



Local Orders Already in Line with Governor's Executive Order

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(Nacogdoches, Texas) On April 17, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott issued Executive Order No. GA-16 to address reopening select services as the first step in statewide COVID-19 recovery efforts. The Governor's *Strike Force to Open Texas* aims "to safely and strategically restart and revitalize all aspects of the Lone Star State—work, school, entertainment, and culture."

One major component of the order allows non-essential retail services to resume business if their products can be provided through pickup, curbside, or delivery methods without the public entering the premises.

Nacogdoches County and the City of Nacogdoches issued a joint Stay Home, Stay Safe Order on April 7, 2020, which limited non-essential businesses and issued guidance on providing social distancing practices for essential businesses. However, in response to the State's order, the County and City will yield to statewide directives for retail businesses in regards to reopening at this time. The local information center will continue to answer questions for citizens and retail businesses at: 936-559-2510 or info@nactx.us.

"It is important we balance the safety of our citizens with the reopening of certain businesses," Mayor Shelley Brophy said. "The Governor's executive order affirms the actions our community has taken thus far. Knowing how difficult this time period has been on our community, we want to ensure we are limiting the economic impact to businesses while continuing to practice health safety precautions."

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) offers specific guidance for business owners and customers of reopened retail establishments, of which the County and City of Nacogdoches will uphold at the local level. This information can be found at [DSHS Guidance for Employers, Employees, and Customers of Reopened Retail Services](#).

"In enacting measures to keep employees and consumers healthy, we also recognized that it is important for businesses who are able to function, to do so in a safe manner," County Judge Greg Sowell said. "Retail operations and other non-essential businesses in Nacogdoches are

able to reopen, as long as they provide their products through delivery or pick-up. However, do not discount safety measures such as limiting trips and wearing masks when interacting with the public.”

The Governor’s executive order allows non-essential businesses across Texas to reopen April 24, 2020, while Nacogdoches businesses that are already utilizing these methods may continue their operations using pickup and delivery. At this time, the City and County will not issue new orders or amendments to the Stay Home, Stay Safe orders as the current orders will remain in effect. However, in compliance with the Governor’s directives with the exception of those listed in the state order. The full order can be found detailed here:

https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/press/EO-GA-16_Opening_Texas_COVID-19_FINAL_04-17-2020.pdf.

Although Nacogdoches is still seeing a rise in confirmed COVID-19 cases, the steady increase in the community is likely due to more aggressive testing, thus giving the county a higher confirmed case count than the surrounding areas are reporting. The testing center adapts screening protocols based on the positive cases they get back and utilizes this community-based information to broaden how one qualifies for a test.

Additionally, our local hospitals and the testing center are using mostly private labs which now have a 24-48hr result rate. Local officials feel strongly about the transparency of testing methods and providing the public with verified case count information.

The rise in confirmed cases is also due to a community spread in the area rather than travel related. Citizens are strongly encouraged to limit trips and wear cloth face coverings while safely supporting local businesses.

The best way to ensure numbers from growing at an alarming rate is to stay home and take personal responsibility for your role in preventing the spread. It is safe to presume everyone you are in contact with allegedly has the virus and to act as such by practicing social distancing and good hygiene.