



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Denton City Council Extends Declaration of Local Disaster for COVID-19

DENTON, TX, March 17, 2020 (9:45 p.m.) – On Tuesday, March 17, the Denton City Council voted to extend the seven-day declaration of local disaster for public health emergency that was first signed by Mayor Chris Watts on Friday, March 13. The extended declaration of disaster and order by City Council is effective until 11:59 p.m. April 30, 2020.

The order issued by City Council prohibits community gatherings of 100 or more people in the city of Denton, effective from 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, March 18 until 11:59 p.m. April 30, 2020. The order further urges all individuals to avoid gatherings of 50 persons or more. It also recommends and urges high-risk individuals, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to cancel, reschedule, or not attend any gatherings during this time.

The City of Denton also strongly urges restaurants and bars within the city to limit occupancy to 50 percent or less than permitted by the restaurant or bar's Certificate of Occupancy.

With an extended disaster declaration and this order in effect, the City of Denton is able to:

- Gain access to short-term funding opportunities.
- Activate and implement the emergency management plan.
- Postpone non-essential Municipal Court proceedings.
- Suspend all utility shutoffs for customers unable to pay.
- Provide the City Manager authority to expend up to \$500,000 in response activities during the disaster period.
- Provide the City Manager authority to expend up to \$50,000 in funding to the United Way of Denton County to assist individuals and families in the City of Denton, who have experienced income or job loss due to COVID-19, in eviction avoidance.

The City of Denton continues to closely monitor the developing situation with COVID-19.

See the **attached** declaration and order for more information. Visit www.cityofdenton.com/coronavirus and www.dentoncounty.gov/coronavirus for additional updates.

Contact: Ryan Adams, (940) 349-8565, Ryan.Adams@cityofdenton.com

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Visit www.cityofdenton.com for more news and to stay updated.

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ORDINANCE NO. 20-721

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DENTON, A TEXAS HOME-RULE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, EXTENDING THE EFFECTIVE PERIOD OF THE DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY EXECUTED BY THE MAYOR ON MARCH 13, 2020; TERMINATING AND REPLACING THE ORDER OF THE MAYOR DATED MARCH 13, 2020; AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF AMOUNTS NOT TO EXCEED FIVE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$550,000.00) DURING THIS PERIOD PURSUANT TO CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION 9-23; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, beginning in December 2019, a novel coronavirus, now designated SARS-CoV2 which causes the disease COVID-19, has spread throughout the world and has now been declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization; and

WHEREAS, symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, coughing, and shortness of breath, and in some cases the virus has caused death; and

WHEREAS, the known cases of COVID-19 diagnosed in the State of Texas is currently increasing daily with 18 positive or presumed positive cases across North Texas and several persons under observation in Denton County following presumed exposure; and

WHEREAS, extraordinary measures must be taken to contain COVID-19 and prevent its spread throughout the City of Denton and Denton County, including the limitation of community gatherings of over 100 people and potentially requiring individuals, groups of individuals, or property to be subject to additional measures that prevent or control the spread of disease; and

WHEREAS, the State Office of Court Administration, in consultation with the Supreme Court, Court of Criminal Appeals, and Regional Judges, has provided guidance recommending postponement of all non-essential court proceedings, minimizing staff, and taking all other appropriate measures to prevent the spread of disease; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor of the City of Denton has determined that extraordinary measures must be taken by temporarily limiting the number of persons allowed to convene in a single location; temporarily closing City buildings, facilities, and limiting certain uses thereof; temporarily postponing all non-essential municipal court proceedings; providing resources to prevent eviction due to COVID-19 impact; and temporarily suspending all City utility shut-offs to residential customers; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Mayor executed a "Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency," a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit "A," and an "Order of the Mayor of the City of Denton" pursuant to the Declaration, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit "B;" and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that it is in the best interest of the citizens of the City of Denton to extend the effectiveness of the March 13, 2020 Declaration of Disaster until 11:59 p.m. April 30, 2020, terminate and replace the Order of the Mayor, as detailed herein, and authorize the expenditure of no more than Five Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$550,000.00) during this

period to proceed with the necessary emergency responses and essential functions not already budgeted; NOW, THEREFORE,

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DENTON HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. The facts, circumstances, and recitations contained in the preamble of this Ordinance are found and declared to be true and correct, and are incorporated herein by reference as if fully set out herein.

SECTION 2. Pursuant to Section 418.108, Texas Government Code, and Section 9-27, City of Denton Code of Ordinances, the effective period of the attached Declaration of Disaster executed by the Mayor on March 13, 2020 is extended until 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2020 in the interest of public health and safety in an attempt to prevent the spread of COVID-19, unless further extended, revised, or terminated by law.

SECTION 3. The Order of the Mayor, executed by the Mayor pursuant to the Declaration of Disaster on March 13, 2020, is hereby terminated and replaced with the Order of Council attached hereto as Exhibit "C."

SECTION 4. Pursuant to City of Denton Code of Ordinances Section 9-23, the City Manager is hereby authorized to expend funds up to Five Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$550,000.00) for necessary emergency response procurement and essential functions not already budgeted. The City Manager shall keep a written account of all emergency procurements made during this emergency and provide such accounting to City Council within three (3) months of the conclusion of the emergency.

SECTION 5. The motion to approve this Ordinance was made by Jesse Davis and seconded by John Ryan; the Ordinance was passed and approved by the following vote [5 - 1]:

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Chris Watts, Mayor:	<u>✓</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
Gerard Hudspeth, District 1:	<u>✓</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
Keely G. Briggs, District 2:	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>✓</u>
Jesse Davis, District 3:	<u>✓</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
John Ryan, District 4:	<u>✓</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
Deb Armintor, At Large Place 5:	<u>_____</u>	<u>✓</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
Paul Meltzer, At Large Place 6:	<u>✓</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>

PASSED AND APPROVED this the 17th day of March, 2020.



Chris Watts
CHRIS WATTS, MAYOR

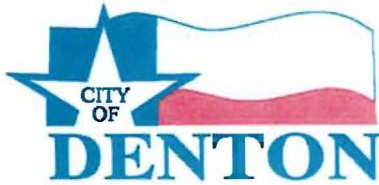
ATTEST:
ROSA RIOS, CITY SECRETARY

BY: Rosa Rios

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:
AARON LEAL, CITY ATTORNEY

BY: Aaron Leal

EXHIBIT "A"



DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, beginning in December 2019, a novel coronavirus, now designated SARS-CoV2 which causes the disease COVID-19, has spread throughout the world and has now been declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization; and

WHEREAS, symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, coughing, and shortness of breath, and in some cases the virus has caused death; and

WHEREAS, the known cases of COVID-19 diagnosed in the State of Texas is currently increasing daily with 13 positive or presumed positive cases across North Texas and several persons under observation in Denton County following presumed exposure; and

WHEREAS, extraordinary measures must be taken to contain COVID-19 and prevent its spread throughout the City of Denton and Denton County, including the limitation of community gatherings of over two hundred fifty (250) people and potentially requiring individuals, groups of individuals, or property to be subject to additional measures that prevent or control the spread of disease; and

WHEREAS, the State Office of Court Administration, in consultation with the Supreme Court, Court of Criminal Appeals, and Regional Presiding Judges has provided guidance recommending postponement of all non-essential court proceedings, minimizing staff, and taking all other appropriate measures to prevent the spread of disease;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DENTON:

1. That a local state of disaster for public health emergency is hereby declared for the City of Denton, a Texas home-rule municipal corporation, pursuant to Section 418.108(a) of the Texas Government Code and Section 9-21 of the City of Denton Code of Ordinances.
2. Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 418.108(b) and Section 9-27 of the City of Denton Code of Ordinances, the state of disaster for public health emergency shall continue for a period of not more than seven (7) days from the date of this declaration unless continued or renewed by the Denton City Council.
3. Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 418.108(c) and Section 9-25 of the City of Denton Code of Ordinances, this declaration of a local state of disaster for public health emergency shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the City Secretary.
4. Pursuant to Section 418.108(d) of the Texas Government Code, this declaration of a local state of disaster activates the City of Denton emergency management plan and grants the Mayor the powers set forth in Section 9-22 of the City of Denton Code of Ordinances; including the power to temporarily close City buildings, facilities, and certain uses thereof; to temporarily postpone all

non-essential municipal court proceedings; to temporarily suspend all City utility shut-offs to residential customers affected by COVID-19; and to prohibit all public and private gatherings wherein two hundred fifty (250) people or more are expected, as well as those gatherings of twenty (20) or more people where high-risk individuals, as defined by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are in attendance.

5. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 122.006, the City may adopt rules to protect the health of persons in the City and provide for the establishment of quarantine stations, emergency hospitals, and other hospitals.

6. That this proclamation shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance.

DECLARED this the 13th day of March, 2020.



Honorable Chris Watts
City of Denton Mayor

EXHIBIT "B"



ORDER OF THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DENTON DATE ISSUED: MARCH 13, 2020

Summary: The virus that causes 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is easily transmitted through person to person contact, especially in group settings, and it is essential that the spread of the virus be slowed to protect the ability of public and private health care providers to handle the influx of new patients and safeguard public health and safety. Because of the risk of the rapid spread of the virus, the need to protect the most vulnerable members of the community, this Order closes certain City buildings and non-essential services or uses. This order prohibits community gatherings of two hundred fifty (250) persons or more within the City of Denton beginning at 5:00 p.m. on March 13, 2020, and continuing seven days through 5:00 p.m. on March 20, 2020, as defined below. The City of Denton strongly recommends following the social distancing protocols attached to this Order. Additionally, the City of Denton urges high-risk individuals, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to cancel, reschedule, or not attend events that will have or will likely have 20 or more people.

PURUSANT TO THE MAYORAL PROCLAMATION OF MARCH 13, 2020 AND THE AUTHORITY IN SECTION 9-22 OF THE DENTON CODE OF ORDINANCES AND SECTION 416.108 OF THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, CITY OF DENTON MAYOR CHRIS WATTS HEREBY ORDERS:

1. Effective as of 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 13, 2020, and continuing until 5:00 p.m. on March 20, 2020, public or private Community Gatherings (as defined in Section 4 below) are prohibited anywhere in the City of Denton.
2. The City of Denton strongly urges organizations that serve high-risk populations, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to cancel gatherings of more than 20 people. These recommendations are based on the social distancing practices promulgated by the CDC as well as the "Implementation of Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission" issued by the CDC. The City of Denton urges people not to attend non-essential gatherings during the duration of this Order in order to help slow down the spread of the COVID-19 virus.
3. All non-essential court proceedings in the Municipal Court No. 1 of the City of Denton are postponed. All such proceedings will be rescheduled following the term of this Order. No fine, penalty, or punishment shall issue against a party because of the postponement ordered herein. Municipal Court No. 1 shall continue to hear all proceedings deemed essential by the state Office of Court Administration, including search and arrest warrant requests, arraignments, criminal magistration proceedings, and requests for temporary restraining orders.
4. Definitions:
 - a. For purposes of this Order, a "Community Gathering" is any indoor or outdoor event or convening, subject to the exceptions and clarifications below, that brings together or is likely to bring together three hundred (300) or more persons at the same time in a single room or

other single confined or enclosed space, such as an auditorium, theater, stadium (indoor or outdoor), arena or event center, meeting hall, conference center, large cafeteria, gymnasium, or any other confined space.

- b. For purposes of clarity, a "Community Gathering" does not include the following so long as visitors are generally not within arm's length of one another for extended periods:
 - i. spaces where 250 or more persons may be in transit or waiting for transit, such as airports, bus stations, or terminals;
 - ii. office space or residential buildings;
 - iii. grocery stores, shopping malls, or other retail establishments where large numbers of people are present but it is unusual for them to be within arm's length of one another for extended periods; and
 - iv. hospitals and medical facilities.
- c. Specifically excluded from the definition of "Community Gathering" is the following:
 - i. gathering of people in multiple, separate enclosed spaces in a single building, such as a multiplex movie theater, school, church, or office tower, so long as 250 people are not present in any single space at the same time; and
 - ii. the use of enclosed spaces where 250 or more people may be present at different times during the day, so long as 250 or more people are not present in the space at the same time.

5. It is further ordered that all City of Denton utility shut offs for residential customers are suspended, even for nonpayment, during the pendency of this Order upon proof of income or job loss directly resulting from COVID-19.

6. The City Manager is given authority to expend up to \$50,000.00 as funding to the United Way of Denton County to assist individuals and families living in the City of Denton, who have experienced income or job loss directly resulting from COVID-19, in eviction avoidance.

7. This Order shall be effective until 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 20, 2020, or until it is either rescinded, superseded, or amended pursuant to applicable law.

8. Copies of this Order shall be promptly provided to the City Secretary for filing and posting on the City's website and in other conspicuous places.

IT IS SO ORDERED



Mayor Chris Watts
City of Denton



ORDER OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DENTON
DATE ISSUED: MARCH 17, 2020

Summary: The virus that causes 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is easily transmitted through person to person contact, especially in group settings, and it is essential that the spread of the virus be slowed to protect the ability of public and private health care providers to handle the influx of new patients and safeguard public health and safety. Because of the risk of the rapid spread of the virus, the need to protect the most vulnerable members of the community, this Order closes certain City buildings and limits non-essential services or uses. This order prohibits community gatherings of one hundred (100) persons or more within the City of Denton beginning at 12:01 a.m. on March 18, 2020, and continuing through 11:59 p.m. on April 30, 2020, as defined below. The City of Denton strongly recommends following the social distancing protocols promulgated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Additionally, the City of Denton urges all individuals to avoid gatherings of fifty (50) persons or more and high-risk individuals, as defined by the CDC, to cancel, reschedule, or not attend any gatherings during this time.

PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY IN SECTION 9-22 OF THE DENTON CODE OF ORDINANCES AND SECTION 416.108 OF THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, CITY OF DENTON COUNCIL HEREBY ORDERS:

1. Effective as of 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, March 18, 2020, and continuing until 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2020, public or private Community Gatherings (as defined in Section 4 below) are prohibited anywhere in the City of Denton.
2. The City of Denton strongly urges all individuals to avoid any gatherings of fifty (50) persons or more. Further, individuals in high-risk populations, as defined by the CDC should avoid all gatherings. These recommendations are based on the social distancing practices promulgated by the CDC as well as the "Implementation of Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission" issued by the CDC. The City of Denton urges people not to attend non-essential gatherings during the duration of this Order in order to help slow down the spread of the COVID-19 virus.
3. All non-essential court proceedings in Municipal Court No. 1 of the City of Denton are postponed. All such proceedings will be rescheduled following the term of this Order. No fine, penalty, or punishment shall issue against a party because of the postponement ordered herein. Municipal Court No. 1 shall continue to hear all proceedings deemed essential by the state Office of Court Administration, including search and arrest warrant requests, arraignments, criminal magistration proceedings, and requests for temporary restraining orders.
4. Definitions:
 - a. For purposes of this Order, a "Community Gathering" is any indoor or outdoor event or convening, subject to the exceptions and clarifications below, that brings together or is likely to bring together one hundred (100) or more persons at the same time in a single room or

EXHIBIT "C"

other single confined or enclosed space, such as an auditorium, theater, stadium (indoor or outdoor), arena or event center, meeting hall, conference center, large cafeteria, gymnasium, or any other confined space.

b. For purposes of clarity, a "Community Gathering" does not include the following so long as visitors are generally not within arm's length of one another for extended periods:

- i. spaces where persons may be in transit or waiting for transit, such as airports, bus stations, or terminals;
- ii. office space or residential buildings;
- iii. grocery stores, shopping malls, or other retail establishments where large numbers of people are present, but it is unusual for them to be within arm's length of one another for extended periods, though the City of Denton strongly urges said businesses to enforce social distancing of six (6) feet or more in line or queue areas;
- iv. hospitals, medical facilities, and shelters; and
- v. jails and detention facilities.

c. Specifically excluded from the definition of "Community Gathering" is the following:

- i. gathering of people in multiple, separate enclosed spaces in a single building, such as a multiplex movie theater, school, church, or office building, so long as 100 people are not present in any single space at the same time;
- ii. the use of enclosed spaces where 100 or more people may be present at different times during the day, so long as 100 or more people are not present in the space at the same time; and
- iii. places of employment not otherwise generally open to the public.

5. The City of Denton strongly urges restaurants and bars within the City to limit occupancy to fifty percent (50%) or less than permitted by the restaurant or bar's Certificate of Occupancy.

6. All City of Denton utility non-payment shut offs are suspended during the term of this Order.

7. The City Manager is given authority to expend up to \$50,000.00 as funding to the United Way of Denton County to assist individuals and families living in the City of Denton, who have experienced income or job loss directly resulting from COVID-19, in eviction avoidance.

8. This Order shall be effective until 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2020, or until it is either rescinded, superseded, or amended pursuant to applicable law.

9. Pursuant to Section 9-22 of the Code of Ordinances, the following measures are also hereby ordered:

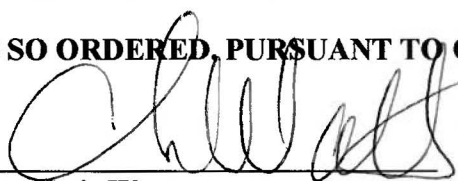
- a. All City Committee, Commission, and Board meetings are suspended through the term of this order, with the exception of the Planning and Zoning Commission, which shall meet only to consider applications subject to state law-imposed deadlines;

EXHIBIT "C"

- b. City Council meetings shall be rescheduled as posted and may be conducted in accordance with alternate measures as permitted by law;
- c. Only electronic purchasing submissions shall be accepted;
- d. No development applications, variance applications, certificate of appropriateness applications, or administrative appeals requiring approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Historic Landmark Commissions, or the City Council shall be accepted for the term of this Order;
- e. The City Manager or his designee is authorized to make application for local, state, and federal assistance as necessary and/or applicable;
- f. The City Manager or his designee is authorized to accept on behalf of the City services, gifts, grants, equipment, supplies, and/or materials whether from private, nonprofit, or government sources;
- g. The City Manager or his designee is authorized to terminate or suspend any event that is or may negatively impact the health, safety, and welfare of persons within the City; and
- h. The City Manager is authorized to approve individual purchases up to \$500,000.00 for general expenditures, which includes: fees, professional services, personal services, and other categories exempted from the bid process by the Local Government Code Section 252.022.

10. Copies of this Order shall be promptly provided to the City Secretary for filing and posting on the City's website and in other conspicuous places.

IT IS SO ORDERED, PURSUANT TO ORDINANCE NO. 20-721.



Mayor Chris Watts
City of Denton