



Aurelio Guerra, Jr.

Willacy County Judge

576 W. Main Ave, Room 152, Raymondville, Texas 78580

AMENDED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORDER INCLUDING MANDATORY FACIAL COVERINGS

ISSUED JUNE 18, 2020

WHEREAS, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 418.108, Willacy County Judge Aurelio Guerra declared a state of local disaster on March 19, 2020, due to imminent threat arising from COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 418.108(b), on March 23, 2020, the Willacy County Commissioners Court approved Willacy County Commissioners Court Order Extending Corona Virus/COVID-19 Disaster Declaration; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 418.108(b), the consent by Commissioners Court authorizes the Willacy County Judge Aurelio Guerra to continue to exercise the powers granted by the Texas Disaster Act of 1975 for the period specified in the order; and

WHEREAS, there currently still exists a declaration of public health disaster in and for the State of Texas as declared by Texas Governor Greg Abbott and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and by approval of the Willacy County Commissioners Court authorized the Willacy County Judge Aurelio Guerra to take such actions as are necessary in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Willacy County by the issuance of orders as necessary; and

WHEREAS, the transmission of COVID-19 has not dissipated but remains a significant threat to the health and safety of the Willacy County Community and rates of infection are increasing at an alarming exponential rate and the number of people ending up in the hospital, ICU, or on ventilators is also dramatically rising despite efforts by local authorities to control the spread; and

WHEREAS, the County Judge has determined that extraordinary emergency measures must

Email: aurelio.guerra@co.willacy.tx.us Phone: 956.689.3393 Fax 956.689.4817

Judges Administrative Assistant- Cassandra Cantu
Email: cassie.cantu@co.willacy.tx.us

be taken to try and mitigate the effects of this public health emergency and to facilitate a response to the public health threat; and

WHEREAS, a County Judge is authorized to control ingress to and egress from a disaster area and control the movement of persons and occupancy of premises on an appropriate local scale in accordance with Section 418.108(g) of the Texas Government Code and his authority as Emergency Management Director; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of this Amended Emergency Management Order to remain as consistent with and to harmonize, to the extent possible, the executive orders of Governor Greg Abbott and with the agreement of the Mayors of the Cities in Willacy County; and

WHEREAS, by the authority vested in me as Willacy County Judge Aurelio Guerra and as the Emergency Management Director for the County of Willacy to continue to protect the health and safety of the community and address developing and rapidly changing circumstances when presented by the current public health emergency, hereby rescind my previous Emergency Management Orders and any Supplemental Emergency Management Orders and issue this Amended Emergency Management Order including mandatory facial coverings in their place.

PURSUANT TO THE TEXAS DISASTER ACT OF 1975, WILLACY COUNTY JUDGE AURELIO GUERRA HEREBY ISSUES THIS AMENDED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

Effective as of 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, June 20, 2020, ("*Effective Date*"), and continuing thereafter, unless extended, modified or terminated early by Willacy County Judge Aurelio Guerra or as otherwise indicated below:

I. **Public Health Emergency.** That this Amended Emergency Management Order shall continue the local disaster declaration and public health emergency for Willacy County for the period specified in this Amended Emergency Management Order and shall incorporate and adopt the most recent executive order GA-26 issued by Governor Greg Abbott on June 3, 2020, and any subsequent orders by the Governor relating to the expanded opening of Texas in response to the COVID-19 disaster.

II. **Health and Safety Policy - Commercial Entities.** From the date of this Amended Emergency Management Order, all commercial entities in Willacy County providing goods or services directly to the public must develop and implement a health and safety policy ("*Health and Safety Policy*"). The Health and Safety Policy must require, at a minimum, that all employees or visitors to the commercial entity's business premises or other facilities wear face coverings when in an area or performing an activity which will necessarily involve close contact or proximity to co-workers or the public where six feet of separation is not feasible. The Health and Safety Policy

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required to be developed and implemented by this Amended Emergency Management Order may also include the implementation of other mitigating measures designed to control and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 such as temperature checks or health screenings. Commercial entities must post the Health and Safety Policy required by this Amended Emergency Management Order in a conspicuous location sufficient to provide notice to employees and visitors of all health and safety requirements. Failure to develop, implement, and ensure compliance with the Health and Safety Policy by employees and visitors within five (5) calendar days following the effective date of this Amended Emergency Management Order shall result in a fine not to exceed \$500 for each violation.

III. **Face Coverings - General Public.** That all people 10 years or older shall wear a face covering over their nose and mouth when in a public place where it is difficult to keep six feet away from other people or working in areas that involve close proximity with other coworkers. The CDC advises face coverings for people 2 years or older. Face coverings may include homemade masks, scarfs, bandanas, or a handkerchief. Willacy County residents should continue to maintain social distancing of at least six feet while outside their home. Willacy County employees are also required to wear face coverings under the same circumstances as the general public.

IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU NOT OBTAIN OR WEAR MEDICAL MASKS or N-95 RESPIRATORS AS THEY ARE A NEEDED RESOURCE FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS.

Our healthcare workers and first responders on the front-line combating COVID-19 must have priority access to medical masks or other personal protective equipment. Face coverings do not need to be worn in the following circumstances:

- When exercising outside or engaging in physical activity outside
- While driving alone or with passengers who are part of the same household as the driver
- When doing so poses a greater mental or physical health, safety, or security risk
- While pumping gas or operating outdoor equipment
- While in a building or activity that requires security surveillance or screening, for example, banks
- When consuming food or drink

Please note that face coverings are a secondary strategy to other mitigation efforts. **Face coverings are not a replacement for social distancing, frequent handwashing, and self-isolation when sick.** All people should follow CDC recommendations for how to wear and take off a mask. Residents should keep up the following habits while in public:

- washing hands before you leave home and when you return,

- staying at least six feet away from others,
- avoiding touching nose or face,
- not using disposable masks more than three times, and
- washing reusable cloth masks regularly to prevent the spread of the virus.


Consistent with Executive Order GA-26 issued by Governor Greg Abbott, no civil or criminal penalty will be imposed on individuals for failure to wear a face covering.

IV. Severability. The sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses and phrases of this Amended Emergency Management Order are severable and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Amended Emergency Management Order should be declared invalid by the final judgment or decree of any court or competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraph and sections that call be given effect without the invalid provision, and to this end, the provisions of this Amended Emergency Management Order are severable.

V. Interpretation and Additional Terms. To the greatest extent possible, this Amended Emergency Management Order shall be interpreted as consistent with and supplemental to any executive order issued by the Texas Governor. All provisions of the executive orders of the Texas Governor either existing or as, if and when issued, which are made applicable to all jurisdictions by law shall be automatically incorporated into and constitute terms of this Amended Emergency Management Order, enforceable as if set forth herein without necessity for the issuance of any further orders.

VI. Enforcement. Excepting Section III of this Amended Emergency Management Order and in accordance with the limitations contained in the executive orders of Governor Greg Abbott, that any peace officer or other person with lawful authority is hereby authorized to enforce the provisions of this Amended Emergency Management Order in accordance with the authority granted under the Texas Disaster Act of 1975 and the Willacy County Emergency Management Plan.

Issued this 18th day of June, 2020 at 4:15 p.m.



 Aurelio Guefra
 Willacy County Judge