

**The Executive order requires all Texans, effective TODAY at 12:01 p.m. to wear a face covering over the nose and mouth in public spaces in counties with 20 or more positive COVID-19 cases, with few exceptions. The Governor also issued a proclamation giving mayors and county judges the ability to impose restrictions on some outdoor gatherings of over 10 people, and making it mandatory that, with certain exceptions, people cannot be in groups larger than ten and must maintain six feet of social distancing from others. Regretfully, I need to update you all on another death, which brings our total to 18**

**Increases in confirmed coronavirus case counts were widespread across the Texarkana region Thursday, and Bowie County, Texas, reported a new death because of COVID-19.**

**In Northeast Texas, Bowie County's count increased by nine, from 286 to 295, Wednesday to Thursday, according to the local emergency Joint Operations Center. One-hundred twenty-two Bowie County patients have recovered. Eighteen have died, an increase of one since Wednesday.**

**Cass County, Texas, held at 47 cases, with 38 recoveries and two deaths, according to the JOC.**

**Titus County's tally rose from 710 to 720 and Morris County's from 39 to 40, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. Red River County held at 112 cases.**

**Confirmed coronavirus case counts increased in seven of eight Southwest Arkansas counties Thursday, according to the Arkansas Department of Health.**

**Sevier County's tally rose from 706 to 717, Miller County's from 118 to 122, Nevada County's from 102 to 104, Howard County's from 94 to 96, Hempstead County's from 50 to 56, Little River County's from 38 to 40 and Pike County's from seven to nine. Lafayette County held at 19 cases.**

**Caddo Parish in Northwest Louisiana added 102 cases Wednesday to reach 3,520, and Bossier Parish added 41 cases to reach 947, according to the Louisiana Department of Health.**

**Statewide, Arkansas reported 22,075 cumulative cases with 279 deaths, Louisiana reported 61,561 cases with 3,147 deaths, and Texas reported 175,977 cases with 2,525 deaths.**

**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 2,679,230 total cases so far in the U.S., with a national death toll of 128,024.**

Just about the time I sent out today's JOC update, Governor Abbott was announcing his newest Executive Order, so I wanted to make sure you all had the latest information at your fingertips. Here's a link to the EO: <https://open.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/EO-GA-29-use-of-face-coverings-during-COVID-19-IMAGE-07-02-2020.pdf>

The Executive order requires all Texans, effective tomorrow at 12:01 p.m. to wear a face covering over the nose and mouth in public spaces in counties with 20 or more positive COVID-19 cases, with few exceptions. The Governor also issued a proclamation giving mayors and county judges the ability to impose restrictions on some outdoor gatherings of over 10 people, and making it mandatory that, with certain exceptions, people cannot be in groups larger than ten and must maintain six feet of social distancing from others.

Here's the language from the order:

Every person in Texas shall wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when inside a commercial entity or other building or space open to the public, or when in an outdoor public space, wherever it is not feasible to maintain six feet of social distancing from another person not in the same household; provided, however, that this face-covering requirement does not apply to the following:

1. any person younger than 10 years of age;
2. any person with a medical condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering;
3. any person while the person is consuming food or drink, or is seated at a restaurant to eat or drink;
4. any person while the person is (a) exercising outdoors or engaging in physical activity outdoors, and (b) maintaining a safe distance from other people not in the same household;
5. any person while the person is driving alone or with passengers who are part of the same household as the driver;
6. any person obtaining a service that requires temporary removal of the face covering for security surveillance, screening, or a need for specific access to the face, such as while visiting a bank or while obtaining a personal care service involving the face, but only to the extent necessary for the temporary removal;
7. any person while the person is in a swimming pool, lake, or similar body of water;
8. any person who is voting, assisting a voter, serving as a poll watcher, or actively administering an election, but wearing a face covering is strongly encouraged;
9. any person who is actively providing or obtaining access to religious worship, but wearing a face covering is strongly encouraged;
10. any person while the person is giving a speech for a broadcast or to an audience; or
11. any person in a county (a) that meets the requisite criteria promulgated by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) regarding minimal cases of COVID-19, and (b) whose county judge has affirmatively opted-out of this face-covering requirement by filing with TDEM the required face-covering attestation form—provided, however, that wearing a face covering is highly recommended, and every county is strongly encouraged to follow these face-covering standards.