



# COMAL COUNTY

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## PUBLIC INFORMATION

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### **Comal County issues disaster declaration; first COVID-19 case confirmed**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, MARCH 18, 2020:**

*NEW BRAUNFELS* — In response to the rise of the novel coronavirus in Texas, a local disaster declaration has been issued for Comal County, which has confirmed its first positive case of COVID-19.

The declaration, signed by County Judge Sherman Krause at 9:26 a.m., is effective immediately and will remain in effect for seven days, pending action to extend it by Commissioners Court in a special meeting scheduled for 8:30 a.m. Tuesday.

“Declaring a disaster activates our emergency management plan and gives Comal County the tools to take further action as it becomes necessary,” Krause said.

Among the advantages provided by a disaster declaration are the ability to seek state and federal support as needed and to seek reimbursement for expenses incurred during the disaster, if and when those resources become available. It also formally activates the county’s emergency operations center and activates plans designed to maintain county services throughout the event.

In recent days, Comal County’s Office of Public Health has seen an increase in the number of tests submitted by health care providers to the state and private labs, with the one positive test received Wednesday morning.

The positive case is travel-related; the patient has been self-quarantined since their arrival in the community, and they have had no contact with other local members of the public.

Although the disaster declaration allows the county to issue emergency orders to protect the public health of the community, the county is encouraging residents to follow the guidelines regarding mass gatherings and social distancing published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The county will continue to provide updates as new information becomes available. The Office

of Public Health COVID-19 website, [www.comalcountytexas.com/covid19](http://www.comalcountytexas.com/covid19), is updated frequently with information from local, state and federal sources. It also includes an ongoing list of closures and other changes to operations in county offices.

Residents with questions or concerns about the novel coronavirus can call a dedicated hotline, 830-221-1120, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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