



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

For Immediate Distribution | March 23, 2020 | (512) 463-1826

Governor Abbott Requests Major Disaster Declaration from White House

AUSTIN - Governor Greg Abbott today sent a letter to President Trump requesting a presidential declaration of a major disaster in Texas based on the continued impact of COVID-19. This action follows on the heels of a series of proactive measures, including declaring a state of disaster for all 254 Texas counties on March 13, 2020.

Filed in accordance with the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, the request is based in part on Governor Abbott's conclusion that the ongoing COVID-19 incident is of such severity and magnitude that supplementary federal assistance is necessary to save lives, to protect property, public health, and safety, and to lessen or avert the threat of a larger disaster.

"Texas is all-in on our response to COVID-19 and we need Washington's financial assistance as provided for under the law to support our efforts to limit the spread of this virus," said Governor Abbott. "COVID-19-related expenses and obligations are already exceeding \$50 million and that will only rise as our efforts continue. Additional federal funding is essential for us to maintain our aggressive course of action to protect our state."

In his letter, the Governor specifically requested Individual Assistance Crisis Counseling and Public Assistance Category B (Emergency Protective Measures) including Direct Federal Assistance for all 254 counties in Texas, noting that, as of March 23rd, Texas has 352 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with eight related deaths.

Governor Abbott's letter also detailed the state's efforts to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, including executing the state's emergency management plan and issuing multiple executive orders, in accordance with guidelines from President Trump and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These include:

- mandatory avoidance of social gatherings of more than 10 people;
- mandatory avoidance of dine-in eating and drinking at bars or restaurants, and of gyms or massage establishments;
- prohibition on non-critical visits to nursing homes, retirement or long-term care facilities; and
- the temporary closure of in-person school operations.

The Governor has also issued multiple waivers of state law to remove barriers limiting the response to this pandemic and activated the Texas National Guard to be prepared to assist

with response efforts for COVID-19. To date, more than 466 Texas jurisdictions have submitted local disaster declarations, a number that is expected to rise.

The requested federal aid would be used to overcome the current shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), needed medical equipment and testing supplies as well as looming shortages of hospital beds, medical equipment, and a healthy and adequate cadre of medical personnel.

The letter also designated Chief Nim Kidd as the Governor's Authorized Representative and State Coordinating Officer, tasked with continuing his coordination with FEMA on all matters related to COVID-19.

[View the Governor's letter.](#)

###

Please DO NOT REPLY to this message. It comes from an un-monitored mailbox. If you have any questions regarding this announcement, please contact the Governor's Press Office at (512) 463-1826.

[Manage Subscriptions](#) | [Unsubscribe All](#)

[GovDelivery](#), Inc. sending on behalf of the Office of the Governor · P.O. Box 12428 · Austin TX 78711-2428 · 800-843-5789