April 28, 2020

On April 17, 2020, Governor Abbott issued **Executive Order GA-16**. That Order extended the restrictions on businesses and services in Texas. However, while some relaxations were included in the Order, other restrictions remained. Social distancing; closing of restaurants, massage parlors, bars, and open retail/wholesale stores remained closed. Those restrictions were put in place to protect the citizens of Texas from spreading a very deadly virus. Some relaxations of restrictions were made: Churches, curb-side pick up at stores, etc. All these restrictions are set to expire on April 30, 2020.

On April 27, 2020, Gov Abbott issued **Executive Order GA-18** related to the expanded reopening of services as part of the safe, strategic plan to Open Texas in response to the COVID-19 disaster.

Essentially, the Order states: All retail stores, restaurants, movie theaters, and malls are permitted to reopen on Friday, May 1, 2020. These services must limit capacity to 25% of their listed capacity.

All museums and libraries may open with the same 25% limitation. Churches and places of worship remain open. Outdoor sports are allowed to resume so long as no more than four participants are playing together. Dentist offices, nurses, and sole proprietorship, are allowed to reopen.

Nursing homes and assisted living facilities are to remain closed to visitors.

Included in the Governor’s Open Texas plan is the provision to review the Health Data available on May 18, 2020 to determine if partial reopening has been successful or, has increased the spread of the COVID-19 virus. If the spread has increased, the previously restrictions will be **re-implemented**. Should data show that Texans are being responsive to health measures of social distancing and sanitary precautions, new guidelines will be put in place to allow opening of restaurants and other businesses to 50% of their capacity.

Again, the partial Open Texas plan is designed to allow businesses to begin to reopen in a staged manner. It is not to allow open season on all businesses. If we here in Bosque County will remain vigilant and concerned about our neighbors, we will get past this difficult time and the virus will no longer control our lives.

Don L Pool

County Judge

Bosque County, Tx