

# *City of Beaumont*

## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 2020

CONTACT: MAYOR BECKY AMES  
(409) 880-3770

Please Refer to the Following Attachment:

“CITY OF BEAUMONT DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER DUE TO PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY”

**CITY OF BEAUMONT  
DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER  
DUE TO PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

**WHEREAS**, in December 2019, a novel respiratory disease named "SARS-CoV-2" that causes a disease named "coronavirus disease 2019" ("COVID-19") was detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China; and

**WHEREAS**, symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath that may result in mild to severe illness, and in some cases death; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization Director General declared the outbreak of COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern and advised countries to prepare for the containment, including active surveillance, early detection, isolation and case management, contact tracing, and prevention of onward spread of the disease; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 31, 2020, the U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, the identification of "community spread" cases of COVID-19 in the United States could potentially signal that transmission of the virus may no longer be limited to travel to outbreak areas or contact with travelers who have visited outbreak areas; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Center for Disease Control ("CDC"), it is likely that at some point, widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the United States will occur; and

**WHEREAS**, the CDC warns that widespread transmission of COVID-19 would translate into large numbers of people needing medical care at the same time; and

**WHEREAS**, the CDC is recommending no gathering with 50 people or more be held in the United States for the next eight (8) weeks; and

**WHEREAS**, the CDC also warns that schools, childcare centers, workplaces, and other places for mass gatherings may experience more absenteeism; public health and healthcare systems may become overloaded with elevated rates of hospitalizations and deaths; other critical infrastructure, such as law enforcement, emergency medical services, and transportation industry may also be affected; and health care providers and hospitals may be overwhelmed; and

**WHEREAS**, the Governor of the State of Texas on March 13, 2020 declared a state of disaster for all counties of Texas; and



**WHEREAS**, the Jefferson County Judge on March 13, 2020 issued emergency orders, as amended, regarding the occupancy of premises throughout Jefferson County; and

**WHEREAS**, given, among other things, including the CDC's guidance, there is an ongoing risk and likelihood of COVID-19-positive patients being identified in the City of Beaumont; and

**WHEREAS**, the City, local health agencies, and political subdivisions within the region have been working diligently to implement CDC guidelines, but now require additional tools and resources to protect the public health given the current state of the epidemic and the need for a sustained response; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the Texas Disaster Act of 1975, as amended, Texas Government Code, Chapter 418, (the "Texas Disaster Act"), the Mayor is designated as the Emergency Management Director of the City of Beaumont, and may exercise the powers granted to the Governor on an appropriate local scale; and

**WHEREAS**, a declaration of local disaster due to this public health emergency includes the ability to reduce the possibility of exposure to disease, control the risk, promote health, compel persons to undergo additional health measures that prevent or control the spread of disease, including isolation, surveillance, quarantine, or placement of persons under public health observation, including the provision of temporary housing or emergency shelters for persons misplaced or evacuated and request assistance from the Governor of state resources; and

**WHEREAS**, by this Declaration, I declare all rules and regulations that may inhibit or prevent prompt response to this threat suspended for the duration of the incident; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the authority granted to the Mayor under the Texas Disaster Act, I authorize the use of all available resources of state government and political subdivisions to assist in the City's response to this situation; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Beaumont, and the people and communities of the City have suffered or face imminent threat to the public health and the potential for loss of life and property resulting from a disaster: the introduction, transmission, or spread (or imminent threat of the same) of COVID-19 in the City of Beaumont; and

**WHEREAS**, I, the Mayor of the City of Beaumont have determined that emergency measures must be taken to either prepare for or respond to a disaster due to this public health emergency in order to respond quickly, to prevent and alleviate the suffering of people exposed to and those infected with the virus, as well as those that could potentially be infected or impacted by COVID-19, and to prevent or minimize the loss of life;



**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BEAUMONT, TEXAS:**

**Section 1. Declaration of Local State of Disaster.** That a local state of disaster and public health emergency is hereby declared for the City of Beaumont and incorporated areas pursuant to §418.108(a) of the Texas Disaster Act.

**Section 2. Duration of Local State of Disaster.** Pursuant to §418.108(b) of the Texas Disaster Act, the state of disaster and 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 City Council. A city council meeting will be held Monday, March 23, 2020 to consider extending the declaration.

**Section 3. Publicity and Filing.** Pursuant to §418.108(c) of the Texas Disaster Act, this declaration of a local state of disaster due to this public health emergency shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the City Beaumont clerk.

**Section 4. Activation of the City Emergency Management Plan.** Pursuant to §418.108(d) of the Texas Disaster Act, this declaration of a local state of disaster due to this public health emergency activates the City of Beaumont Emergency Management Plan.

**Section 5. Temporary Housing and Emergency Shelter.** Pursuant to §418.020(d) of the Texas Disaster Act, this declaration authorizes the City to: (1) temporarily or permanently acquire by lease, purchase, or other means sites required for temporary housing units or emergency shelters for disaster victims; and (2) enter into arrangements necessary to prepare or equip the sites for installation and use of temporary housing units or emergency shelters, including arrangements necessary for the transportation and purchase of temporary housing units or emergency shelters.

**Section 6.** Pursuant to **§122.006** of the **Texas Health and Safety Code**, the City is authorized to take any actions necessary to promote health and suppress disease, including quarantine, examining and regulating hospitals. The City of Beaumont hereby declares that those persons under investigation, persons under management, and quarantined persons remain within the confines of their homes or in safe, secure facilities during the quarantine period following their exposure to the virus.

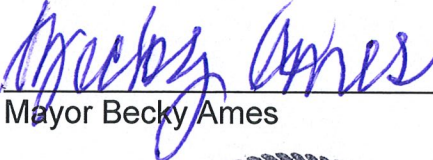
**Section 7. City Facilities.** In keeping with the directives of the CDC, effective March 17, 2020, the following city facilities will be closed: Civic Center, Julie Rogers Theatre, Jefferson Theatre, Lakeside Center, Sterling Pruitt Center, Community Centers, Athletic Complex, Tennis Center, and Municipal Court. The City Council will consider the closure at the council meeting held Monday, March 23, 2020 in City Council Chambers at 1:30 P.M.

The following city facilities will remain open to the public for normal operations. No special events will be scheduled: City Hall, City Libraries, Henry Homberg Golf Course, Municipal Transit, and City parks.

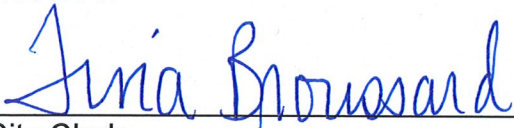
**Section 8. Community Gatherings.** It is recommended that any individual or organization with a planned or scheduled gathering with fifty (50) or more people is urged to cancel or postpone such events to assist in the effort to contain the covid-19 pandemic. This provision is not intended to interfere with the conducting of public or private education.

**Section 9.** This declaration shall take effect at midnight on the date of signing.

ORDERED this 16th day of March, 2020.

  
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Mayor Becky Ames

ATTEST:

  
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City Clerk

