



Dear Fellow Texans,

We are facing difficult times at the local, state, and federal levels as we combat the spread of the coronavirus. There have been job losses, reduced wages, and increased restrictions placed on our daily lives. **My first priority is ensuring the health and safety of my fellow Texans and stopping this virus so we can get back to our normal lives.**

The first steps we need to take are to be responsible and follow the guidance of the [Public Health Disaster Declaration](#) and the recent [Executive Orders](#) Gov. Abbott issued.

I want to assure you that my staff and I have been in constant communication with state and local officials. We are on conference calls with the Governor, Lt. Governor, the Texas Education Agency, the Health and Human Services Commission, and the Department of State Health Services to receive the latest updates. We are also passing on information to and from state agencies to ensure that the needs of Texans are met.

Our office and others are working hard at breaking down barriers, like when Gov. Abbott recently took action to expand the [nursing workforce](#). We expect more announcements like this in the near future.

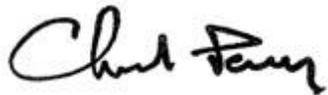
## 14 Essential Updates for Your Family or Business

- If you believe you have the [coronavirus](#), **DO NOT** first drive to your doctor's office or to the hospital. First call 211 or your healthcare provider to receive special instructions.
- If you are having trouble paying bills, affording food or have other needs that must be met you can call 211 or go to [211 Texas](#) or [FindHelp.org](#).
- If you have lost your job or even if you still have a job, but have reduced hours you may qualify for [unemployment insurance](#).

- The Small Business Administration Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program has been activated and Texas has received a statewide declaration. Businesses are encouraged to [apply online](#).
- Residential eviction proceedings have been [temporarily suspended](#) unless there is a threat of physical harm or criminal activity.
- Many broadband and telephone providers have taken a [Federal Communication Commission](#) pledge to not terminate services, waive late fees and to open up new wi-fi hotspots for residents for the next 60 days. New wi-fi hotspots will include rural areas so please stay tuned or call your service provider.
- Daycares are still open, but there may be restrictions. Many people, especially healthcare and first responders workers, need this service and the state and federal government are working towards more guidelines and opportunities for those who need daycare.
- TEA announced a collaboration with local schools on the [Texas Students MealFinder Map](#) which will allow parents to locate schools serving meals in their communities. This is a new service so be sure to [check back](#) if services are not in your area.
- Gov. Abbott has [temporarily waived](#) expiration dates for Driver Licenses, Commercial Driver Licenses, and other identification forms.
- It is illegal for price gouging to occur. Please [report to the Texas Attorney General](#) if you witness it happening.
- The federal government has passed [legislation](#) that will provide for paid sick leave and free corona testing. More [legislation](#) is being debated that may provide cash payments to citizens, defer student loan payments, and fee free loans.
- Tax Day has been moved from [April 15th to July 15th](#) for all individuals and businesses.
- TDEM would like to remind state agencies, local governmental entities, and non-profits to track COVID-19 expenditures and submit to the Disaster Summary Outline on the [TDEM website](#) for possible eligibility for assistance.

Information is changing daily, if not hourly. We are working hard to keep you updated and answer your questions. Please stay tuned for more information in the coming days. In addition, the Department of State Health Services has produced a [website](#) to access additional information on the virus, including numbers infected and tested.

For Texas,



Senator Charles Perry