



Crestline
SOLUTIONS

COVID-19: Texas Update

April 28, 2020

1. Texas reopens more businesses ...

Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued several Executive Orders to begin what he said was [Phase I of reopening Texas](#).

- **Phase I:** It includes opening [retail](#), but limiting foot traffic to 25% of occupancy. This includes restaurants, malls, theaters, museums and libraries ... but not salons, bars, or gyms. Phase I begins May 1.
- **Phase II:** The Governor stopped short of giving a definitive date for beginning Phase II, but said it could come as early as May 18, and would depend on trends in new cases, fatalities, and hospitalizations. At a minimum it would include opening the businesses above to 50% occupancy.

Governor Abbott also continued to loosen restrictions on the healthcare industry ... where elective procedures had been put on hold ... licensed hospitals may now conduct such procedures so long as they reserve 15% of their capacity for treatment of COVID-19 patients.

The Governor also released [“Texans Helping Texans: The Governor’s Report to Open Texas”](#) ... the report provides special guidance for Texans over 65, guidelines for all Texans to adhere to for protecting themselves and others, a mitigation plan for long-term care facilities, an overview of the steps the State is taking to increase testing, and its newly implemented contact tracing program.

The full press release from the announcement is [here](#).

2. President Trump updates testing program ...

President Trump announced yesterday an [update to the CDC's testing program](#). The primary thrust of the update is to provide states with sufficient tests to test 2% of its population ... which is considered by the CDC guidelines to be a floor for reopening a state ...

The new push would double the number of tests done so far in the United States.

While the federal government will be providing the kits (i.e., swabs and test kits) ... states will be administering the tests and can decide to test more than 2% of the population.

The [CDC has expanded its list of symptoms](#) to include chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell ... signifying just how different the manifestations of the disease can be.

As Congress starts to look towards the next round of stimulus, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has said the next package may include [relief for state and local governments](#) ... but only if limits on the liability of business owners and healthcare workers are also included ... aid for state and local governments had been a point of dispute between McConnell and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Meanwhile, the replenished PPP program ran into problems when the SBA [website crashed](#) as it reopened yesterday ...

3. Other tidbits ...

A possible [vaccine is going to trial in England](#) ... the plan is to test the vaccine in 6,000 people by the end of May ... if effective, early doses could be available as soon as September.

In his Executive Orders, Governor Abbott [overrode mandates to wear masks](#) like the one in Harris County ... while encouraging people to wear masks in public.

New York State [canceled its June democratic primary](#) ... calling it a “beauty contest” at this point ... Bernie Sanders was critical of the decision.

That is all today.