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RAPPIN' Tommy Wyatt

Make sure that your household is counted!

The U.S. Census Bureau is determined to make sure that every household in America is counted. They are so committed that they are delaying the deadline for getting this done by two weeks. The new deadline has been moved from the end of July 2020 to August 14, 2020.

The Covid-19 virus has caused a panic around the globe. It appears that this epidemic will require our attention for a long time.

But while we are trying to beat this virus, we have to keep our eyes on other pressing matters. We cannot let this situation cause us to take our attention away from the census. In fact, the Virus will have a large impact on how the the federal government will distribute their help to return our communities back to normal .

It has been charged that an under count quite often causes the African American Community to be denied the help that they need, because of an under count of the number of people living in the community.

The census will also determine how political lines are drawn as we get ready for the next elections. The lines will determine who is eligible to run for office in those precincts.

The Census Bureau is making a greater effort to insure that every home is counted by making it easier. You can now register online or through the regular process of having the census taker come to your home.

You can get the information about how to register online at "2020CENSUS.GOV. After you register, tell your neighbor how to do the same.

In the meantime, we all must do every thing that we can to survive the Covid-19 Virus.

Texans Urged to Use 2-1-1 Texas Social Services Hotline For COVID-19 Information and Referrals

(AUSTIN, TX) – Texas Health and Human Services encourages all Texans in need of COVID-19 information and referrals to community resources to call the 2-1-1 Texas hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

"As we encourage people to use social distancing and to stay at home when possible, this state resource can help the public stay informed, stay calm and stay safe," said Wayne Salter, HHS Deputy Executive Commissioner of Access and Eligibility Services. "Our trained staff are working tirelessly around the clock to respond to all the public's questions, through 2-1-1 as well as our HHS social media platforms."

Texans, no matter where they live, can dial 2-1-1 or (877) 541-7905 and select option 6 to get information and referrals to COVID-19 social services, including testing, community clinics, unemployment benefits and more.

Texans can also dial 2-1-1 to find information about local community resources such as financial assistance for utilities or rent and food pantries,



TEXAS Health and Human Services

housing assistance, crisis counseling, utility payment assistance, and senior services.

Call center operators answered more than 785,000 calls by Texans for information and services during Hurricane Harvey and are available to help during this public health crisis.

For general health-related information and precautions on COVID-19, visit the DSHS website and the CDC page.

Stay up-to-date on the latest news and updates impacting HHS services and regulated providers by visiting the HHS COVID-19 page.

For more information on the state hotline, visit 211texas.org.

HHS Encourages Texans to Apply Online for Benefits

Agency Takes Protective Measures for Staff and the Public

(AUSTIN, TX) – Texas Health and Human Services is encouraging Texans to submit benefit applications and other paperwork online at YourTexasBenefits.com or via the Your Texas Benefits mobile app to reduce foot traffic in the state's more than 250 eligibility offices.

"As Texans, we must all do what we can to get through this pandemic together," said Wayne Salter, HHS Deputy Executive Commissioner for Access & Eligibility Services. "We hope to reduce the number of Texans using office services and ask that if you can conduct your business online to please do so at this time."

HHS administers assistance programs such as Medicaid, SNAP food benefits, TANF cash assistance and WIC. Applying online will minimize the potential for staff and public exposure to COVID-19, while allowing staff to maximize the number of applications they can screen and approve during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Although office locations will remain open at this time, Texans are encouraged to apply for or renew their benefits through YourTexasBenefits.com. Through the website or the mobile app, Texans can:

- Create a new account;
- Find their username on existing account;
- Upload files;
- Update phone number;
- Report changes.

All visitors are highly encouraged to use the



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hand sanitizer stations placed in state offices. Individuals with symptoms indicating COVID-19 should not visit an HHS eligibility office. These symptoms have been identified as fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

HHS offices are not COVID-19 testing sites. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, please contact your local medical provider.

The Your Texas Benefits mobile app can be downloaded at your mobile carrier's app store. People with questions about using the website or mobile app, including those who have special needs, should dial 2-1-1 and select option 2.

For questions about SNAP, TANF, Medicaid or CHIP, dial 2-1-1 and select option 2. To check benefit amounts, recipients can visit YourTexasBenefits.com or call the Lone Star Help Desk at 1-800-777-7EBT (1-800-777-7328).

For health-related information and general precautions on COVID-19, visit the DSHS website and the CDC page.

Stay up-to-date on the latest office closures by visiting the HHS COVID-19 page.

CHANGE OF DATE FOR THE 2020 PROFILES OF PROMINENCE CEREMONY

By Arlene L. Youngblood

(AUSTIN, TX) - The Austin Metroplex Chapter of National Women of Achievement, Inc. will induct 11 honorees for the Sixteenth Biennial African- American Women's Profiles of Prominence 2020 ceremony. Please note that the date for the event has been changed from Saturday, March 28, 2020 to **Saturday, May 9, 2020 at 6 p.m.** The location has not been changed and the event will be held at St. James Missionary Baptist Church, 3417 East Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Austin, Texas. Please share with others this date change.

For more information about the event, email Austin.nwoa@gmail.com and texasongbird@hotmail.com.

INSIDE



Virulent communicable disease impacts entertainers. See COVID-19 Page 3



White House, Senate reach deal for economic stimulus See RELIEF Page 5



Austin inducts emergency rules to reduce impact of COVID-19. See SHELTER Page 6

Travis County District Judges Issue Order on Low-Level Felony Cases In Effort to Reduce Travis County Jail Population

(Austin, TX) - In a historic development to reduce the jail population, Travis County District judges, "in the interest of justice and fairness," have issued an order that will allow certain persons charged with low-level, non-violent felony crimes to be automatically released from jail on a personal bond.

Offenses for which the automatic bond is available include, Possession of a Controlled Substance, Credit or Debit Card Abuse, Prostitution, Theft, and other low-level felony crimes (see attachment for Order and list of offenses). This measure was under consideration before the COVID-19 State of Emergency, and, although the impact of the order will hopefully have a positive effect on the number of persons introduced into the jail population, discussions about the order have been underway for weeks.

There are exceptions to the new order on low-level felonies. They include people who are charged with a new offense while on pre-trial release, have a warrant for failing to appear in court or a bond forfeiture, or have a parole revocation, among others (see attachment for more exceptions).