

TEXAS COMMISSION ON JAIL STANDARDS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MEMORANDUM

To: All Sheriffs and Jail Administrators
From: Brandon S. Wood, Executive Director
Date: February 28, 2020
RE: Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Please find below links that provide procedures and guidance for dealing with COVID-19. While some of the guidance directives are not oriented towards county jails, the information may be of assistance to your operations. I urge you to take all precautions and to assume that “it could happen here.”

In addition to adding a question about recent travel to your intake screening, the best advice all correctional facilities can follow is to consistently use standard precautions and practice good hand hygiene. At the end of the day, this is a respiratory virus and our current understanding is that it is transmitted similarly to the flu (i.e., through air droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes). Although not thought to be the primary way COVID-19 spreads, people may also get the disease by touching a contaminated surface or object and then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes. Currently there is no specific treatment or vaccine for COVID-19, but we know that many respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, can be prevented by practicing good hand hygiene and standard precautions. Below are some websites that staff can visit to learn more about COVID-19:

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) COVID-19 website

<https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 website

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

CDC Frequently Asked Questions & Answers regarding COVID-19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

CDC COVID-19 Information for Healthcare Workers

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/index.html>

CDC Resources for Health Departments Related to COVID-19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/index.html>

CDC Locations with Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/locations-confirmed-cases.html>