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Press Release**

**Hillsboro, TX** – The number of cases of COVID-19 in Hill County held steady over the weekend at 10 with some recoveries reported. Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is currently reporting 13,906 cases in Texas with 287 fatalities. In addition, DSHS is reporting 1,176 people in Texas are currently hospitalized with COVID-19, which is down from the 1,439 reported hospitalized on Friday. 2,269 patients in Texas are estimated to have recovered from the illness.

During a press conference held today, Texas Governor Greg Abbott described the numbers as “glimmers of hope with many red flags attached.” It appears the social distancing guidelines and stay-home orders are doing what they were designed to do by flattening the curve and slowing the spread of the Coronavirus. Governor Abbott also said later in the week he expects to make announcements about the status of schools in Texas and whether or not they will reopen for the remainder of this academic year and plans on how Texas will reopen for business when the time is right.

“Today’s numbers were some much-needed good news mixed in with the fact that the danger is still very real and present,” said Hill County Judge Justin Lewis. “Thankfully, the efforts we are putting into social distancing and staying home seem to be turning the tide in our favor, however, it is still premature to know for certain,” continued Lewis. “The only way we keep the numbers trending in the right direction is to stay the course and remain diligent in our efforts to protect ourselves, our loved ones, our frontline responders and our healthcare infrastructure.”

Other information from today says the Federal Government is beginning to release stimulus payments to individuals. The payments are beginning to be direct deposited into accounts this week for individuals who have information on file with the IRS, and those will continue over the coming weeks. If individuals do not have direct deposit information on file with the IRS, they can visit the website, at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and click on the box titled *Non-filers Enter Payment Info Here* to provide your information for direct deposit. The website also provides information on the stimulus payments.

Governor Abbott also announced a partnership between Goldman-Sachs and LiftFund, a community development financial institution, to provide additional funding sources for the Payment Protection Program being provided to assist small businesses through this time. For more information on available assistance, businesses should visit their website at [www.liftfund.com](http://www.liftfund.com).

This time of separation can be hard on our mental and emotional health, and The Heart of Texas Region MHMR has provided information on how individuals can seek assistance if they have concerns. You can call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 or text ‘TalkWithUs’ to 66746 for access to immediate counseling for anyone who is seeking help in coping with the mental or emotional effects caused by developments related to the coronavirus pandemic. The Helpline is a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week and free resource that responds to people who need crisis counseling and support in dealing with the traumatic effects of a natural or human caused disaster.

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The Helpline is sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Helpline specialists are trained to assist callers who have a range of symptoms. Other information and resources can be found at their website [www.hotrmhmr.org](http://www.hotrmhmr.org).

For the best information available on the spread of the Coronavirus across Texas, DSHS has a dashboard website available at <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>. People interested in monitoring updates from Hill County on the situation will find the most current information on the Hill County Emergency Management Facebook Page. The County will also provide regular updates to *KHBR 1560 AM Radio* and the *Hillsboro Reporter*.

In addition, the County has an emergency notification system. If you would like to receive phone call, text or email updates as warranted, you can register with the Hill County Emergency Notification System. Visit the Office of Emergency Management website at [www.hilloem.com](http://www.hilloem.com), scroll to the bottom of the home page and click on emergency alerts. Follow the prompts to set up your account.