



BOARD OF FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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March 24, 2020

Dear Residents and Organizations of Franklin County –

It is my desire to let you all know the rationale that was used in deciding when to issue the “Stay at Home” Order for Franklin County – similar to the one that has been issued in Douglas County, Miami County and all Counties in the greater Kansas City metro area.

As a business owner, an elected official, and someone who strongly believes that the Government’s role in our daily lives should be as limited as possible, I have delayed my response as Chairman of the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners to endorse this Order. Up to this point, I’ve wanted to prolong the productivity and comfort that life as normal brings to our community for as long as reasonably possible. This echoes the sentiments I have heard from many of you in the community.

After an abundance of research and consultation with staff, I find the following facts to be true:

- About a week ago, the Kansas City metro area began to see transmission of COVID-19 through “community spread,” meaning that the illness spread to people who had not traveled nor had any contact with known infected persons.
 - This directly indicates that a number of people in the general public (in a nearby, commonly visited destination) have the virus but are unaware that they are carriers.
 - Considering Franklin County’s close ties to the Kansas City metro region, experts in public health and emergency management can give us no reason to believe this spread has stopped at the Franklin County line.
- Testing has become more limited in our area as KDHE has a shortage of test kits. Although private companies are working to bridge this gap, we are still having trouble obtaining tests at this time.
- In the absence of immediate action, when Kansas reaches its peak of the virus spread (if not before the peak), healthcare systems will become overwhelmed and unable to care for individuals who would have easily been cared for under normal circumstances.
- Many people are fortunate enough to experience only mild symptoms from COVID-19 leading some to believe there is no sense of urgency or importance to slowing the spread without an order stating as much.

On behalf of the entire Franklin County Government, please understand that we do not take making a decision like this for our community lightly. However, the impact of the actions we take now will benefit us when our community will need it most. We appreciate your cooperation and willingness to protect those who are most vulnerable to this virus.

Respectfully,

Colton M. Waymire
Chairman of the Board
Franklin County Board of County Commissioners