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**NEWS
RELEASE**

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COVID-19 Update

City Moves into Phase III for Drive-Thru Specimen Collection

EL PASO, Texas—The City of El Paso Public Health Department is reporting **47** new COVID-19 cases bringing the county’s total number to **587**, the number of deaths remains at **nine (9)**.

Positive cases in El Paso County include 304 females and 283 males; see accompanying graphics and map. There are now 37 patients hospitalized, and 13 of those are currently in ICU.

City and County officials are still working to review the federal and state executive orders to finalize amendments to the local Stay Home, Work Safe Orders and emergency ordinances.

The City will be expanding its testing criteria at the drive-thru site to include testing for the general public that are presenting symptoms.

“We are moving into the third phase of our testing and are now able to test the general community who are showing COVID-19 symptoms such as fever, cough and shortness of breath, etc.” said Dr. Hector Ocaranza, El Paso City/County Health Authority. “The opportunity to expand testing will allow us to identify more COVID-19 positive cases in our community to isolate them and reduce the spread of the virus to others.”

The testing is free and a physician’s order or insurance is **not** required, however staff may still ask for orders and insurance as a part of the process. Qualifying individuals must not take any fever reducing medications prior to the appointment. If testing criteria is not met, the appointment and/or specimen collection at the site will be denied.

To make an appointment call (915) 212-0783 during operational hours of Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m.-5 p.m. The location of the collection specimen drive-thru site will be provided when the appointment is made. Instructions will be provided for those awaiting their results. Test results will be received between three (3) to seven (7) days.

For additional information about the third phase, please see the attached advisory. Additional information is available at EPStrong.org.

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