



Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

Richard F. Cortez
County Judge

David L. Fuentes
Commissioner, Precinct 1

Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu
Commissioner, Precinct 2

Joe M. Flores
Commissioner, Precinct 3

Ellie Torres
Commissioner, Precinct 4

OFFICE OF COUNTY JUDGE RICHARD F. CORTEZ

Public Affairs Division

100 E. Cano St., 1st Floor
(956) 292-7026 P
(956) 292-7766 F
www.co.hidalgo.tx.us W
Public.Info@co.hidalgo.tx.us E

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Saturday, March 21, 2020

First Case of COVID-19 in Hidalgo County is Confirmed

EDINBURG –Hidalgo County has its first case of a person testing positive for COVID-19, Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez announced Saturday night.

Hidalgo County health officials were immediately alerted to the positive test and, in turn, alerted Judge Cortez. The person's name has not been released because of federal privacy laws, Judge Cortez said. The person lives in the McAllen area of Hidalgo County and local authorities in that area have also been alerted.

Health officials have ordered the person into home isolation and have begun the process of retracing the person's whereabouts over the past several weeks to determine who else has been in contact with the person.

"We knew this day was coming and we are prepared," Judge Cortez said.

Under emergency protocol, Judge Cortez ordered the Hidalgo County Division of Emergency Management to go into a Level 1 Operational status, the county's highest.

Anticipating that someone would contract the coronavirus in Hidalgo County, Judge Cortez declared a state of disaster on March 17 and ordered no mass gatherings in the county as of that date. Two days later, he ordered that all restaurants, bars and private clubs stop any in-dining service and that gatherings be limited to no more than 10 people.

An Emergency Operation Center has already been activated where county health, law enforcement and emergency management officials are working in concert from a single command center to mitigate the spread of the disease and provide essential services related to any collateral effects from the global pandemic.

"This is a highly contagious disease and residents should not be surprised — or alarmed — that others in Hidalgo County will likely contract the virus," Judge Cortez said. "The best thing you can do is stay home."

Because of the ban on gatherings, there will not be an immediate press conference. Please direct any additional questions to Carlos Sanchez at carlos.sanchez@co.hidalgo.tx.us.

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Hidalgo County is home to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. We provide health and justice to the over 800,000 residents of our county. We strive to be accessible and responsive to our citizens by providing excellent public service through the values of leadership, transparency, fairness, collaboration, respect and fiscal responsibility. Follow our social media feed at www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/followus