



## **DECLARATION OF DISASTER**

### **ORDER OF CITY OF COLUMBUS MAYOR LORI AN GOBERT**

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Governor Abbott issued a disaster proclamation certifying under Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code that the novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”) poses an imminent threat of disaster for all counties in the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Commissioner of State Health Services declared a Public Health Disaster for the entire State of Texas on Thursday, March 19, 2020 and outlined certain control measures and mitigation strategies; and

WHEREAS, the transmission of COVID-19 has not dissipated and remains a significant threat to the health and safety of the citizens of the City of Columbus as rates of infection are increasing at an exponential rate and the number of people being admitted to the hospital, ICU, or put on a ventilator is also rising despite efforts to control the spread; and

WHEREAS, on June 3, 2020, Governor Abbott issued Executive Order GA-26 relating to the expanded opening of Texas in response to the COVID-19 disaster; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor has determined that extraordinary measures must be taken to contain COVID-19 and prevent its spread throughout City of Columbus; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of this Order to remain as consistent with and to harmonize with, to the extent possible, the executive orders of Governor Abbott;

NOW, THEREFORE, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY GIVEN MY BY § 418.108 OF THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNOR ABBOTT’S EXECUTIVE ORDER GA-26, BE IT ORDERED BY LORI AN GOBERT, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS THAT EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:



1. A local state of disaster for public health emergency is hereby declared for the City of Columbus, Texas, pursuant to Section 418.108(a) of the Texas Government Code.
2. All commercial entities in the City of Columbus providing goods or services directly to the public must develop and implement a health and safety policy (“Health and Safety Policy”). The Health and Safety Policy must require, at a minimum, that all employees or visitors to the commercial entity’s business premises or other facilities wear face coverings when in an area or performing an activity which will necessarily involve close contact or proximity to co-workers or the public where six feet of separation is not feasible. The Health and Safety Policy required to be developed and implemented by this Order may also include the implementation of other mitigating measures designed to control and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 such as temperature checks or health screenings. Commercial entities must post the Health and Safety Policy required by this Order in conspicuous locations sufficient to provide notice to employees and visitors of all health and safety requirements.
3. All people 10 years or older shall wear a face covering over their nose and mouth when in a public place where it is difficult to keep six feet away from other people or working in areas that involve close proximity with other coworkers. The CDC advises face coverings for people 2 years or older. Face coverings may include homemade masks, scarfs, bandanas, or a handkerchief. City of Columbus citizens should continue to maintain social distancing of at least six feet while outside their homes. Consistent with Executive Order GA-26 issued by Governor Abbot, no civil or criminal penalty will be imposed on individuals for failure to wear a face covering.
4. The sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses and phrases of this Order are severable and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Order shall be declared invalid by the final judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections that can be given effect without the invalid provision, and to this end, the provisions of this Order are severable.
5. To the greatest extent possible, this Order shall be interpreted as consistent with and supplemental to any executive order issued by the Governor of Texas. All provisions of the Governor’s executive orders either currently existing or if and when issued, which are made



applicable to all jurisdictions by law, shall be automatically incorporated into and constitute terms of this Order, and be enforceable as if set forth herein without the necessity of the issuance of any further orders.

6. Excepting Section 3 of this Order and in accordance with the limitations contained in the executive orders of Governor Abbott, any peace officer or other person with lawful authority is hereby authorized to enforce the provisions of this Order in accordance with the authority granted under Chapter 418 of the Texas Government Code.
7. This Order will continue until rescinded in accordance with the above cited statute, but in no instance will this Order continue for more than seven days without being authorized by the City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas.

ORDERED this 19<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lori An Gobert". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Lori An Gobert, Mayor  
City of Columbus