



**TEXAS**  
Health and Human  
Services

**Texas Department of State  
Health Services**



October 19, 2020

**John W. Hellerstedt, MD, Commissioner**  
**Texas Department of State Health Services**

# Emergence and Preparation

- **January 7:** Chinese authorities identified a new (novel) type of coronavirus
- **January 21:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed first case of novel coronavirus in the U.S. in Washington state
- **January 23:** DSHS launched the [www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/) website and prepared to launch #TexasDSHS social media campaigns
- **January 30:** Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Rapid Assessment Subcommittee met to discuss novel coronavirus issues
- **January 31:** DSHS activated the State Medical Operations Center (SMOC)

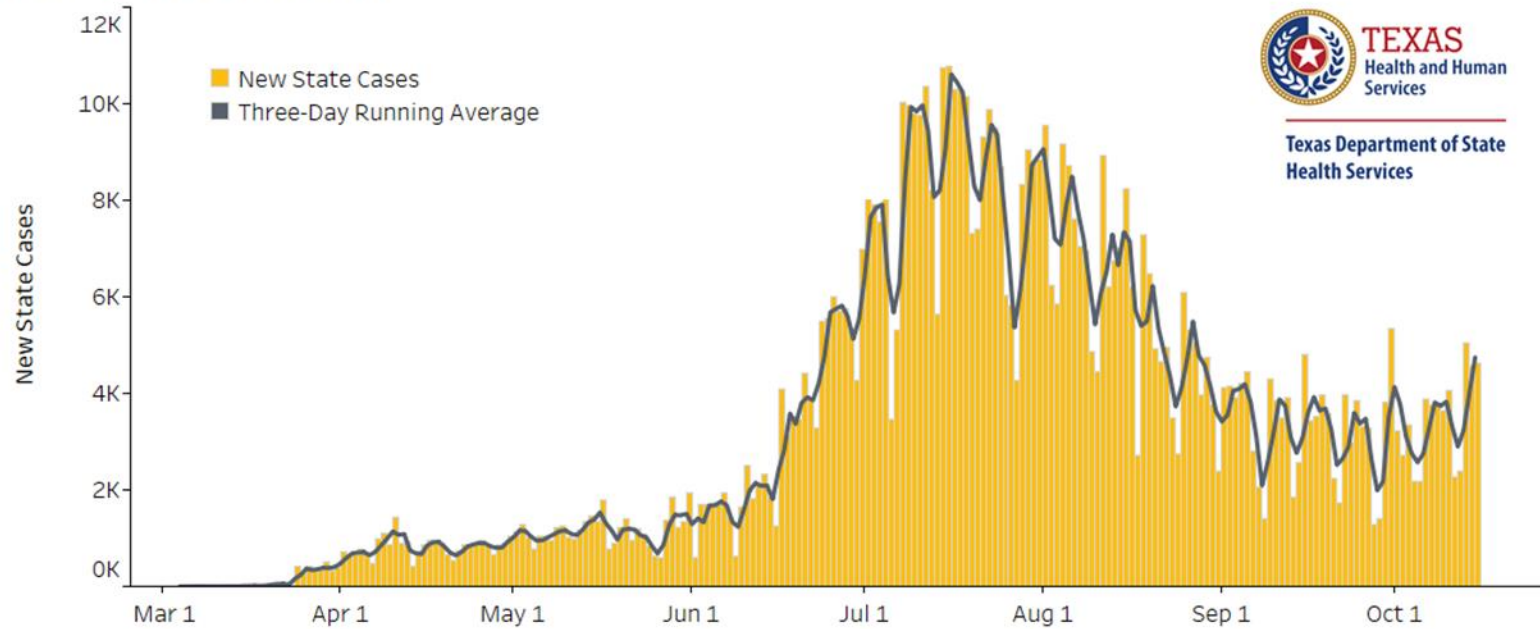
# Spread and Response

- **February 4:** Full Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response met to discuss novel coronavirus
- **February 11:** International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses named the novel coronavirus “severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2” (SARS-CoV-2) and the associated disease “COVID-19”
- **March 4:** DSHS announced the first positive test result for COVID-19 in Texas
- **March 13:** Governor Greg Abbott declared a State of Disaster for all Texas counties
  - Began issuing Executive Orders and Waivers to mitigate the crisis
  - Schools, businesses, other entities and activities shut down

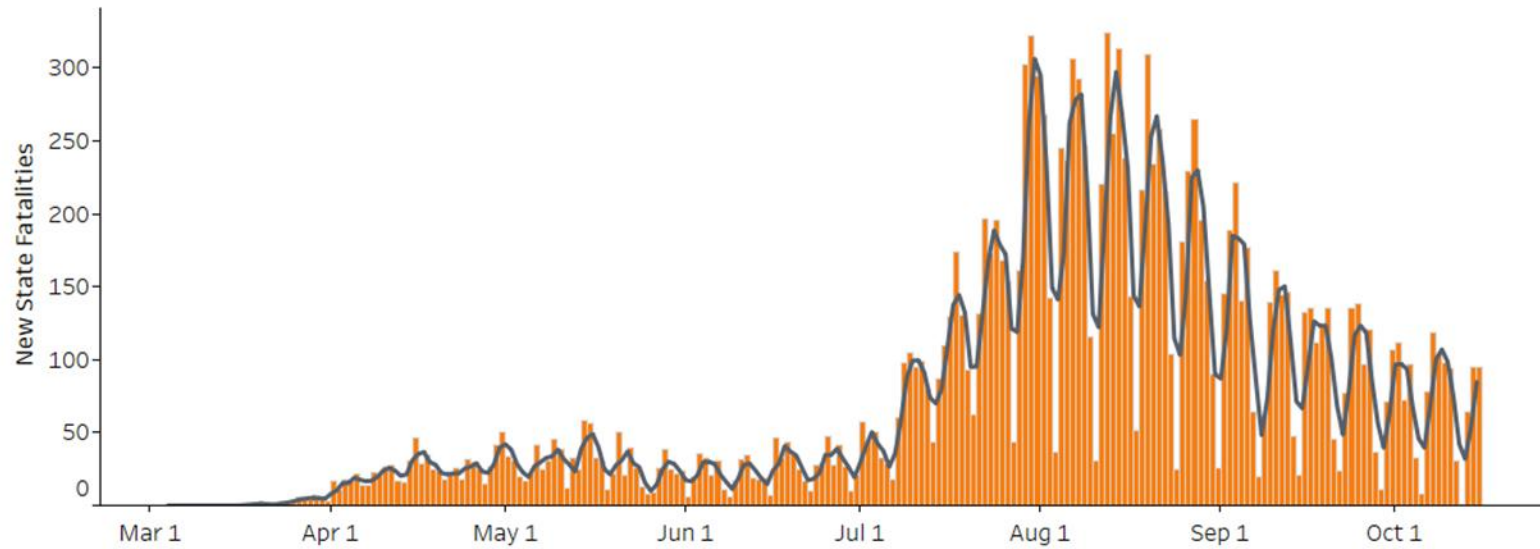
# Ongoing Challenge

- **March 17:** DSHS announced the first death of a person with lab-confirmed COVID-19
- **March 19:** DSHS Commissioner Hellerstedt declared a Public Health Disaster for Texas
- **March 26:** State Operations Center (SOC) integrated the SMOC and other state agencies into its Unified Command structure
- **March – May:** Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Rapid Assessment Subcommittee met to work on COVID-19 issues
- **October 15:** 809,808 confirmed COVID-19 cases reported in 252 counties of Texas with 16,812 fatalities

## New Texas Cases by Day



## New Texas Fatalities by Day



These preliminary data are current as of 1:00pm on 10/15/2020.

Note: As of July 27, DSHS is reporting COVID-19 fatality data based on death certificates. The metric used in these charts reports total newly reported fatalities (as opposed to the date of death).

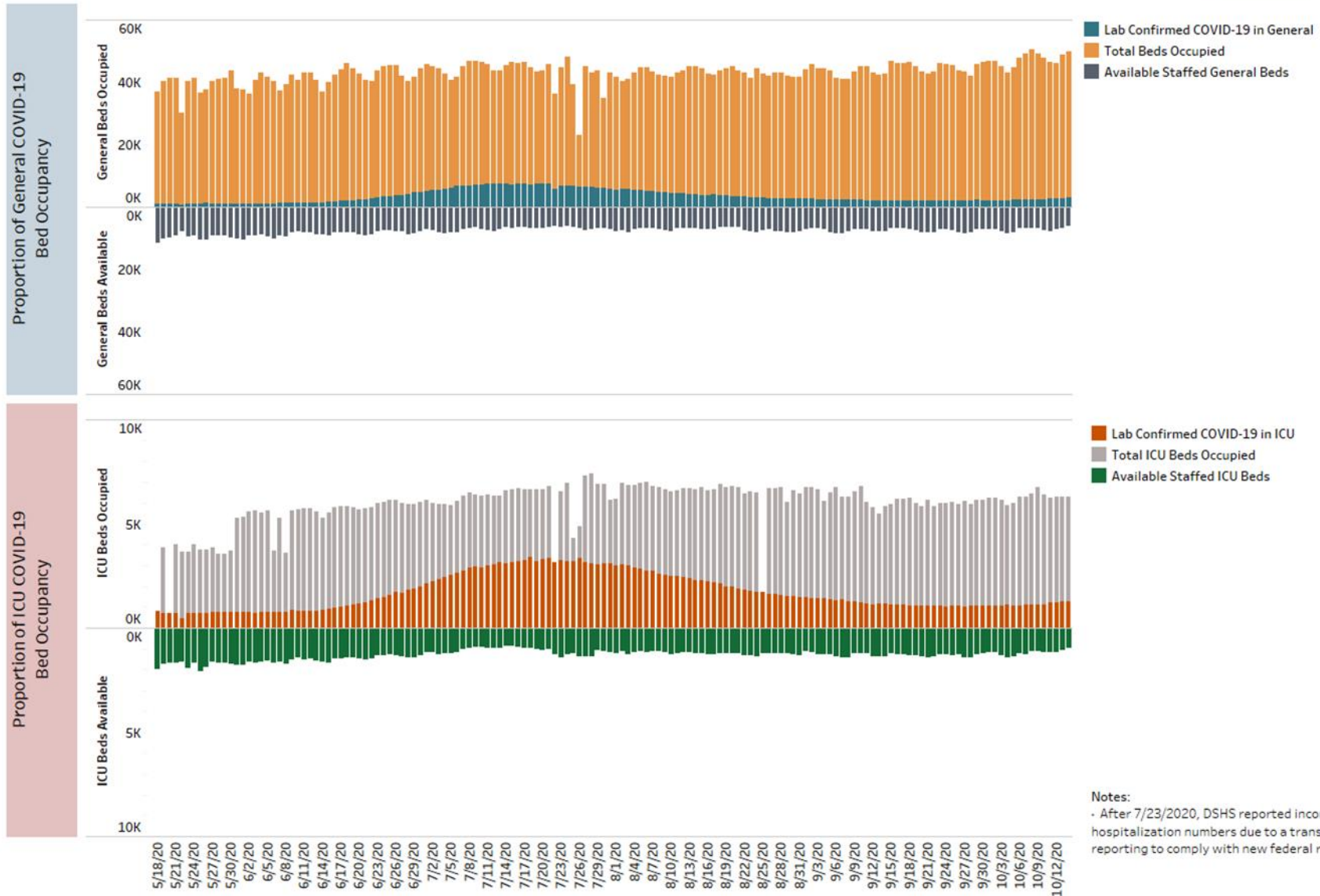


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# Hospitalizations Over Time

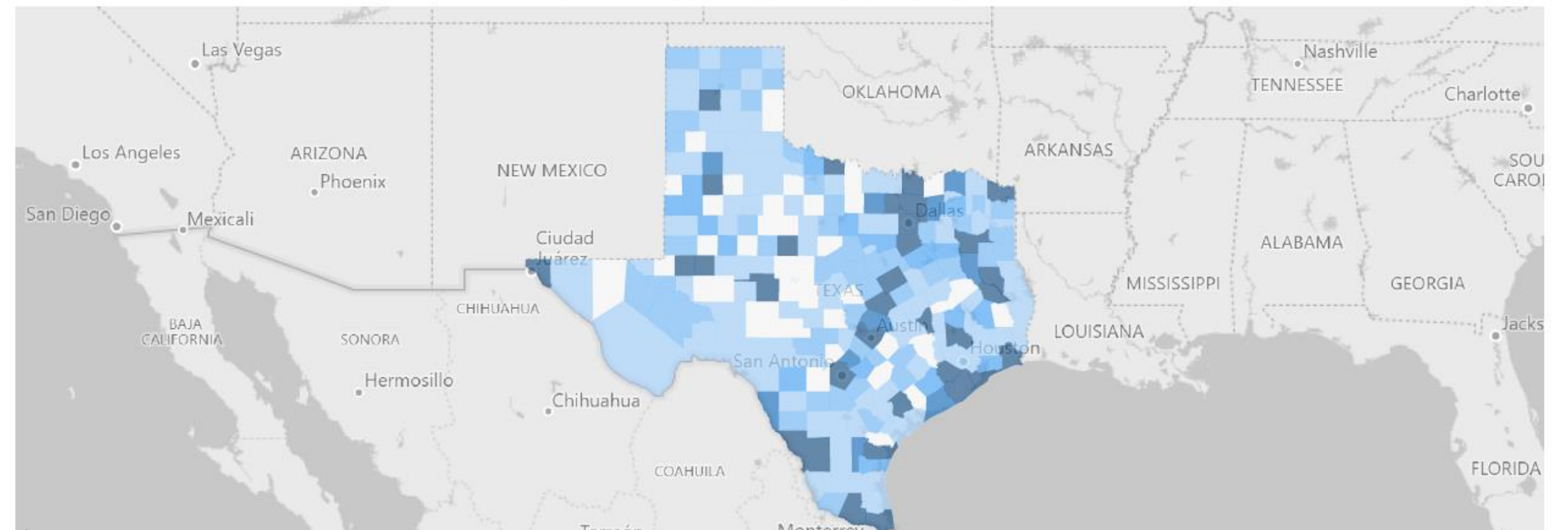
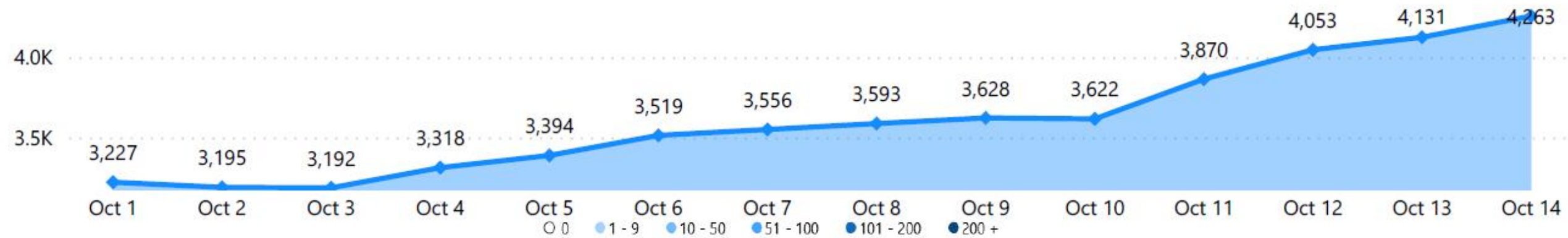
Total Texas Proportion of Lab-Confirmed COVID-19 Occupancy of General and ICU Beds out of Total Hospital Beds as of: Sunday, October 4, 2020



Notes:  
- After 7/23/2020, DSHS reported incomplete hospitalization numbers due to a transition in reporting to comply with new federal requirements.

These preliminary data are current as of 1:00pm on 10/15/2020.

# Total Lab Confirmed Patients in Hospital





# DSHS Roles during the Pandemic

- Coordination of local and state public health efforts
- Statewide management and provision of lab testing and capacity
- Data collection, analysis and reporting
- Health care system support and deployment of medical staffing to hospitals and nursing facilities
- Statewide public awareness
- Public Health guidance for individuals and businesses and consultation with local elected leaders
- Sourcing and consulting on medical supplies and personal protective equipment
- Developing the infrastructure to safely and appropriately disseminate vaccine

# Coexisting with COVID-19

- COVID-19 remains a real and present danger for everyone until a vaccine and effective medicines are available
  - Majority of Texans are still susceptible, situation always has potential to get worse
- Prevent virus transmission by modifying activities and incorporating new safety protocols into old routines
  - Observe infection control across all sectors for as long as it takes to control virus spread
- Reopen businesses and resume activities strictly following the minimum standard protocols and Executive Orders:  
[www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/opentexas](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/opentexas)
- Get vaccinated for influenza

# General Prevention Messages

- Use cloth face coverings in public
- Personal hygiene:
  - Wash hands, cover coughs, disinfect surfaces and objects
- Limit contact with others and avoid crowds in both indoor and outdoor spaces
  - Keep a physical distance of at least 6 feet apart
- Stay home as much as possible
  - Always stay home when sick
- People older than 65 and those with underlying health conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure are at especially high risk



**Wear a Face Covering  
Help Protect Texans**

Your face covering protects **others**  
Their face covering protects **you**

The Texas Department of State Health Services recommends Texans wear face coverings in public places to stop COVID-19 from spreading.

Those who cannot take off a face covering by themselves or have trouble breathing should not wear a face covering.

**COVID-19**  
CORONAVIRUS | EARLY 2020

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For updates and more information, visit [dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus](https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus)

# Thank you!



[www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus)

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