



April 23, 2020

Dr. Umair Shah
Executive Director
Harris County Public Health
2223 West Loop South
Houston, TX 77027

Dear Dr. Shah,

Thank you for your efforts at this time to mitigate and respond to the threats posed by COVID-19. I write today to request a modification to how Harris County Public Health (HCPD) reports positive COVID-19 cases.

Please consider reporting positive cases on the date the test was administered rather than on the date the results are reported to HCPH from the confirming laboratory. As evidenced by recent case numbers, reporting cases once confirmed to HCPH can skew the trajectory of case activity as many positive results are from tests originally performed as long as three weeks prior to the date the positive results are reported.

Delays in reporting make it difficult for local jurisdictions to determine the real level of current spread in their community. Further, as provided in the White House's Guidelines Opening America Up Again, governing jurisdictions are assessing daily case counts to determine when the 14 day gating criteria have been met. Local governments are prioritizing the health of their communities while evaluating the potential to lift current restrictions in a responsible, safe manner that does not jeopardize the gains we have made in combatting the spread of this virus. Accurate, timely case reports that represent the true status of virus spread are critical to making these informed decisions.

I appreciate your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

Gordy Bunch
Chairman, The Woodlands Township