

STATE OF TEXAS §

§

COUNTY OF BROOKS §

DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER RELATED TO

**COVID – 19 Global Health Crisis.**

WHEREAS, Brooks County has experienced school closures, the altering of schedules by other governmental entities, and some venues are beginning to temporarily close, as precautionary responses to the increasing presence of COVID- 19 in Texas, including Brooks County; and

WHEREAS, costs incurred to prepare for and respond to COVID-19 are beginning to mount in Brooks County; and

WHEREAS, Brooks County has already taken numerous steps to prepare for COVID 19, such as coordinating preparedness efforts across local agencies and working with local partners to promote appropriate mitigation efforts; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to take additional steps to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to protect the health and welfare of citizens of Brooks County; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 has the potential of endangering lives, and

WHEREAS, the Texas Government Code Chapter 418 gives the county judge the power to declare a local disaster within the county “if the threat of disaster is imminent”; and

WHEREAS, the magnitude of the potential health risk and danger as well as the rapidity with which COVID-19 could escalate constitute an imminent threat of disaster; and

WHEREAS, the declaration of such a disaster authorizes the imposition of controls on activities which tend to increase the likelihood of injury to the public; and

WHEREAS, such controls, once implemented, have the potential of protecting lives and property by mitigating the threat of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, a local disaster declaration expires seven days after its issuance, unless the commissioners court consents to its renewal or continuance.

BE IT THEREFORE PROCLAIMED that I, Eric Ramos, County Judge of Brooks County, declare a local state of disaster based on the threat of the spread of COVID-19 in Brooks County, Texas.

BE IT ALSO PROCLAIMED that public and private Community Gatherings of more than 10 individuals anywhere in Brooks County is prohibited. While this does not shut down any specific businesses, it does prohibit any business or private home from having more than 10 people, including employees, in an enclosed space. (This provision excludes businesses that sell food and/or sanitizing/antibacterial cleaning supplies.)

BE IT ALSO PROCLAIMED that local restaurants close their dining rooms. These businesses may continue to operate on a to-go or drive basis.

BE IT ALSO PROCLAIMED that this state of disaster will continue until rescinded in accordance with the above cited statute, but in no instance will this declaration continue for more than seven days without being authorized by the County Commissioners Court.

BE IT ALSO PROCLAIMED that a violation of this Disaster Declaration is punishable as a Class C misdemeanor by a fine not to exceed \$500.00 or as authorized by Government Code §418.173 and adopted in the county's emergency plan by a fine not to exceed \$1,000.00 or confinement in jail for a term not to exceed 180 days, whichever is greater.

This declaration shall be promptly publicized and filed with the County Clerk.

IN WITNESS WHERE OF, I affix my signature this 18<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.



County Judge

Filed with the Clerk of Brooks County on March 18, 2020