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**COUNTY OF TAYLOR**  
Abilene, Texas

Downing A. Bolls, Jr.  
County Judge

December 8, 2020

To: Media Advisories

Media Release: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**STATEMENT FROM TAYLOR COUNTY JUDGE DOWNING BOLLS  
REGARDING THE COVID-19 OPERATION OF BARS AND SIMILAR  
ESTABLISHMENTS**

On October 7, 2020, Governor Abbott issued Executive Order GA-32, which updated the thresholds for areas with high hospitalizations. That order took effect on October 14, 2020 and granted bars and similar establishments that hold a permit from the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission the option of offering on-premises services at up to 50 percent of their total occupancy, *if*.

- a) The bar or similar establishment is not in an area with high hospitalizations and the county judge of the county in which the bar or similar establishment is located files the requisite form with the TABC.

An area of high hospitalizations is defined as “Any Trauma Service Area that has had seven consecutive days in which the number of COVID-19 hospitalized patients as a percentage of total hospital capacity exceeds 15 percent, until such time as the Trauma Service Area has seven consecutive days in which the number of COVID-19 hospitalized patients as a percentage of total hospital capacity is 15 percent or less.”

Seven days ago, the number of COVID-19 hospitalized patients as a percentage of total hospital capacity rose above 15 percent and it has remained over 15 percent since that time.

At 3:34 p.m. this afternoon, we were sent the following notification:

*The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) notified TABC that your county is included in a Trauma Service Area (TSA) that now has high hospitalizations as defined by the current executive order. You previously filed a certification form with TABC to indicate that you opted to open bars and similar establishments in your county. Because you are now located within a high hospitalization TSA, bars and similar establishments in your county may remain open only if you separately have filed and are in compliance with the attestation form promulgated by DSHS regarding minimal cases of Covid-19 in your county. Accordingly, we request that you update your TABC certification form to either (a) indicate you have filed with DSHS, and are in compliance with the requisite attestation form promulgated by DSHS regarding minimal cases of COVID-19 or (b) decertify your county.*

Acting on my authority as Taylor County Judge, pursuant to GA-32, I officially notified the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission that Taylor County has now become ineligible to opt-in because we are now in an area with high hospitalization. To file an attestation form promulgated by DSHS, a county “must have 30 or fewer new COVID-19 cases during the previous 14-day period.” The number of Taylor County COVID-19 cases during the last 14 days greatly exceeds 30 cases. Therefore, Taylor County cannot file the attestation form. The high hospitalization designation further means that this Trauma Service Area may not conduct elective surgeries or reopen to the higher levels (75 percent of total occupancy) as indicated under GA-32.

Further information regarding bar operations can be obtained from the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission website at <https://www.tabc.texas.gov/coronavirus>.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Downing A. Bolls, Jr.", with a stylized, cursive script.

Downing A. Bolls, Jr.