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## Update from Waco-McLennan County EOC As of April 9<sup>th</sup> at 4pm

This is a coordinated collection of information the public needs to know from various City of Waco departments and other local providers during the COVID-19 Coronavirus response.

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### **\* Pranks Spreading On Social Media\***

It has come to the attention of the EOC that “pranks” are spreading on social media where people intentionally cough on other persons in public or initiate other communication with the intent to place the person in fear of becoming infected with COVID-19. The EOC has received information that actions similar to these have taken place within McLennan County.

The aforementioned actions constitute criminal conduct. If someone is found to be intentionally coughing on others or initiating other communication with the intent to place someone in fear of being infected with COVID-19 the actor can be arrested and charged with several different offense. The actor could face criminal charges of Terroristic Threat, Harassment, and/or Violation of Emergency Management Plan. The criminal penalty for these offenses can include fines up to \$2,000 and 180 in jail.

The law enforcement agencies in McLennan County are aware of these offenses and in conjunction with the McLennan County Criminal District Attorney’s Office will arrest and prosecute individuals who are trying to instill undo fear and panic to the good citizens of McLennan County.

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### **\* Guidance for Cloth Masks \***

CDC has issued new guidance for wearing cloth masks. Under the new guidance, the CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. The use of a mask does not mean that social distancing no longer applies. This is a voluntary public health measure.

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**Wearing a mask of any type does not provide full protection from the virus. It's an additional step to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others.**

**If you decide to wear a mask of any type, you must continue following social distancing standards. Only go out in public for essential needs. When you do go out in public you should keep at least 6 feet away from other people. Don't touch your face. Wash your hands often to remove any germs. The best way to protect yourself from Covid-19 is to not be exposed to the virus and stay home.**

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