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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Hunt County Judge

Date: 12/7/2020, 6:00 PM

Re: Business Occupancy Reduction Due to COVID-19 Hospital Numbers

On Saturday, December 5, the Texas Department of State Health Services e-mail the Hunt County Judge the attached letter. The letter was e-mailed to the County Judges of 19 counties in and around the DFW metro area, which are part of “Trauma Service Area E.” Because the number of COVID-19 hospitalizations as a percentage of total hospital capacity has exceeded 15% for seven consecutive days, important changes to business capacity have been triggered. Those changes are summarized in the attached DSHS letter and the attached Executive Orders (GA-31 and GA-32), and are effective immediately. These new restrictions will remain in effect until Trauma Service Area E experiences “seven consecutive days in which the number of COVID-19 hospitalized patients as a percentage of total hospital capacity is 15 percent or less.”

In summary, as of December 5, 2020, all restaurants, retail stores, office buildings, manufacturing facilities, gyms and exercise facilities and classes, museums, and libraries in all counties in Trauma Service Area E are required to return to maximum 50 percent occupancy levels until further notice. Other details may be found in the attached Executive Order GA-32.

Bars in Hunt County are also now closed under GA-32. Paragraph 7 of that Executive Order states that “Bars or similar establishments that hold a permit from the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC), and are not restaurants ... may offer on-premises services at up to 50 percent of the total listed occupancy ... [only if the bar] is not in an area with high hospitalizations.” Because Hunt County is now in an area with high hospitalizations, the state has administratively closed non-restaurant bars, and has contacted some or all of those establishments directly.

Additionally, all licensed hospitals in the Trauma Service Area are required to discontinue inpatient elective surgeries as set forth in Executive Order GA-31. The Health and Human Services Commission, the agency responsible for regulating hospitals in Texas, is separately providing notice directly to affected hospitals notifying them of the requirement to discontinue elective surgeries located in Trauma Service Area E.