



# COUNTY of GALVESTON

Criminal District Attorney

**JACK ROADY**

**Kevin Petroff**  
First Assistant

**Johnny J. Freeze**  
Chief Investigator

**Zonia Wilturner-Smith**  
Chief Executive Officer

April 1, 2020

RE: Enforcement of Governor's Executive Order GA 14 and Local Disaster Orders

Dear Emergency Management Coordinators and Law Enforcement Leaders:

Governor Abbot has issued Executive Order GA 14 which becomes effective at 12:01 am on April 2, 2020.

The Order contains a number of guidelines, recommendations and restrictions on conduct. Some conduct is strictly prohibited, while other conduct should be "avoided." The Order also includes a criminal enforcement provision, allowing for a fine of up to \$1,000 and a jail sentence of up to 180 days. Additionally, some local governments have enacted disaster-related orders creating similar penalties.

In light of the disaster-related efforts to manage the jail population by reducing arrests for low-level, non-violent offenses, these criminal penalties should be used only as a last resort. In terms of enforcement, it is recommended that law enforcement first issue verbal and/or written warnings, followed by issuance of a citation, and finally exercising discretion to make an arrest only after less restrictive options have proven unsuccessful. Therefore, officers must consult and get approval from an intake prosecutor before making any arrest for violation of a disaster-related order. The phone number for Intake is 409-789-2927.

Finally, officers are now encountering suspects who may be COVID-19 positive and may have questions about whether and how to detain someone based on this condition. If officers have any questions in this regard, please have them contact Assistant District Attorney Brent Haynes at 409-692-0604. He is on-call around the clock.

Be safe,

**Felony Section**  
Off: 409-766-2355

**Family Law Section**  
409-766-2364

**Grand Jury Section**  
409-766-2379

**Worthless Check Section**  
409-766-2429

**Felony Victim's Asst.**  
409-770-5124

**Houston Line**  
281-316-8300

**Fax: 409-766-2290**

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