

**CITY OF WOODWAY
DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER
DUE TO PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

WHEREAS, in December 2019, a novel respiratory disease named “SARS-CoV-2” that causes a disease named “coronavirus disease 2019” (“COVID-19”) was detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China; and

WHEREAS, symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath that may result in mild to severe illness, and in some cases death; and

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020 the World Health Organization Director General declared the outbreak of COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern and advised countries to prepare for the containment, including active surveillance, early detection, isolation and case management, contact tracing, and prevention on onward spread of the disease; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation’s healthcare community in responding to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the identification of “community spread” cases of COVID-19 in the United States could potentially signal that transmission of the virus may no longer be limited to travel to outbreak areas or contact with travelers who have visited outbreak areas; and

WHEREAS, according to the Center for Disease Control (“CDC”), it is likely that at some point, widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the United States will occur; and

WHEREAS, the CDC warns that widespread transmission of COVID-19 would translate into large numbers of people needing medical care at the same time; and

WHEREAS, the CDC is recommending no gathering with 50 people or more be held in the United States for the next eight (8) weeks; and

WHEREAS, the CDC also warns that schools, childcare centers, workplaces, and other places for mass gatherings may experience more absenteeism; public health and healthcare systems may become overloaded with elevated rates of hospitalizations and deaths; other critical infrastructure, such as law enforcement, emergency services, and transportation industry may also be affected; and health care providers and hospitals may be overwhelmed; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Texas on March 13, 2020 declared a state of disaster for all counties of Texas; and

WHEREAS, given, among other things, including the CDC's guidance, there is an ongoing risk and likelihood of COVID-19 positive patients being identified in the City of Woodway; and

WHEREAS, the City, local health agencies, and political subdivisions within the region have been working diligently to implement CDC guidelines, but not require additional tools and resources to protect the public health given the current state of the epidemic and the need for a sustained response; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Texas Disaster Act of 1975, as amended, Texas Government Code, Chapter 418, (the "Texas Disaster Act"), the Mayor is designated as the Emergency Management Director of the City of Woodway, and may exercise the powers granted to the Governor on an appropriate local scale; and

WHEREAS, a Declaration of local disaster due to this public health emergency includes the ability to reduce the possibility to exposure to disease, control the risk, promote health, compel persons to undergo additional health measures that prevent or control the spread of disease, including isolation, surveillance, quarantine, or placement of persons under public health observation, including the provision of temporary housing or emergency shelters for persons misplaced or evacuated and request assistance from the Governor of state resources; and

WHEREAS, by this Declaration, I declare all rules and regulations that may inhibit or prevent prompt response of this threat suspended for the duration of the incident; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the authority granted to the Mayor under the Texas Disaster Act, I authorize the use of all available resources of state government and political subdivisions to assist in the City's response to this situation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Woodway, and the people and communities of the City have suffered or face imminent threat to the public health and the potential for loss of life and property resulting from a disaster: the introduction, transmission, or spread (or imminent threat of the same) of COVID-19 in the City of Woodway; and

WHEREAS, I, the Mayor of the City of Woodway have determined that the emergency measures must be taken to either prepare for or respond to a disaster due to this public health emergency in order to respond quickly, to prevent and alleviate the suffering of people exposed to and those infected with the virus, as well as those that could potentially be infected or impacted by COVID-19, and to prevent or minimize the loss of life;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WOODWAY, TEXAS:

Section 1. Declaration of Local State of Disaster. That a local state of disaster and public health emergency is hereby declared for the City of Woodway and incorporated areas pursuant to §418.108(a) of the Texas Disaster Act.

Section 2. Duration of Local State of Disaster. Pursuant to §418.108(b) of the Texas Disaster Act, the state of disaster and public health emergency shall continue for a period of not more than **seven (7) days** from the date of this Declaration unless continued or renewed by the City Council. A city council meeting will be held Monday, March 23, 2020 to consider extending the Declaration.

Section 3. Publicity and Filing. Pursuant to §418.108(c) of the Texas Disaster Act, this Declaration of a local state of disaster due to this public health emergency shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the City of Woodway Secretary.

Section 4. Activating of the City Emergency Management Plan. Pursuant to §418.108(d) of the Texas Disaster Act, this Declaration of a local state of disaster due to this public health emergency activates the City of Woodway Emergency Management Plan.

Section 5. Pursuant to **§122.006** of the **Texas Health and Safety Code**, the City is authorized to take any actions necessary to promote health and suppress disease, including quarantine. The City of Woodway hereby declares that those persons under investigation, persons under management, and quarantined persons remain within the confines of their homes or in safe, secure facilities during the quarantine period following their exposure to the virus.

Section 6. City Facilities. In keeping with the directives of the CDC, effective March 17, 2020, the following facilities will be closed until further notice: Woodway Family Center, Carleen Bright Arboretum, Municipal Court, and all City rental facilities and spaces.

The following city facilities will remain open to the public for normal operations: City Hall, Public Safety, and Community Services.

Section 7. Community Gatherings (as defined in Section 9) are prohibited anywhere in the City of Woodway. The uses in subsections (i) and (ii) of this section are not considered Community Gatherings, but are limited or prohibited;

(i) The area where alcoholic beverage consumption occurs for on-premise consumption, including a bar, lounge, or tavern, or private club shall close; and

(ii) Indoor recreational facilities, including a gym or health studio; indoor amusement facility, including a bowling alley or a pool hall; or theater (theatre) shall close.

Section 8. In addition, the Mayor of the City of Woodway and the Waco-McLennan County Public Health District ("Health District") strongly recommend canceling, rescheduling, or not attending events with more than 50 persons. The Mayor of the City of Woodway and the Health District strongly urge organizations that serve high-risk populations to cancel any gatherings. These recommendations are based on the social distancing practices attached to this Declaration as well as the "Implementation of

Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission" issued by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"). The Mayor of the City of Woodway and the Health District urge people to not attend non-essential gatherings during the duration of this Declaration in order to help slow down the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Section 9. Definitions:

- a. For purposes of this Declaration, a "Community Gathering" is any indoor or outdoor event or convening, subject to the exceptions and clarifications below, that brings together or is likely to bring together fifty (50) or more persons at the same time in a single room or other single confined or enclosed space, such as an auditorium, tent, arena or event center, music venue, meeting hall, conference center, large cafeteria, or any other confined indoor or confined outdoor space.
- b. An outdoor "Community Gathering" under this Declaration is limited to events in confined outdoor spaces, which means an outdoor space that is enclosed by a fence, physical barrier, or other structure and where people are present and they are within six feet of one another for extended periods.
- c. For purposes of clarity, a "Community Gathering" does not include the following, or other similar uses, so long as persons attending the Community Gathering are generally not within six feet of one another for extended periods;
 - (i) spaces where fifty (50) or more persons may be in transit or waiting for transit such as airports, bus stations, or terminals;
 - (ii) office space, public and private schools, child-care facilities, residential buildings, or any type of temporary sheltering or housing;
 - (iii) grocery stores, shopping centers or malls, or other retail establishments where large numbers of people are present, but it is unusual for them to be within six feet of one another for extended periods.

Section 10. This Declaration shall take effect at midnight on the date of signing.

ORDERED this 18 day of March, 2020



Mayor Bob Howard

ATTEST:



Donna Barkley
City Secretary