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Press Release

Hillsboro, TX – As cases of COVID-19 continue to increase, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has issued new recommendations for all individuals to wear face masks of some sort whenever they are out in public. The CDC asks individuals to make their own face coverings or use cloth masks but leave the N95 masks available for healthcare workers on the frontlines of the COVID-19 fight. Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is currently reporting 7,276 cases in Texas with 140 fatalities which is a 2.3% mortality rate. Hill County’s confirmed number of cases on the DSHS website is shown as five, but the Local Health Authority has confirmed six cases and that number will be updated on the DSHS count in the coming days.

In addition to wearing a face covering when in public, it is recommended that whenever possible, only one person per household should be performing essential functions for the group. By limiting the number of people per household who are moving around, we limit the amount of exposure for all in the home. Over the next two weeks, it is imperative to restrict movements even more. Individuals are encouraged to research available options for curbside pickup and delivery options for groceries, medicines and any other vital items which may be deemed necessary over the next two weeks.

“Retail managers across the county are reporting groups of shoppers coming in together,” said Hill County Sheriff Rodney Watson. “When more people than necessary are running errands, you increase the exposure for your family as well as for the workers who are making sure we all have the necessities available to us. We are asking everyone to take your family and your neighbors into consideration and limit your household to only one person performing essential functions whenever possible. Your actions will be crucial to our success in coming through this,” continued Watson.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott has announced new waivers to help put more people to work in the healthcare arena. In addition, he has announced a partnership with care.com to help first responders find childcare solutions while they continue to work. The State is providing regular updates on the status of their COVID-19 response, and you can follow their updates at www.texas.gov/covid19.

“Hill County has been doing a good job of adhering to the executive orders and following social distancing guidelines and staying home, but now is not the time to relax our focus,” said Hill County Judge Justin Lewis. “From everything we are being told, this will be one of the most critical weeks we will face in this fight, and the only way we achieve success is if we all work together to stay apart and not let this spread too quickly. We are known for taking care of ourselves and our neighbors, and the best way we can do that now is to stay home. Please do your part,” continued Lewis.

For the best information available on how to protect yourself and others and following the spread of the Coronavirus across Texas, DSHS has a dashboard website available at <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>. People interested in monitoring updates from Hill County on the situation will find the most current information on the Hill County Emergency Management Facebook Page. The County will also provide regular updates to *KHBR 1560 AM Radio* and the *Hillsboro Reporter*.

In addition, the County has an emergency notification system. If you would like to receive phone call, text or email updates as warranted, you can register with the Hill County Emergency Notification System. Visit the Office of Emergency Management website at www.hilloem.com, scroll to the bottom of the home page and click on emergency alerts. Follow the prompts to set up your account.

