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Tommy Gonzalez

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**NEWS
RELEASE**

COVID-19 Update

04 / 28 / 2020

City, County to Amend Local Directive, Report Two Deaths

EL PASO, Texas — The City of El Paso Public Health Department is reporting **two (2)** additional COVID-19 deaths, bringing the total number of deaths to **14**. The female patient in her 70s and the male patient in his 50s both had underlying health conditions.

El Paso is also reporting **28** new COVID-19 cases bringing the county's total number to **857**. Positive cases in El Paso County include 454 females and 403 males; see accompanying graphics and map. There are now 32 patients who are hospitalized, and 19 of those hospitalized are currently in ICU.

"We once again are saddened to report two new deaths due to COVID-19, and our hearts go out to the families of these two individuals," said Dr. Hector Ocaranza, City/County Health Authority. "The public must understand that each person must take responsibility and take care of each other by staying home if possible, practice social distancing, washing their hands and wearing a face covering."

City and County officials are in the process of amending the current Local Emergency Directive in response to Governor Abbott's Executive Orders issued on April 27 calling to re-open the Texas economy. The amended directive will go into effect on Friday, May 1 at 12:01 a.m. and will incrementally start to re-open the economy.

"We will continue to address the public health needs of our community, while abiding by the Governor's latest Executive Order to re-open Texas," said Mayor Dee Margo. "This is an imperfect balancing act between our health and our economy. To re-open completely we must abide by social distancing, and stay home as much as possible."

The amended directive will include:

Stay Home, Work Safe Order Lifted May 1

- Consistent with state and national recommendations, El Pasoans are strongly urged to stay at home if they can, and continue to exercise social distancing, proper hygiene and use face coverings.
 - Social gatherings continue to be strongly discouraged.
 - People over the age of 65 or considered part of a vulnerable population are strongly encouraged to continue to remain at home and limit contact as much as possible with persons from outside their immediate household.
- Businesses
 - Essential businesses which have been operating will be allowed to continue to operate with the safety protocols already in place.
 - Retail-to-Go businesses which have been operating will be allowed to continue to operate with the safety protocols already in place.

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- Additional businesses, including restaurants, retail stores, malls and movie theaters, will be allowed to open with certain restrictions:
 - Operate at 25% total listed occupancy only.
 - Operate with the same safety protocols in place for essential businesses and Retail-to-Go businesses.
 - Face coverings are required for all employees while working at essential businesses, Retail-to-Go operations or the newly reopened businesses allowed to operate at 25% capacity.
- Golf courses and private tennis courts will be open and fishing will be allowed with safety protocols in place.
 - Tennis courts at private facilities may be utilized following the Local Health Authority's Order or guidance.
- City of El Paso parks will remain closed except for walking on designated walking paths.
 - Public park playgrounds, tennis courts and basketball courts will remain closed.
 - Playgrounds will remain closed.
- City of El Paso museums and libraries will remain closed.

The updated Directive once completed will be made available at www.epstrong.org under "Health Orders." Residents are encouraged to report non-compliance by calling 3-1-1.

The 21-COVID hotline is operational from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For referral to services, contact 2-1-1 and select option six (6). For more information, visit www.epstrong.org.

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