

Taylor County
Courthouse
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

March 2, 2021

To: Media Advisories

Media Release: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**TAYLOR COUNTY JUDGE ISSUES STATEMENT REGARDING
GUBERNATORIAL EXECUTIVE ORDER GA-34 RELATING TO THE OPENING
OF TEXAS IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 DISASTER**

Texas Governor Greg Abbott today issued GA-34 which makes some significant changes to previous executive orders. **Effective at 12:01 a.m. on March 10, 2021**, in all counties not in an area of high hospitalizations, COVID-19-related operating limits for any business or other establishment will be lifted; and, no person may be required by any jurisdiction to wear or mandate the wearing of a face covering (although individuals are strongly encouraged to wearing face coverings over their nose and mouth wherever it is not feasible to social distance from persons not of the same household by six feet).

This announcement will come as welcomed news to many, but, for some, it will only lead to more confusion. On February 28, 2021, Taylor County recorded its 350th death due to COVID-19 complications. For the record, in the more than 11 months since the first confirmed COVID-19 death in our county, more than 51,576 tests have been administered of which 86.41 percent were negative; 13.59 percent were positive; and 94.15% of those who contracted COVID-19 have recovered. In Trauma Service Area "D", which includes Taylor County and the surrounding area, the rate of COVID-19 hospital patients as a percentage of total hospital capacity has dropped to 2.96 percent!

The Governor attributes this to the increase in Texans being voluntarily vaccinated, having natural immunity, improved treatment methods, abundant testing, use of personal protective equipment, and adherence to safety practices like social distancing, hand sanitizing, and use of face coverings.

It must be stressed, however, that COVID-19 is not gone and continues to be a threat, especially to those who are elderly, have chronic illness, or impaired immune systems. It should be stressed, therefore, that while his order lifts occupancy restrictions and ends mask mandates by the state, nothing in his order precludes businesses or other establishments from requiring employees or customers to follow additional hygiene measures, including the wearing of face coverings. You are strongly encouraged to use good-faith efforts and available resources for your protection. **Personal responsibility is still of paramount importance in attempting to prevent the spread of COVID-19.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Downing A. Bolls, Jr.", with a stylized, cursive script.

Downing A. Bolls, Jr.