**PUBLIC NOTICE TO THE RESIDENTS OF HEMPHILL COUNTY**

**Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19:**

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms or combinations of symptoms may have COVD-19: cough or shortness of breath or difficulty breathing OR AT LEAST TWO OF THESE SYMPTOMS: fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell. If you have any of these emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately: trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or inability to arouse, bluish lips or face. \*\*\*THIS LIST IS NOT ALL INCLUSIVE. PLEASE CONSULT YOUR MEDICAL PROVIDER FOR ANY OTHER SYMPTOMS THAT ARE SEVERE OR CONCERNING TO YOU.

**How to protect yourself and others:**

Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung diseases or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

**Know how it spreads**

* There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
* The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.
* The virus is thought to be spread mainly from person-to-person.
  + Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  + Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
  + These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
  + Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

**Everyone should:**

* Wash your hands often.
  + Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  + If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces and rub them together until they feel dry.
  + Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
* Avoid close contact.
  + Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  + Stay home as much as possible.
  + Put distance between yourself and other people. (Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.)
* Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others.
  + You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
  + Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
  + The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
  + Do NOT use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker.
  + Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.
* Cover coughs and sneezes.
  + If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
  + Throw used tissues in the trash.
  + Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
* Clean and disinfect.
  + Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
  + If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
  + Then, use a household disinfectant. Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work.
* Residents can go to the following website to learn about COVID-19 spread in nearby communities to help better understand their risk to exposure of traveling outside of Hemphill County at <https://txdshs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/ed483ecd702b4298ab01e8b9cafc8b83>
* Local COVID-19 testing availability; call your primary care physician. If you have an emergency health care issue with COVID-19 related symptoms, contact the Hemphill County Hospital Emergency Room or call 911. For additional information and where to get tested, go to [www.texas.gov](http://www.texas.gov).
* For more COVID-19 information, you may visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>