**TEXAS - STATE RESPONSE TO COVID 19**

This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available. For the most up-to-date health-related COVID information, please see:

* [Centers For Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/)

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| **--- Regularly Updated Texas Resource Pages ---** | | |
| [**Governor Greg Abbott**](https://gov.texas.gov/coronavirus)  The Governor’s Office is updating their news section daily regarding the state response to COVID-19. They have also set up an updates and resource page. | [**Texas Department of Emergency Management**](https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/)  [**(TDEM)**](https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/)  TDEM serves the State of Texas by managing the all-hazards emergency management plan for the state. TDEM works closely with local jurisdictions, state agencies, and federal partners. TDEM staff are stationed statewide and serve six different regions. | [**Texas Department of State Health Services**](https://dshs.texas.gov/news/updates.shtm#coronavirus)  [**(DSHS)**](https://dshs.texas.gov/news/updates.shtm#coronavirus)  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. |

**State Agency Resources:**

* [Texas Medical Board](http://www.tmb.state.tx.us/)
* [Texas Department of Insurance](https://www.tdi.texas.gov/news/2020/coronavirus-updates.html)
* [Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation](https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/covid19.htm)
* [Texas Commission on Environmental Quality](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/)
* [Texas Railroad Commission](https://www.rrc.state.tx.us/covid19/)
* [Texas Education Agency](https://tea.texas.gov/#Coronavirus%20(COVID-19))
* [Texas Department of Transportation](https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/media-center/statewide-news/006-2020.html)
* [Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner](https://occc.texas.gov/publications/coronavirus-bulletins)
* [Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission](https://www.tabc.state.tx.us/coronavirus/index.asp)

**Small Business Administration Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL)**

* [The Small Business Administration (SBA) COVID-19 Page](https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources)
* [TDEM Estimated Disaster Economic Injury Worksheet](https://tdem.texas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Economic-Injury-Worksheet-051410.pdf)

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has designated COVID-19 as a qualifying event for the provision of Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) for businesses and private non-profits in affected communities. Texas is currently working with SBA to qualify for this declaration.

Small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives and some private nonprofit organizations that have suffered substantial economic injury due to COVID-19 may be eligible for an EIDL of up to $2 million, which will provide the necessary working capital to help businesses survive until normal operations resume after a disaster. EIDL assistance will only be available to small businesses when the SBA determines they are unable to obtain credit elsewhere.

In order for Texas to receive an SBA Economic Injury Disaster Declaration, the following must occur:

1. Affected businesses will need to fill out an Estimated Disaster Economic Injury Worksheet certifying the business has suffered substantial economic injury as a result of COVID-19 and are in need of financial assistance.
2. The Economic Injury Worksheet should be submitted via email to TDEMPARecovery@tdem.texas.gov
3. Once Texas has received five SBA validated Economic Injury Worksheet, the Governor may request the Economic Injury Disaster Declaration. A county will need to submit at least one valid Economic Injury Worksheet in order to be included on the declaration. Additional counties can be added to the declaration at a later date.

To improve the process by which the state and individual counties will be declared eligible, TDEM is reaching out to business organizations and individual businesses seeking Economic Injury Worksheet submissions. TDEM ask that your organization notify its members of the availability of the program and encourage the submission of an application to determine eligibility.

Your assistance in this effort is critical in order to facilitate the declaration and certification process. TDEM will continue reaching out to your organizations as this process moves forward, and will provide additional information on applying for EIDLs once the declaration has been approved.

Should you have any further questions, please contact your local emergency management office or email the TDEMPARecovery@tdem.texas.gov.

Additional information about Economic Injury Disaster Loans can be found here, <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/Information/EIDLLoans>

**MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS**

March 19, 2020

* **Governor Greg Abbott’s virtual Town Hall meeting** at 7:00 p.m. CT. The Governor will discuss the statewide response to the current coronavirus outbreak and will be joined by top officials from the Department of State Health Services, the Texas Division of Emergency Management and the Texas Education Agency. Viewers will be invited to submit questions to the Governor and the other state officials via the internet using the hashtag #AskAbbott.

March 18, 2020

* Governor Greg Abbott issued a proclamation suspending provisions of the Texas Election Code to **allow political subdivisions to postpone their 2020 local elections**. This means local governments now have the ability to postpone their May 2, 2020 elections until November 3, 2020. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-issues-proclamation-allowing-for-postponement-of-local-elections-set-for-may-2nd).
* Governor Greg Abbott has directed the **Department of Public Safety (DPS)** to temporarily waive expiration dates for Driver Licenses, Commercial Driver Licenses, and other identification forms. This suspension will be in effect until 60 days after the DPS provides further public notice that normal Driver License operations have resumed. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-dps-waive-expiration-dates-for-driver-licenses).
* The State Preservation Board fully **closed public access to the Texas State Capitol**. Elected officials and staff will be able to enter the building to continue work. State agency personnel with state IDs also will be allowed in the building.

March 17, 2020

* The Texas Department of State Health Services confirmed the **first death of a Texas resident** who tested positive for COVID-19, the illness caused by the new coronavirus. The patient was a man in his 90s.
* Governor Greg Abbott waived certain regulations and directed that the **Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) issue an emergency rule, all relating to telemedicine care** for patients with state-regulated insurance plans to help doctors across Texas continue to treat their patients while mitigating the spread of COVID-19. The suspensions and emergency rule will work together to allow telemedicine visits for patients with state-regulated plans to be paid the same as in-office visits for insurance purposes. These actions build upon waivers the Governor issued last week of portions in the Occupations Code to expand provider flexibility in providing medical services over the phone. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-waives-certain-regulations-for-telemedicine-care-in-texas).
  + [TDI emergency rule](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDAzMTguMTg5MTQyMjEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy50ZGkudGV4YXMuZ292L3J1bGVzLzIwMjAvZG9jdW1lbnRzLzIwMjA2Mjg3LnBkZiJ9.ozyMATkk5VTT0nIBzpXhxLn-MAG-33yEUlZPlouTfcs/br/76262757646-l) (3/18/2020)
  + [FAQs on TDI rule](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDAzMTguMTg5MTQyMjEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy50ZGkudGV4YXMuZ292L25ld3MvMjAyMC90ZWxlbWVkaWNpbmUtZW1lcmdlbmN5LXJ1bGUuaHRtbCJ9.uH_IZIqBXyKreL-z6dV97FUpU7X8Qi78pFK_kbUpRgo/br/76262757646-l) (3/18/2020)
* Governor Greg Abbott requested designation from the **Small Business Administration (SBA)** Economic Injury Disaster Declaration in order to access the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program for the entire state of Texas. If granted, the SBA would provide long-term, low-interest loans to qualifying businesses across the state. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-requests-emergency-designation-for-small-business-disaster-loans-from-u.s-small-business-administration).
  + [**The Small Business Administration (SBA)**](https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources) has designated COVID-19 as a qualifying event for the provision of Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) for businesses and private non-profits in affected communities. Texas is currently working with SBA to qualify for this declaration.
  + [ESTIMATED DISASTER ECONOMIC INJURY WORKSHEET FOR BUSINESSES](https://tdem.texas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Economic-Injury-Worksheet-051410.pdf) (TDEM)
* The Governor announced a **temporary waiver for hospitals to increase unused bed capacity** without submitting an application or associated fees. This precautionary measure will help ensure Texas hospitals across the state have adequate care capacity for patients. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-holds-video-call-with-state-hospitals-to-discuss-care-capacities-for-covid-19).
* Governor Greg Abbott **activated the Texas National Guard** to be prepared to assist with response efforts for COVID-19. This preparative measure will ensure that the Texas National Guard can assist in various forms throughout the state when needed. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-activates-national-guard-in-response-to-covid-19).
  + Healthcare workers and first responders who are members of the Texas National Guard are excluded from this activation so that they can continue serving the people of Texas in their respective fields.
* Governor Greg Abbott issued a proclamation setting the **special election for Texas State Senate District 14** on Tuesday, July 14, 2020. The special election will fill the seat being vacated by Senator Kirk Watson. The special election would ordinarily be held on Saturday, May 2, 2020, but the Governor utilized his powers under Chapter 418 of the Texas Government Code to suspend provisions of the Texas Election Code and allow the election to be held at the later date. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-issues-proclamation-postponing-special-election-for-texas-senate-district-14).

March 16, 2020

* Governor Greg Abbott has announced that Texas is **waiving certain rules relating to vehicle registration, parking placards for persons with disabilities, and titling** to aid the state's efforts to combat COVID-19. These suspensions will allow Texans to avoid penalties for failure to timely title or register a vehicle, or renew a parking placard. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-waives-certain-vehicle-registration-titling-and-parking-placard-regulations-in-texas).
* Governor Greg Abbott granted the **Office of the Attorney General’s request for suspension of certain open-meeting statutes**. This temporary suspension will allow for telephonic or videoconference meetings of governmental bodies that are accessible to the public in an effort to reduce in-person meetings that assemble large groups of people. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-allows-virtual-and-telephonic-open-meetings-to-maintain-government-transparency).
* Governor Greg Abbott announced that he has **waived the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) testing requirements** for the 2019-2020 school year. Additionally, Governor Abbott is requesting that the Department of Education (DOE) waive federal testing requirements for the 2019-2020 school year. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-waives-staar-testing-requirements).

March 15, 2020

* Governor Greg Abbott has **waived regulations to ensure students who are enrolled in work-study programs will continue to receive critical funding** while campuses close due to their response to COVID-19. As campuses across the state move instruction online, critical work-study programs that ensure students receive the financial assistance they need to pay their bills would have been put at risk without this waiver. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-waives-regulations-to-ensure-students-in-work-study-programs-receive-critical-funding-during-school-closures).
* Governor Greg Abbott **waived state laws that prohibit trucks from the alcohol industry from delivering supplies to grocery stores**. This will provide grocers with another private-sector option to keep their shelves stocked. By waiving these regulations, we are streamlining the process to replenish the shelves in grocery stores across the state. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-waives-laws-to-allow-trucks-from-alcohol-industry-to-deliver-grocery-supplies).

March 14, 2020

* Governor Greg Abbott directed the **Texas Medical Board (TMB) and the Texas Board of Nursing (TBN) to fast-track the temporary licensing of out-of-state physicians, physician assistants, certain retired physicians, nurses, and other license types** to assist in Texas' response to COVID-19. Today's announcement is among the actions Governor Abbott is taking under the State of Disaster declaration. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-fast-tracks-licensing-for-out-of-state-medical-professionals).
* Governor Greg Abbott announced that he is **waiving certain regulations related to commercial trucking** in the state of Texas. The suspensions will expedite commercial vehicle delivery of more supplies in each truckload as Texas works to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) across the state. These waivers were requested by and will be coordinated through the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), and are part of the actions Governor Abbott is taking under the [State of Disaster he declared yesterday](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fgov.texas.gov%2Fnews%2Fpost%2Fgovernor-abbott-holds-press-conference-on-coronavirus-declares-state-of-disaster-for-all-texas-counties&data=02%7C01%7CNan.Tolson%40gov.texas.gov%7C29a48a5644c74d4f5c4d08d7c8249eb0%7C54cb5da6c7344242bbc25c947e85fb2c%7C0%7C0%7C637197931920708900&sdata=czSjtUP3X%2BMLXTONZSfIFI8q6chOQxxJbCNU%2BR8tBKg%3D&reserved=0). More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-waives-certain-state-trucking-regulations-to-expedite-delivery-of-resources-around-texas).

March 13, 2020

# **Governor Abbott Declares State of Disaster In Texas** Due To COVID-19. More info [here](https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-declares-state-of-disaster-in-texas-due-to-covid-19). Governor Abbot also directed state agencies to provide flexible work and telecommuting policies for agency employees.