



# Hays County News

## January 31, 2021

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Lower COVID-19 Hospitalizations Lead to Reinstating Capacity Rules per Governor's Orders

**Hays County Courthouse, San Marcos, TX** – Businesses can return to pre-January 8<sup>th</sup> capacity levels as hospital Trauma Service Area O, of which Hays County is a part, has remained under the 15% COVID-19 threshold for seven (7) consecutive days. Hays County Judge Ruben Becerra today received a letter from Dr. John Hellerstedt, Director of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), informing him of the situation.

Under the rules of Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-32, bars can reopen, elective surgeries can be scheduled, and businesses can increase their capacity to 75 percent. All information and exemptions in Executive Order GA-32 can be found on Governor Abbott's [website](#).

Judge Becerra said he is pleased to see the region's efforts to slow the spread of the virus are working.

"This is a positive step in the right direction," he said. "Everything we are doing right now, combined with rolling out the vaccine to everyone who wants it, will aid in the fight against COVID-19."

Regarding the Hays County implementation of the vaccine, he said sees, hears, and shares in the frustration felt in the community.

"With the current severe lack of vaccine supply, the tremendous demand makes dispensing the doses a huge disappointment," he said.

He added that Hays County officials continue to research, learn and consult with regional partners, including Austin Public Health, to get vaccines into as many people who want it as possible.

The Hays County Office of Emergency Services (OES) and the Hays County Local Health Department (HCLHD) are collaborating on creating a waiting list for anyone in the DSHS Phase 1A and Phase 1B groups.

OES Director Mike Jones cautioned that the system will still lead to frustrations since the County doesn't have many vaccine doses to dispense at this time.

“While no system is perfect,” he said, “our goal is to take care of Hays County residents in the most efficient and effective manner possible. Receiving less than 2,000 doses per week from DSHS is a frustration felt by everyone at the County and in our community.”

Any DSHS-designated vaccine hub must make the doses it receives available to anyone in Texas, not just the county in which the hub is located. Therefore, Jones said, people from all over the state are also trying to get into the vaccine clinics in this county.

“It’s an unfortunate situation for all of us,” he said.

Jones said once the waiting list set-up is finalized, the County will share the information on its website, [hayscountytexas.com](http://hayscountytexas.com), on its emergency information site [haysinformed.com](http://haysinformed.com) and on the County’s official social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter.

**To receive text alerts** about the COVID-19 vaccine, **text COVID** to 844-928-3213.

More information is also on the [Hays County COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ page](#). The County’s [COVID-19 information page](#) also has useful information for Hays County residents.

Additional vaccine information is available from the [Texas Department of State Health Services](#).

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