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**Date: July 1, 2020 - For Immediate Release**  
**Press Release**

**Hillsboro, TX** – Hill County has added 4 new cases of COVID-19 overnight and now has 44 active cases out of 70 confirmed positive cases since tracking by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) began in February. Two of the new cases are located in Hillsboro, 1 is in Whitney and 1 in Blum. Statewide there have been 168,062 confirmed cases in the State of Texas, and 78,025 of those are estimated to be active at this time. Reported fatalities stand at 2,481 and DSHS is currently reporting 6,904 individuals in Texas hospitals as a result of COVID-19.

“This continual climb in cases can be intimidating, but as we said from the beginning, an increase was expected as Texas reopened,” said Hill County Judge Justin Lewis. “However, the concern is the pace at which the increase is occurring. If you are following the statewide news, you know that many of our largest hospitals have maxed out their intensive care unit occupancies, and those numbers continue to filter down as more people are being hospitalized in our region, too.”

“So, it is incumbent on each of us to do all we can to protect ourselves and our neighbors to keep as many of us out of the hospital as possible,” continued Lewis. “As we approach the Fourth of July weekend, our freedoms as Americans are at the forefront of our minds, and while we are blessed to live in one of the most non-restrictive environments, it can only stay that way if we take action to protect those freedoms. Right now, wearing a mask when you are out in public is the most important step you can take to help us from going back under a stay-home order. It’s your choice, but please take that step to help protect one another. I cannot emphasize how important it is,” finished Lewis.

For complete information on Governor Abbott’s executive orders, please visit <https://gov.texas.gov> . In addition to checking with local news outlets on the requirements in a specific region, please review information on the guidelines to follow as business operations and recreational activities reopen at <https://open.texas.gov/>

Information on the spread of the Coronavirus across Texas is available at the DSHS dashboard website, <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>. To monitor updates from Hill County, the most current information will be provided on the Hill County Emergency Management Facebook Page and *KHBR 1560 AM Radio* and the *Hillsboro Reporter*.