



Hidalgo County Health and Human Services Department

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Iván Meléndez, M.D., M.B.A.
Health Authority / Chief Physician

Eduardo Olivarez
Chief Administrative Officer

HIDALGO COUNTY LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITY ORDER **FOR ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL SYSTEMS RELATED TO ON-CAMPUS** **INSTRUCTION RE-OPENING**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 418.108, Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez issued a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency on March 17, 2020, due to the imminent threat arising from the Coronavirus (COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, on March 22, 2020, the Commissioners Court of Hidalgo County issued an Order of Continuance of Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 121 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, the County has appointed Dr. Ivan Melendez as the Hidalgo County Local Health Authority and pursuant to his appointment, has the authority to administer state and local laws relating to public health within the jurisdiction of the County of Hidalgo, Texas; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the authority of Section 81.082(a) of the of the Texas Health and Safety Code, and Title 25, Section 97.6(h) of the Texas Administrative Code, unless specifically preempted by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), the Local Health Authority has supervisory authority and control over the administration of communicable disease control measures within its jurisdiction, to include public or private schools systems, when in his opinion control measures are necessary to protect the public health; and

WHEREAS, the ongoing evaluation of circumstances regarding the Public Health Emergency related to COVID-19, now demonstrates a substantial and uncontrolled spread of the disease in the community, with a surge in the number of active positive cases, hospitalizations, and deaths;

NOW, THEREFORE, effective immediately and continuing until modified, rescinded, or superseded, The Hidalgo County Health Authority hereby imposes the following control measures on all public and private schools offering instruction to students in any and all grades pre-kindergarten through grade twelve (12) as follows:

- (1) All Public and Private School Systems in the County of Hidalgo, Texas offering instructions to students in any and all grades, pre-kindergarten through grade twelve (12) shall **NOT** re-open for on-campus instruction at schools until after **September 27, 2020**. Instruction may be provided through virtual, remote, or distance learning only.
- (2) Administrators, teachers, and operations staff may conduct or facilitate the remote learning process, or other operations, while on-campus provided applicable CDC guidelines including social distancing and facial coverings are followed at all times.
- (3) All school-sponsored events and activities, including but not limited to clubs, sports, fairs, exhibitions, and academic or athletic competitions, shall not take place until school systems resume on-campus instruction.
- (4) By or before the two weeks prior to school system opening for on-campus instruction, each school system shall develop a plan for re-opening on-campus instruction and activities and make such plan available for parents and the general public.

This Order shall remain in full force and effect, unless it is modified, extended, rescinded, or superseded, or amended by applicable law; the ongoing evaluation of circumstances regarding the Public Health Emergency related to COVID-19 in the County of Hidalgo, Texas; or preempted by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

If any subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Order, or any application of it to any school system, or circumstance related to this Order is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, then such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portions or applications of this Order.

This Order is issued under my authority as the Local Health Authority for the County of Hidalgo, Texas on this the 14th day of July, 2020.



Ivan Melendez, M.D.

Local Health Authority – County of Hidalgo, Texas