

For Immediate Release

From the Office of

Hot Spring County Judge

Dennis Thornton

HOT SPRING COUNTY COVID-19 UPDATE

Today, April 7, 2020, the Arkansas Department of Health has confirmed there are now **7** positive cases of COVID-19 in Hot Spring County. I would like to personally thank the citizens of Hot Spring County for following the list of best practices I recently posted. It is obvious that what we are doing is working. With that said, it is “absolutely essential” that we continue these “best practices”!

- Frequent handwashing with warm soap and water.
- Wipe surfaces frequently with cleaners such as 10% Bleach, Lysol, Clorox wipes, or other approved cleaners.
- Social distancing – Keep 6 feet from others and avoid crowded areas or public events. Staying at home really impacts the spread of a virus.
- Go out of the home for essentials only (food, prescriptions, work).
- Stay home if you feel sick. Cover coughs and sneezes. Also, wear a mask when you’re out, if available. Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html> for more details.

Undoubtedly, by continuing to follow these best practices, we WILL flatten the curve of COVID-19. The County will continue to be proactive as we follow the mandates placed by Governor Asa Hutchinson. I remain in constant contact with state and county leadership as we share information, plans, and resources.

Yesterday, April 6th, 2020, Governor Asa Hutchinson held a conference call with County Judges and Mayors in Arkansas. The Governor has been frequently asked about the potential issuing of a “stay at home order.” This term is varying in definition and has been implemented in numerous states. Governor Hutchinson seems confident that Arkansas is still approaching the COVID-19 Pandemic in the

appropriate manner; however, he assured these elected officials that he would take any measures necessary to protect public health if it became obvious the current strategies are not working. Governor Hutchinson repeatedly emphasized that each of us, as citizens of Arkansas, must do our part by following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines regarding social distancing and wearing masks.

Another area of concern is the financial burden this event will have on counties and cities throughout the state. The first round of financial assistance from the Federal Government will most likely not be for use by these entities as it relates to lost revenues. Hopefully, this will be addressed at a later time.

As for Hot Spring County Government, we will see a reduction in operating revenues, but the full extent of the impending reduction will not be known for almost two months. Currently, I do not foresee any major disruptions to County Services. We continue to be on restricted access with services limited to on-line, over the phone, or by email. Necessary accommodations can be made by appointment only.

I urge everyone to be considerate of yourself and those around you, to keep a safe distance from each other, and to wear a mask when in public.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call my office at 501-332-2261. You may continue to monitor hot.springcounty.org and <https://adem.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/f533ac8a8b6040e5896b05b47b17a647> for the latest updates.

I continue to say, “Our citizens are the most important resource we have. The County is determined to do what we can to dampen the spread of this virus and help our families. Each of us is responsible for doing our utmost to save lives. We must not be governed by fear but proceed with prayer and practicality.”

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Isaiah 41:10 NIV