



## A Message from Mayor Rios

March 25, 2020

There seems to be some confusion over the terms “Stay at Home” and “Shelter in Place,” the Governor’s Order, what’s happening in other cities and counties throughout the State and what we’re doing in Aransas County.

Neither the State, Aransas County, City of Rockport or Town of Fulton have issued a formal “Stay at Home” declaration. What we are doing is complying with the Governor’s Executive Order that went into effect on March 13, as well as subsequent Orders through this afternoon. They call for:

- Encouraging people to stay at home
- Self-implementation of social distancing
- No gatherings of more than 10 people. There are some exceptions and limitations for local governments and churches
- Requiring restaurants to transition from dine-in to take-out and curbside. Additionally, those restaurants that serve alcohol may temporarily sell alcohol with the food purchase.
- Expanding hospital capacity throughout the state
- Increasing the number of medical professionals to alleviate work overload and stress that may affect those who are “working on the front line”
- Employing aggressive means to secure personal protection equipment (ppe) and testing materials
- Limiting elective and non-surgical medical procedures
- Limiting non-essential personnel/individuals from entering senior living, skilled nursing, hospital and other facilities
- Closing of schools

Hearing about confirmed cases in nearby counties can be unsettling, but we ask you to remain calm. These cases are being handled through the State and the individuals are quarantined. If you have questions as to what the symptoms may be, we encourage you to visit the City’s web site for determination and next steps.

If you feel symptomatic or need to be tested, please call our regional Department of Health office at 956-421-5505. Do NOT present yourself to a doctor’s office, urgent care facility or emergency room. There’s also a state hotline – 211 for COVID-19, other health-related issues, and resources.

Texans can dial

**2•1•1** option 6

for information on COVID-19 and local  
community resources on health care,  
utilities, food, housing and more.

We are still hopeful that our community will follow these guidelines and we can mitigate the spread before having to undertake any drastic actions. Please know that these guidelines are enforceable. Both the Rockport Police Department and Sheriff's Office have had to break up some larger gatherings and issued verbal warnings. They have the discretion, and the law behind them, to go further. Because our community and the state have issued Disaster Declaration, any citations or arrests would be "elevated" to the next level.

The most important thing is for all of us to do our part in containing/reducing the spread. If you don't have a reason to leave your home, don't do it.

City and County offices, as well as the Appraisal District have closed their offices to public traffic. Employees are still working and each of the entities has options for the continuation of business through phone, email, fax, etc., as well as payments. Additionally, the Governor has extended the deadlines on expiring activities that cannot be handled online.

There are two new changes in City operations: 1) ALL City Parks' hours have been changed to 8 am – 8 pm and 2) there is a temporary hold on golf cart inspections. As mentioned in a previous article, the County will not be issuing transfer station cards at the Library at this time.

Businesses have not been asked to close at this time, but several restaurants and retailers have chosen to do so. We encourage you to support our local restaurants by using their drive-in, take-out, and delivery options. There have been some very creative offerings.

#### Special Message from County Judge Mills:

We continue to monitor the situation and listen to the updates provided by Governor Abbott. So far, the Aransas County area has been spared from the Coronavirus contamination, but we remain vigilant on that front. We also encourage you to follow the CDC recommendations for hand washing and sanitation. We will get through this situation together as we did through Harvey. Please continue to practice social distancing. Our beach remains open but please keep your groups under 10. Thank you for your understanding and compliance as we work together during this crisis

#### Special Message from Code3:

Anyone that is looking to be tested should contact their Primary Care Physician PCP. If they have no PCP, they should call the Health Department for direction. Patients should not go to the Emergency Room or Urgent Care solely to be tested for COVID-19. They should follow the

instructions above. If they are directed by the Health Department at 956-421-5505 to call Code 3, Code 3 will triage their need via a telemedicine consult with our physician on duty and give further direction from there.

As always, we encourage you to visit the City's web site - [www.cityofrockport.com](http://www.cityofrockport.com) – for local, state and federal news and information – knowing that it, like this message, represents all of the local entities.

***Remember -- through facts, not fear we'll come through it.***