



**C.H. "Burt" Mills, Jr.
Aransas County Judge**

January 27, 2021

RE: COVID-19 Pandemic and Vaccinations

To the Citizens of Aransas County,

This Covid-19 Pandemic has been a difficult matter to navigate. As we all know, this virus is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person to person, including between people who are physically near each other (within about 6 feet). People who are infected but do not show symptoms can also spread the virus to others. As a result, the county has opted to close our beaches, courts, and public facilities, periodically, as a precaution to slow the spread. To date, our best defense has been to wear a mask, wash our hands as often as possible and maintain the social distance whenever we can.

Now, thank goodness, we have an additional tool in this fight, a vaccine. I would like to request the assistance of every Commissioner and Aransas County citizen to learn the facts of this Pandemic. The supply and demand of the vaccine include an ever-evolving plan to roll out these vaccines (in hopes to put an end to this pandemic).

When the COVID-19 virus first made waves in the spring of 2020, Rick McLester-EOC and I partnered with the Rockport Chamber of Commerce to establish a Task Force to address this Pandemic on a local level; and to provide information and facts to the public instead of speculation and fear, via a weekly local Press Release. Since that time, our Task Force has grown to include Ms. Patricia Arnold with Aransas County Medical Services, Inc. (ACMSI), a 501-C3 Non-Profit Organization. Ms. Arnold has taken the lead in advocating for additional vaccines for our community and, with the assistance of Aransas County, has compiled a list of citizens eligible to receive the vaccination when doses become available. For those members of our community who are eligible and wish to join the list, please visit: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdicPKM9_qRVJJob5bhW2sZJvACv2KQFkrlumi7S-FvyZkcb9Q/viewform to sign up.

Please be assured that we strive to pass along only the facts as we know them at the time. Anything less would be a great disservice to our citizens and their safety. That being said, here are the facts as we know them for this week:

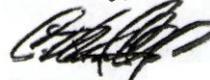
Vaccine Facts:

- 1) The vaccine distribution is controlled by the Federal and State government.
- 2) There are over 328 Million Americans who need a vaccine (if they decide to get it).
- 3) There are approx. 29 Million people in Texas.
- 4) There is (to date) a tremendous shortage in the amount of vaccines available to meet this demand. Two (2) doses, 27-31 days apart, are required for the vaccine to be fully effective.
- 5) The priority requirements from the State (IA- Health Care providers & 1B Citizens 65+ and 16-64 with chronic illnesses) are being followed by ALL Vaccine distribution sites.
- 6) Due to the size of the population here in Aransas County (approx. 25K) it is unlikely that we will be allocated an amount of vaccines to address our needs. Therefore, the Task Force encourages all people who wish to be vaccinated and meet the above requirements to find vaccines opportunities wherever you can.

Thus far, healthcare facilities and pharmacies in Aransas County have received a limited number of vaccines (a few hundred doses) from the State of Texas. Of those, 300 doses were received on January 19, 2021 with less than 24 hours' notice. In other words, with only 24 hours' notice, our team, with the help of Volunteers working under extreme conditions, were able to accept 300 doses and get it administered as quickly as possible to citizens on the ACMSI vaccination list. This success, of course, is critical to remaining as a viable partner with the State of Texas so that more vaccine supply can be made available to our small population. In retrospect, had last minute notice been given, or advertising done, we fear it would have resulted in a huge, unorganized cluster of citizens with no direction, left angry and confused as to why they did not receive a vaccine. A situation and outcome we wish to avoid.

In closing, I have asked Patricia Arnold to provide a report to the Commissioners at our next meeting on February 8, 2021. In my opinion, we all need to pull together and support her in this difficult task by sharing accurate, fact-checked information. Sharing information that is not fact-checked with the appropriate sources is irresponsible and will only lead to making this job even more difficult. Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact one of us and we will do our best to be responsive as possible.

Sincerely,



C. H. "Burt" Mills, Jr.
Aransas County Judge

Cc: Senator Cruz
Senator Comyn
Congressman Cloud
Gov. Greg Abott
State Sen. Kolhorst
State Re. Morrison
Patricia Arnold