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**Press Release**

**Hillsboro, TX** – New cases of COVID-19 continue to be reported on a daily basis in Hill County. Today's report from the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) shows the caseload increased by two overnight bringing the total number of cases to 38. One of the new cases is a male in his 20s in the Hillsboro area, and the other is a female in her 60s in the Blum area. Of the Hill County cases, DSHS reports 16 as active, 15 recovered, 1 deceased and 6 cases without an active status do not have a stated outcome in the DSHS report. Statewide numbers on the DSHS website as of 5:00pm show 93,206 cases in Texas with 2,518 patients hospitalized, and 2,029 fatalities. 60,681 of the cases are estimated to be recovered while 39,496 of the cases are still listed as active, according to DSHS.

“For those of you following the numbers with us, this is 14 new cases in 16 days,” said Hill County Judge Justin Lewis. “This is not the trend we wanted to see for the beginning of the summer. It felt like we went forever telling our residents there were no new cases in Hill County, so I believe people started feeling safer and more comfortable and began to relax their guard,” continued Lewis, “and now that we have community spread occurring, we’ve become a little numb to the numbers and reports, but now is not the time to stop following CDC guidelines. We do not want this to become widespread throughout our County.”

While the aggregate number of cases increased overnight, so did the active cases in Hill County. We added more new cases than recoveries, so our active number is at 16 which is above the threshold set by Governor Abbott to move to the next phase of opening. Restaurants moved to 75% allowed occupancy, but the rest of businesses must remain at the previously allowed occupancies.

“We can’t stop living our lives, and I want everyone to return to their day-to-day activities, but I’m asking that everyone do so in a safe manner,” stated Lewis. “Across Texas people have stood on the front lines of this battle for months now, and we owe it to everyone who has risked their health and safety to do everything we can to protect ours while reclaiming our freedoms,” continued Lewis. “The people of Hill County are always cooperative and considerate of their neighbors, and the time of this pandemic has been no different, but we can’t quit before we reach the finish line. I know I sound like a broken record, but please keep social-distancing, keep wearing masks and keep washing your hands, because if we don’t follow through now, all the previous months’ work will have been for nothing.”

Please review information on the guidelines to follow as business operations and recreational activities reopen at <https://open.texas.gov/>

Information on the spread of the Coronavirus across Texas is available at the DSHS dashboard website, <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>. To monitor updates from Hill County, the most current information will be provided on the Hill County Emergency Management Facebook Page and *KHBR 1560 AM Radio* and the *Hillsboro Reporter*.