



OFFICE OF TRAVIS COUNTY JUDGE SAMUEL T. BISCOE

June 29, 2020

Dear Judges/Dear Mayors and City Managers/Superintendents,

Allow me this opportunity to update you on our current situation. We are now approaching or have surpassed 70% capacity in our regional hospital system. Austin Travis County Public Health is preparing an Alternative Care Site. Because of rapidly increasing demand for testing, our Public Health and Community Care testing are now being rationed to only those with symptoms (not the asymptomatic or those who have come in contact with confirmed COVID + patients). The increased numbers of tests have caused a commensurate increase in demand for analysis. CPL (our largest lab) has rationed analysis to only those tests coming from the hospitals for severely ill patients in order to reduce turn-around time. Our numbers of confirmed positives and the lag time between the testing and the test results have either outstripped both our ability to contact trace and the utility in contact tracing. In summary, the rapid increase in cases has outstripped our ability to track, measure, and mitigate the spread of disease.

For these reasons, I suggest all local governments cancel publicly sponsored events and close public spaces in advance of the 4th of July weekend in order to discourage social gatherings and therefore discourage spread of COVID-19. We simply cannot afford missteps at this stage which could exacerbate the risk of overwhelming our healthcare system.

My deepest regret in bringing this news to our partnership. Please share what adaptations you may be making to find new ways to serve and celebrate with your constituents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Samuel T. Biscoe".

Samuel T. Biscoe
Travis County Judge