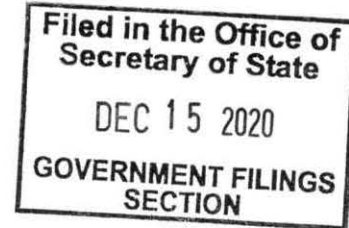




December 15, 2020

The Honorable Ruth R. Hughs
Secretary of State
State Capitol Room 1E.8
Austin, Texas 78701



Dear Secretary Hughs:

Pursuant to his authority as the Commissioner of Public Health, Dr. John Hellerstedt has issued the following:

A declaration of a Public Health Disaster Declaration, stating that the novel coronavirus (SAR-CoV-2, that causes the disease COVID-19) continues to present 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.

The original declaration is attached to this letter of transmittal.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara L. Klein".

Barbara L. Klein, J.D., EMPL
General Counsel

Attachment



Commissioner John W. Hellerstedt, M.D.

**DECLARATION OF A PUBLIC HEALTH DISASTER IN THE STATE
OF TEXAS**

December 15, 2020

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

WHEREAS, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, issued a disaster proclamation on March 13, 2020, certifying under Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code that the novel coronavirus (SAR-CoV-2, which causes the disease known as COVID-19) poses an imminent threat of disaster for all counties in the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas renewed the disaster proclamation under his authority under Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code; and,

WHEREAS, I, John W. Hellerstedt, M.D., Commissioner of the Department of State Health Services, issued a public health disaster declaration on March 19, 2020, certifying that the introduction and spread of the communicable disease known as COVID-19 in the State of Texas 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; and

WHEREAS I have determined on each of the subsequent days, determined that COVID-19 continues to present 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; April 18, 2020, May 15, 2020, June 15, 2020, July 15, 2020; August 17, 2020; September 17, 2020; October 16, 2020, and November 13, 2020, and

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WHEREAS I have determined today that COVID-19 continues to present 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.

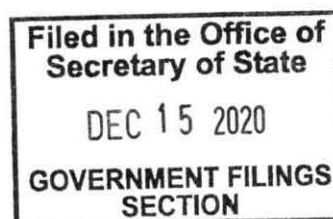
THEREFORE, I, John Hellerstedt, M.D., Commissioner of Public Health, in accordance with the authority vested in me by Section 81.082(d) of the Texas Health and Safety Code, hereby declare a state of public health disaster for the entire State of Texas.

Pursuant to Section 81.002 of the code, each person shall act responsibly to prevent and control communicable disease.

Prevention is the best defense against any illness and we know what we need to do to prevent the spread of COVID-19. If each of us do our part, just three steps, we will not just be taking care of ourselves but taking care of each other. Let Texas lead the nation, as we so often do, in doing all we can to prevent further spread of COVID-19.

- Wash your hands often. Twenty seconds with soap and warm water, or if that is not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Remain physically/socially distant by keeping at least 6 feet apart from others who are not in your own household.
- Wear a face covering whenever you are near other people outside of your own household.

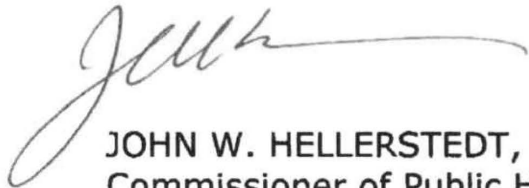
The Texas Department of State Health Services will continue to provide the most current and practical advice on how to control the spread of COVID-19 and encourages all Texans to seek additional information from a trusted source such as <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronoavirus/> or from the Centers for Disease Control at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/>.




This declaration supersedes any previous public health disaster declaration.

Copies of this proclamation will be filed with applicable authorities.

Given under my hand this the
15 day of December, 2020.


JOHN W. HELLERSTEDT, M.D.
Commissioner of Public Health

ATTESTED BY:



Ruth Hughs
Secretary of State

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