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MARK J. KEOUGH
COUNTY JUDGE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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**ORDER TERMINATING MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S STAY HOME STOP THE SPREAD
ORDER**

(April 17, 2020)

WHEREAS, a local disaster declaration was issued on March 12, 2020 of which Montgomery County Commissioners Court extended through May 11, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 27, 2020 County Judge Mark J. Keough issued the local Stay at Home Stop the Spread Order, which adopted stop the spread guidelines and determined according to CISA guidelines, what businesses were deemed essential or non-essential, closing non-essential businesses and adopting CDC guidelines for social gatherings and social distancing; and

WHEREAS, Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued Executive Order GA-14 on March 31, 2020 adopting the same guidelines for essential and non-essential businesses defined by CISA guidelines, closing non-essential businesses and directing citizens to adhere to CDC guidelines for social gatherings and social distancing; and

WHEREAS, while Montgomery County will continue to see an increase in active COVID-19 cases, those increased cases are no longer exponentially growing as originally projected due to the adoption and practice of social distancing by the citizens of Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, Due to executive orders issued by Texas Governor Greg Abbott and the compliance with those orders by Montgomery County hospitals, emergency rooms and medical facilities, which freed up additional hospital capacity across Texas, Montgomery County hospital utilization has remained manageable and the surge of patients requiring hospitalization, as originally predicted, has continued to diminish over the last week; and

WHEREAS, continuing the practice of regular hand washing, general sanitizing and social distancing according to the CDC guidelines will continue to decrease the threat of COVID-19 to the general population of Montgomery County in the upcoming days; and

WHEREAS, U.S. President Donald Trump and Texas Governor Abbott have announced both present and future guidance pertaining to the safe reopening of the American and Texas economies; and

NOW THEREFORE, I, MARK J. KEOUGH, COUNTY JUDGE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, TEXAS, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY VESTED BY TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE CHAPTER 418, HEREBY TERMINATE THE CURRENT “STAY AT HOME STOP THE SPREAD ORDER” AND FURTHER ORDER:

- 1) Executive Order GA-14, signed by Texas Governor Greg Abbott on March 31, 2020, currently in effect throughout Texas and Montgomery County, remains in effect until its expiration date or until it is amended, terminated, extended or superseded by a subsequent order issued by Governor Abbott.
- 2) Montgomery County’s Local Stay Home, Stop the Spread Order dated March 27, 2020, and all subsequent amendments or extensions, including the 11:59 PM to 6:00 AM curfew, are immediately terminated.
- 3) Montgomery County will continue, as directed, to enforce all provisions of Executive Order GA-14 and any subsequent Executive Orders issued by Texas Governor Greg Abbott.
- 4) All Businesses in Montgomery County as defined by GA-14 and clarified by subsequent opinions of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, which have been deemed essential or non-essential, shall continue to follow all of the provisions of GA-14 and any future amendments or provisions of that order, or any provisions of subsequent Executive Orders issued by Texas Governor Greg Abbott.

TO FACILITATE A SAFE OPENING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY ECONOMY, THE FOLLOWING ARE FURTHER ORDERED:

Definitions:

For the purpose of this order “vulnerable individuals” has the meaning of;

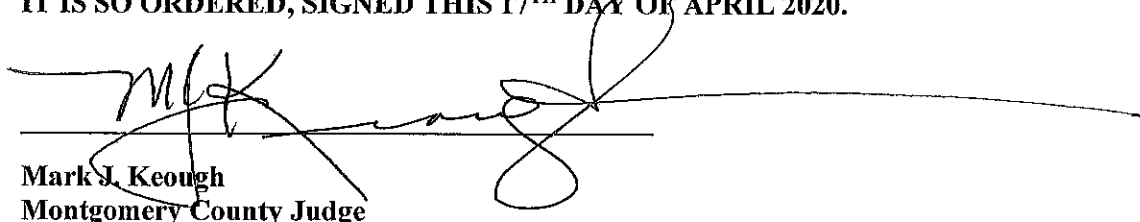
- A. Elderly individuals
 - B. Individuals with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune system is compromised.
- 5) Montgomery County residents and businesses shall follow all current or future guidance and/or orders issued by the CDC, the White House, or the Texas Governor, with regard to social distancing, phased opening of certain businesses, protection of vulnerable individuals, mass gatherings, social events, and travel. Guidance and/or orders issued by the aforementioned group may be altered or amended by local orders, as necessary, to respond to and mitigate local COVID-19 conditions.

- 6) Nursing homes, retirement, long-term care, senior living centers, or any other facility that provides a permanent or temporary living services to vulnerable individuals shall prohibit non-essential visitors from accessing their facilities unless to provide critical assistance or for end of life visitation. Additionally, these facilities are prohibited from providing or allowing gatherings of residents. **(This provision shall remain in effect until further notice)**
- 7) Vulnerable individuals should continue to stay home as much as possible. When necessary to be in public places, vulnerable individuals, should avoid any large gatherings, maximize physical distance from others and practice good hygiene.
- 8) Individuals are urged to continue practicing good hygiene, by washing hands often, utilizing hand sanitizer when hand washing is unavailable, avoid touching your face, disinfecting frequently used items and surfaces, and utilize face coverings where possible when in public settings. Individuals who are ill should stay home avoiding any public activities and isolate from other family members until directed by a medical professional or symptom free.
- 9) Businesses are urged to develop and implement appropriate policies in accordance with any guidance or orders issued by federal, state and local governments. These policies should follow best practices for each respective industry with regard to; social distancing, and use of protective equipment. Providing increase sanitation of common and high-traffic areas, screening employees for illness, requiring employees who are ill to stay home.

Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code § 418.173, any law enforcement agency in Montgomery County is hereby authorized to enforce section(s) 1, 4, and 6 of this Order and the failure to comply with this Order is an offense under the laws of this state and is punishable by a fine that does not exceed \$1,000 dollars or confinement in jail for a term that does not exceed 180 days or both.

PROVISIONS OF THIS ORDER ARE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY OR AS NOTED AND SHALL REMAIN IN EFFECT UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED OR UNTIL JUNE 1, 2020 UNLESS TERMINATED, SUPERSEDED, AMENDED OR EXTENDED PURSUANT TO APPLICABLE LAW.

IT IS SO ORDERED, SIGNED THIS 17TH DAY OF APRIL 2020.



Mark J. Keough
Montgomery County Judge

WITNESSED: 