

The Bandera PROPHEET

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The Bandera Prophet

Texas Governor Greg Abbott has issued an updated executive order as the U.S. continues its race against CoViD-19. While he has carefully avoided issuing a shelter-at-home mandate, new travel restrictions and closures have been implemented. Effective April 2 at 12:01 a.m., all Texans are urged to minimize social gatherings of any kind and in-person contact with people who are not in the same household, and schools have been ordered closed through May 4.

“Essential services” are listed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and now include churches and houses of worship. The interpretation of that exception is vague, however suggestions from the CDC, including maintaining a six-foot distance between people, remain clear.

The list of other essential businesses as determined by the government is at www.tdem.texas.gov/essentialservices.

In his order, Abbott wrote that “all services should be provided through remote telework from home unless they are essential services that cannot be provided through remote telework. If religious services cannot be conducted from home or through remote services, they should be conducted consistent with the guidelines from the president and the CDC by practicing good hygiene, environmental cleanliness, and sanitation, and by implementing social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19.”

Businesses that have mandated closures include gyms, massage establishments, tattoo and piercing studios, cosmetology salons and bars and restaurants, however drive-thru, pick-up and delivery of food and drinks is allowed, and “highly encouraged throughout the limited duration of this executive order.”

Allowed activities outside of the home include going to the grocery store and gas station, visiting parks, hunting, fishing, walking and bicycling. Visitation is banned at nursing homes, assisted living facilities and jails and prisons.

Travel restrictions and mandatory 14-day quarantines are being enforced at Texas state lines, both via airport and highway. States are being added to the list almost daily, however as of press time, travelers entering Texas through an airport from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Louisiana, California, Washington, Atlanta Chicago, Detroit or Miami will be subject to a mandatory self-quarantine. Exempted from that rule are those in the military, emergency response, and health and critical infrastructure services.

Further, anyone who exhibits symptoms of the disease “shall be escorted to the designated quarantine location by a DPS trooper.”

Failure to comply with the governor’s executive issue could result in a fine up to \$1,000 and 180 days in jail.