



City of San Marcos

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NEWS

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City Clarifies Order Restrictions on Restaurants & Bars

Following yesterday's order by San Marcos Mayor Jane Hughson to prohibit public or private community gatherings of 10 persons or more anywhere within the city limits until April 1, 2020, the City is clarifying how the occupancy restrictions apply to the dining areas of restaurants and to the operation of bars with or without food service.

A FAQ document to address the questions that have been received from our valued local merchants will follow this release by end of day tomorrow and will also be available through the San Marcos Chamber of Commerce, Greater San Marcos Partnership and the Downtown Main Street Program. The Chamber will also be releasing a helpful video later today that will be shared on the City Hall Facebook Page and at www.sanmarcostx.gov/covid19info.

Eating Establishments:

Eating or food establishments are ordered to take measures to reduce occupancy levels to ensure that no more than 10 people occupy the same space or dining room at the same time, and are encouraged to provide take-away or no-contact delivery food service designed to limit exposure between individuals. Restaurants may continue to operate a dining area if they meet the 10 person limit at any one time, and may continue to serve alcohol to these patrons as allowed by their TABC permit.

Restaurants that operate one large open-style dining area may take steps to create multiple individual spaces seating up to 10 patrons within that room either by using physical barriers or by taking measures to create virtual individual spaces by removing tables between clusters. The space between these virtual dining rooms should be no less than six feet. Examples of physical barriers include partitions, plastic or cloth sheeting, or other similar objects. A restaurant with indoor and outdoor seating areas that are separated by a physical barrier could utilize both areas for up to 10 patrons in each.

An "Eating or Food Establishment" is defined as a facility that prepares and sells food and drink that may or may not include the sale of alcohol for on premise consumption. Eating establishments include the following uses:

- Brewpub
- Coffee or tea shop

- Restaurant, either sit down or fast-food
- Take out or pizza delivery facility
- Yogurt or ice cream shop.

Bar with No Food Service:

The holder of a mixed beverage permit for on-premise consumption, commonly known as a bar, that provides no food service is ordered to close common bar spaces open to the public and is prohibited from allowing consumption on the bar premises until April 1, 2020.

The new Order signed by the Mayor was effective as of 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 17, 2020, and continues for the next 15 days, until April 1, 2020, when it will be reevaluated. This order supercedes the original Order that was signed by the Mayor on March 16. The March 17 Order is attached to this press release for public review and is also available on the city's website at www.sanmarcostx.gov/covid19info.

This Order does not apply to the following facilities:

- Critical infrastructure, including airport facilities and operations, transit, and transit facilities;
- Government buildings providing essential services;
- Schools or institutions of higher learning;
- Grocery stores and pharmacies; and
- Hospitals and medical offices and facilities.

For purposes of this Order, "grocery stores" includes warehouse stores, big-box stores, bodegas, gas stations, and farmers' markets that sell food products and household staples.

During this period of social distancing and efforts to halt spread of the virus, the City reminds residents that it offers many online resources; a complete list of those with links are available at www.sanmarcostx.gov/remotebusiness. The public is encouraged to utilize phone and computer access to services whenever possible.

Contact your healthcare provider or the Hays County Local Health Department at **512.393.5520** if you are concerned that you have been exposed to COVID-19 or if you are experiencing symptoms. The Hays County Health Department has a monitoring protocol in place which will be explained to you if warranted. If you are experiencing symptoms, health professionals recommend calling ahead and consulting with your physician's office prior to arrival.

San Marcos will continue to follow the guidelines set forth by the State Department of Health Services, the Hays County Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control. Current updates and helpful links may be found at www.sanmarcostx.gov/covid19info.

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