

Taylor County Judge
400 Oak Street
Suite 300
Abilene, TX 79602



325-674-1235 ph.
325-674-1365 fax
bollsd@taylorcountytexas.org

COUNTY OF TAYLOR
Abilene, Texas

Downing A. Bolls, Jr.
County Judge

February 3, 2021

Immediate Press Release: Taylor County has been released from High Hospitalizations

To Media Advisories:

STATEMENT REGARDING LIFTING OF STATUS
AS AREA OF HIGH HOSPITALIZATIONS

This afternoon, I was in receipt of a letter from Dr. John Hellerstedt, the Texas Commissioner of Health, notifying me that Trauma Center Service Area "D" is no longer an area of high hospitalizations. I am, in turn, notifying the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission of my intent to "opt-in" once again to allow bars and similar establishments to reopen at 50% of capacity. Other businesses to go back to operating at 75% of capacity. These are private businesses, some, however are governed by the state. Additionally, hospitals may resume elective surgeries.

My reaction to this change is simply this: While I am certainly encouraged by the progress we have made over the last week, but I caution that this encouragement is guarded at best. The public should remain vigilant and responsive to the threat that COVID-19 continues to pose to our County. This virus continues to spread through the community through personal contact with persons outside of the immediate household. Tracing has shown us that this exposure is occurring at schools, workplaces, and those gatherings with friend groups and family members outside of their own household.

The news about COVID-19 is getting better. Today, our COVID-19 patient hospitalization rate per total hospital capacity is back down into the single digits (9.28%). Keeping it there is everyone's responsibility and if citizens return to "life as normal" we will again be back to the restrictions we are now coming out of. The future really is in our hands, so collectively we should respond accordingly. Responsible people make responsible decisions. There are safety protocols in place and they should be followed. If not, this will prove to be just a temporary situation.

Next month will mark COVID-19s first appearance in Taylor County. It has already claimed 285 lives and that is 285 too many. Vaccinations are taking place as vaccine becomes available, but vaccine alone it will not prevent the need for continued personal caution. The virus is beginning to mutate into new variants. Stay vigilant. Stay safe, and stay informed. Wear masks responsibly, social distance by six feet, avoid gathering with people outside your household, wash your hands and disinfect often – and - stay home if you are sick!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Downing Bolls". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Downing Bolls
Taylor County Judge