



CITY OF UVALDE

Uvalde, Texas

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Guidelines to Local Emergency Declaration

Effective May 1, 2020

We have reviewed Governor Abbott's most recent Executive Order GA-18 and his "Open Texas" report. In light of the favorable local statistics on controlling the spread of COVID-19 in our community and after consulting with Dr. Jared Reading, Uvalde Health Authority, the City of Uvalde and Uvalde County fully support the governor's effort to open businesses. We recognize that livelihoods are at stake and believe that businesses need to operate and can do so without jeopardizing public health.

The new executive order applies to those businesses that were restricted by prior orders from the governor, and includes in-store retail services, dine-in restaurant services, museums, libraries, and services provided by an individual working alone in an office. The city and county are adding gyms and salons to the list of businesses above. These businesses may "reopen" as of May 1, but on a partial basis at less than full occupancy.

Gyms and salons were not included in the list of businesses the governor is allowing to open, and the executive order says only, "People shall avoid visiting..." gyms and salons (along with certain other businesses.) This indirect language does not sound like a clear prohibition to us, and so we will leave it to the public and the business operators to decide what they should do, as long as the rules on congregating around entrances, social distancing, and the guidelines on hygienic practices and masking are strictly followed.

Recognizing the differences between urban and rural communities, the governor has added flexibility in the rules to allow businesses to operate at higher occupancy, under defined criteria, in rural counties. Because of our local COVID-19 numbers, Uvalde County meets the criteria for this higher occupancy, subject to documentation attested to by the county judge; Judge Mitchell has submitted the required documentation. Thus, those businesses referenced above may operate at 50 percent of their total listed occupancy, effective May 1.

The executive order does not define "total listed occupancy," but we believe it refers to the occupancy limits established under the fire code. If you have questions about occupancy numbers, please contact the fire marshal at the City of Uvalde.

Specific recommended health protocols for those businesses that choose to open are contained in "The Governor's Report to Open Texas," which along with Executive Order GA-18 may be found on the governor's website, gov.texas.gov.

Although the governor and local authorities are allowing businesses to open, there is no requirement that they do so or that they open to the maximum permitted occupancy. And even



with these changes, prior rules and guidelines remain in place. The COVID-19 emergency is likely far from over, and now is not the time for our vigilance to wane. We urge you to continue to practice social distancing, good hygiene, sanitizing, limiting your outings, wearing a mask when you are in a public setting, and above all, to exercise common sense in keeping yourselves and your fellow citizens safe.

William Mitchell, County Judge
Don McLaughlin, Mayor