



December 29, 2020

For Immediate Release:

On December 27, 2020, Guadalupe County received notice from the Texas Department of State Health Services that Trauma Service Area P, which includes Guadalupe County, now meets the definition of an area with a high COVID-19 hospitalization rate. The letter, signed by DSHS Commissioner John Hellerstedt, states that our area may not continue to operate at the higher levels allowable under Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-32 and that hospitals in our area may not conduct elective surgeries.

The Governor's Executive Order (GA-32), which went into effect on October 14, 2020, allowed bars to reopen and businesses to operate at 75% capacity, except in areas with high COVID-19 hospitalization rates. The Order defines areas with high hospitalizations as "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." Trauma Service Area P includes Guadalupe County, and the high hospitalization rate has triggered these specific restrictions (bar closures, reduced capacities, and postponement of elective surgeries).

According to the Governor's Order, effective immediately, businesses in Guadalupe County operating at 75% capacity must reduce their capacity to 50%, bars that are not operating as a restaurant under TABC rules must close. All hospitals must postpone elective surgeries. The 50% capacity order applies to retail establishments, restaurants, bars that are operating as restaurants, office buildings, manufacturers, museums, libraries, gyms, and fitness facilities and classes. Additionally, people shall not visit bars or similar establishments. Still, those businesses may continue to offer a drive-thru, pick up, or delivery options for food and drinks to the extent authorized by TABC.

There is no occupancy limit for the following:

- Any services listed as an Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce
- Religious services
- Local government operations, including county and municipal
- Governmental operations relating to licensing (including marriage licenses), permitting, recordation, and document-filing services, as determined by the local government
- Child-care services
- Youth camps, including all summer camps and other daytime and overnight camps for youths
- Recreational sports programs for youths and adults
- Any public or private schools and any public or private institutions of higher education
- Drive-in concerts, movies, or similar events

There is also no occupancy limit for the following establishments that operate with at least six feet of social distancing between workstations:

- Cosmetology salons, hair salons, barbershops, and nail salons/shops
- Massage establishments

- Other personal-care and beauty services such as tanning salons, tattoo studios, piercing studios, hair removal services, and hair loss treatment and growth services.

These additional restrictions will remain in place until Trauma Service Area P has seven consecutive days in which the number of COVID hospitalized patients is 15% or less.