



JOE RATHMELL
COUNTY JUDGE

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Dear Business Owner:

On October 8, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott issued Executive Order GA-32 to reopen certain venues to 75% capacity and allow resumption of elective surgeries in certain counties. Counties that reside in Trauma Service Areas (TSAs) with high COVID-19 hospitalizations are excluded from these reopenings.

Per the GA-32, areas with high hospitalizations means any Trauma Service Area that has had seven consecutive days in which the number of COVID-19 hospitalized patients as a percentage of total hospital capacity exceeds 15 percent. Zapata County is grouped in a TSA with Webb and Jim Hogg counties. The Commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services in Austin has informed me that our TSA has nearly exceeded the seven consecutive days of high hospitalizations, and it is expected to do so. Zapata County as a whole has also seen an increase in local cases.

Given this latest information, effective Friday, November 20, 2020, all Zapata County businesses must lower their occupancy from 75% to 50%. The Zapata County Commissioners Court is seeking the cooperation of local businesses to implement the necessary precautions regarding the potential spread of the COVID-19.

Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-32 does allow certain businesses to be excluded from the occupancy requirements. These businesses must maintain 6 feet of social distancing between work stations. Those include religious services, child care centers, private and public schools, hair salons, and nail salons.

The Zapata County Commissioners Court asks that residents continue to adhere to safe practices like social distancing, regular hand sanitizing, and the use of facial coverings. Based on the knowledge of the disease, COVID-19 is a virus that is spread from person-to-person, most frequently within 6 feet. This transmission occurs via respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

Occupancy will resume to 75% when our Trauma Service Area has seven consecutive days in which the number of COVID-19 hospitalized patients as a percentage of total hospital capacity is 15 percent or less.

Zapata County will continue to monitor any new developments that arise regarding the COVID-19. Together we can work to ensure these preventative measures will keep our community safe from any unnecessary exposure to the COVID-19. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Joseph Rathmell
Zapata County Judge