

LLANO COUNTY PRESS RELEASE



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COVID-19 (New Coronavirus)

LLANO COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

April 7, 2020

Llano, TX- 10:00 AM-

On April 6, 2020 County Judge Ron Cunningham called for a Special Called Commissioners Court Meeting. During the meeting, the first agenda item was a request of Llano County Commissioners Court to re-appoint Dr. Jack Franklin as the Llano County Health Authority (LHA) a role he has been fulfilling in two-year terms since 2004. Commissioners Court unanimously approved the request.

Established during the 79th Legislative session, Health Authorities (HA) serve as a critical part of the state's public health system. Health and Safety Code establishes and defines a Health Authority in Texas as a physician appointed under the provisions of Chapter 121, to administer state and local laws relating to public health within an appointing body's jurisdiction. Health Authorities are considered an officer of the state when performing duties to implement and enforce laws that protect the public's health.

The duties of the Llano County Health Authority include:

- Establishing, maintaining, and enforcing jurisdictional quarantine orders;
- Aiding local boards of health, local health departments in quarantine inspections, disease prevention and suppression efforts, birth and death statistics, and general sanitation issues within their jurisdiction;
- Reporting the presence of contagious, infectious and dangerous epidemic diseases to local and state authorities;
- Aiding local jurisdictions and boards of health in carrying out public health required rules, ordinances, sanitation laws, quarantine rules, and required reporting of any vital statistics collected.

In a second agenda item, Judge Cunningham requested the Commissioners Court to appoint additional physicians to the LHA to assist Dr. Franklin with the anticipated increase in caseloads of COVID-19 in Llano County. Cunningham began by explaining that in working with Dr. Franklin on a daily basis, during the COVID-19 pandemic, both he and Dr. Franklin are in agreement that there is a high probability of a significant increase in numbers of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Llano County in the very near future. During this increase of confirmed cases, it will be challenging for Dr. Franklin to conduct required duties in a timely manner without additional resources to in establish quarantine orders, conduct quarantine inspections and report the presence of COVID-19.

Judge Cunningham requested, that Commissioners Court also appoint Dr. Randall Grimshaw and Dr. Beverly Grimshaw to assist Dr. Franklin in fulfilling the duties of the Llano County Local Health Authority during the COVID-19 pandemic. These additional appointments are authorized and pursuant to President Trump, Governor Abbott, and Llano County Declarations of Disaster along with Emergency Orders issued by the president, governor, and county judge relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commissioners unanimously agreed to the request.

Judge Cunningham advised, "As the COVID-19 continues to spread across Texas, Llano County work in a proactive approach to ensure we have additional resources to respond to confirmed cases, contain and mitigate the spread, as well as provide redundancy for Dr. Franklin's role as the Llano County Local Health Authority".

Dr. Franklin, Dr. Randal Grimshaw and Dr. Beverly Grimshaw are all residents of Llano County and have been in Family Practice for over 15 years.

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