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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DeWitt County reports six new cases of COVID-19

County health officials are reporting six new cases of coronavirus. All of the individuals are isolated and recovering at home in various locations around the county. The county will no longer release demographic information that might lead to the identification of a person infected with the coronavirus.

A total of 56 cases have been diagnosed in DeWitt County since Governor Greg Abbott declared a state of emergency on March 13, 2020. Twenty-six individuals, including these diagnosed cases, are isolating at home. Three are considered inpatients of medical facilities in Victoria. Twenty-six have recovered. One death in the county is attributed to COVID-19 infection of an individual with a comorbidity.

Throughout DSHS Region 8 which covers 28 counties east and west of San Antonio and includes an estimated population of 3.1 million people, a total of 10,914 cases have been confirmed since tracking began. More than 4,600 of the individuals diagnosed with the coronavirus have recovered. DSHS Region 8 is tracking 609 additional cases that are pending an investigation into the cause of infection. The agency also categorizes "probable" infections. Those numbers are not included in this publication. The agency reports 142 deaths of COVID-19 infected patients in the region, but does not distinguish whether the individuals had comorbidities.

More than 70 percent of the confirmed cases are located in Bexar County where the county judge has issued an executive order requiring retail business employees and customers to wear face masks when social distancing is not possible.

In an effort to slow the spread of this infectious disease, Texas Governor Greg Abbott has issued Executive Orders during this period of emergency. In EO GA-14 he directs citizens to "stay home" and "stay safe." More recent Executive Orders are directed at reopening the Texas economy in a safe and deliberate manner. On Friday, Governor Abbott may amend previous orders in an attempt to slow the progression of the coronavirus.

Individuals may be exposed to COVID-19 and be infectious even when no symptoms are present. If you believe you have been exposed, monitor yourself closely for symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, and shortness of breath for 14 days after the exposure. If you experience any of these symptoms and do not need urgent medical attention, isolate at home and contact your healthcare provider.

If an individual knows they have been exposed, they should not go to work. If a fever and cough are present, they should isolate themselves from others at home and monitor symptoms.

Minimizing exposure is especially important for people who are 65 or older or who have an underlying health condition like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or cancer. People in those groups have a higher risk of developing severe complications if they do get COVID-19, and the safest thing for them during an outbreak will be to stay home as much as possible and minimize close contact with other people. To get ready, they should talk to their doctor about getting additional prescription medications and have enough household items and groceries on hand to stay home as needed.

The judge and emergency management personnel are communicating daily with state officials and regional leaders about the spread of the COVID-19 virus and referring callers to the official websites of the Centers for Disease Control and the Texas Department of State Health Services. These websites are great resources for the general public according to Judge Fowler.

The public can find up-to-date coronavirus information at the Texas Department for State Health Services dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus and the Centers for Disease Control at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus> and DeWitt County at www.co.dewitt.tx.us and on the Facebook Page of DeWitt County Office of Emergency Management.

The governor's office is also providing information and links to the Executive Orders through the website www.governor.texas.gov

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