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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Abbott updates Executive Orders, twice, to amend outdoor gatherings and business-related COVID-19 closures

Granbury, Texas – On Thursday, Texas Governor Greg Abbott announced amendments to his Executive Order (GA-26) that would adversely affect outdoor gatherings and events. It was this change that forced the cancellation of Granbury’s 4th of July Hometown Parade.

GA-26 also implements phase III of the state’s re-opening. The order is much different than previous orders. At its core, it provides that people should not be in groups larger than 10 and should maintain six feet of social distancing from those not in their group.

Beyond that, the order curbs the numbers of people that can access various businesses and take part in various activities. The order also stipulates the following:

- **Face Masks for Individuals:** according to the revised Executive Order, “individuals are encouraged to wear appropriate face coverings, but no jurisdiction can impose a civil or criminal penalty for failure to wear a face covering.” Thursday’s changes were made to stem the spread of COVID-19.
- **Face Masks for Businesses:** The governor indicated his belief that local governments can require businesses to insist that customers wear masks, and that doing so is consistent with Executive Order (GA-26). Although the order prohibits local jurisdictions from imposing a civil or criminal penalty for customers failing to wear a face covering, this does not apply for businesses. In other words, a city’s local order can only impose fines on businesses that fail to make employees and customers wear masks. The order supersedes local orders and prohibits confinement in jail for a violation.
- **July 4th Celebrations:** the previous Executive Order (GA-26), released on June 3,

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that allowed up to 500 people to gather was also modified. The new changes grant more authority to mayors and judges by lowering the crowd threshold from 500 to 100. They can now limit gatherings with an estimated attendance exceeding 100 individuals, considering the following factors:

- The overall number of projected attendees;
- The likelihood of individuals over the age of 65 attending;
- The density of the forum and the ability to ensure social distancing of 6 feet between individuals; and
- The level of transmission in the county.

Second, he issued another amendment to his Executive Order (GA-27) (which can be viewed at: https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/press/EO-GA-27_hospital_capacity_COVID-19.pdf) that relates to hospital bed availability. Elective surgeries at hospitals in Bexar, Dallas, Harris, and Travis counties have been suspended. The governor, through proclamation, can add or subtract from the list of counties included in the Executive Order to address surges in hospitalizations that may arise in other parts of the state.

However, Abbott's follow-up amendment – Executive Order (GA-28) – (which can be viewed at <https://gov.texas.gov/business/page/coronavirus>) – that was announced today, severely limits, and in some cases, even closes certain establishments. The order limits certain businesses and services as part of the state's effort to contain the spread of COVID-19. The order includes:

- All bars and similar establishments that receive more than 51 percent of their gross receipts from the sale of alcoholic beverages are required to close at Noon, June 26, 2020. These businesses may remain open for delivery and takeout, including for alcoholic beverages, as authorized by the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission.
- Restaurants may remain open for dine-in service, but at a capacity not to exceed 50% of total listed indoor occupancy, beginning Monday, June 29, 2020.
- Rafting and tubing businesses must close.
- Outdoor gatherings of 100 or more people must be approved by local governments, with certain exceptions.

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Abbott further stated that businesses should follow the minimum standard health protocols laid out by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Guidance for employers and employees, as well as Open Texas Checklists by business type, can be found on the Open Texas Website at <https://gov.texas.gov/business/page/coronavirus>.

Hood County Judge Ron Massingill is requesting all businesses to reduce their occupancy rate down to 50 percent per Executive Order (GA-28). The county is experiencing a significant increase in positive COVID-19 cases. Massingill and the Hood County Emergency Management Coordinator, Jay Webster, highly recommend that everyone wear a mask and practice social distancing. If you have a fever, cough or other symptoms, they ask you to stay home and help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

For more information please contact Granbury Public Information Officer Alex Southern at 817-573-6764 or at asouthern@granbury.org.

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