

Kendall County COVID-19 Response

Update from Judge Darrel Lux

APRIL 4, 2020 – We are weeks into our fight against the spread of COVID-19 and we still have critical weeks ahead of us. I appreciate the cooperation from the residents of Kendall County that are dedicated to social distancing and practicing responsible behavior.

To date, we have 9 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Kendall County. Of those cases, 4 are residents of the City of Boerne, 4 are residents of Kendall County and one resides in Fair Oaks Ranch. All of the confirmed cases were put on self-quarantine and were travel related or residents of the same household. There have been no hospitalizations. It is important to note that 4 of the residents that tested positive have recovered.

On April 3rd I signed Kendall County's Third Declaration of Local Disaster (KCDD-3). Beginning with this third order, KCDD-3, we have added Explanatory Notes. I would like to thank Bill Ballard, our General Counsel, for his work in presenting the information that is outlined in the declarations in a clear and concise manner to assist the general public and our local law enforcement. Please go to the Kendall County website at www.co.kendall.tx.us to view all Declarations of Local Disaster issued by Kendall County.

All local leaders are strictly monitoring the situation in our jurisdictions in this ever changing environment. In earlier updates I referenced that further restrictions may be put in place if the situation warranted action. Social distancing is the most effective way to reduce the spread. One activity that we have found to be disturbing, and not in compliance with CDC recommendations and Governor Abbott's declaration, is the number of people gathering in our county parks in groups that do not practice responsible social distancing. This has led to the change included in Kendall County's April 3, 2020 declaration. Effective Friday, April 3rd at 11:59 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. on May 1, 2020, all parks maintained by Kendall County, Joshua Springs Park and Preserve, Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area, James Kiehl River Bend Park, and Comfort Park are closed to the public.

Another unsafe behavior that has been observed is the gathering of large numbers of people at our river crossings in the County. Therefore, we are closing all river crossings located on County and State right-of-ways from Friday, April 3rd at 11:59 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. on May 1, 2020 to the public. This does not prevent private property owners from accessing river crossings adjacent or within their property.

While neighborhood Homeowners Association's (HOA's) parks are privately owned, we are requesting HOA's closely monitor their parks and not allow gatherings during the time indicated in our April 3rd Declaration of Local Disaster. We are asking that all HOA's please communicate to their members the information provided in our Declarations, as well as our updates to insure awareness of the issues in Kendall County that need to be addressed and the regulations set in place by the Local, State and County governments. HOA's have the ability to reach out directly to our residents and your assistance is greatly appreciated. I will be contacting the area HOA's starting Monday, April 6th to see what we can do to help you to secure your parks.

We are currently in the ongoing process of identifying businesses that continue to operate in opposition to Governor Abbott's Declaration of Local Disaster. These businesses will be informed of the violation and if necessary subject to the penalties below. If you are uncertain whether your business is an essential business or not, please email COVID-19@co.kendall.tx.us.

Any violation of any Emergency Order issued under our DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY may result in a fine, not to exceed, \$1,000 or confinement in jail for a term, not to exceed, 180 days. In addition, the Kendall County Health Department may take action to enforce any Emergency Order issued under this DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY, including the issuance of citation and/or the suspension or revocation of a Kendall County Health Permit.

Our community is extremely fortunate to have Jeff Fincke, our Emergency Management Coordinator, and Capt. Steven Perez of the Boerne Police Department leading the battle against the spread of COVID-19. They work tirelessly to stay on top of what is happening in the county as well as across the state. The depth of their work is immeasurable and I want to thank both of them for their commitment to our local leaders and the residents of Kendall County.

Again, I continue to urge the citizens of Kendall County to be responsible in their actions and to use common sense. Also, self-quarantine if you have traveled to other countries, states, or portions of Texas that would pose an increased risk of exposure to the virus. Be cautious and move about the County only when necessary. We need to limit our exposure to COVID-19; our neighbors are depending on us!

Our County offices remain open, but we request that you contact us by email or by phone. This will help us limit our employees' exposure as well as the public. Please visit our website for contact information.

For information on the COVID-19 pandemic, please visit our website co.kendall.tx.us or the Kendall County Emergency Management Facebook page. You can also email the County with specific questions about COVID-19 at COVID-19@co.kendall.tx.us.

All of your local leaders are dedicated to stopping the spread of this virus, while keeping our community strong and unified. We need your help! Please, follow the CDC guidelines, wash your hands, stay home and avoid unnecessary travel. Together we can SLOW THE SPREAD.