

# FORT BEND RECOVERS

COVID-19 Weekly Meeting 04/21/20

## Participants

1. Shauna Harris – United Way
2. Delena Pinkney – United Way
3. Caroline Egan – FB HS&EM
4. Mary Vazquez – United Way
5. Terri Stuart – United Way
6. Chelsea Lucas – Katy Responds
7. Herman Rogers – Endeavors
8. Penny Meek – The Henderson-Wessendorff Foundation
9. Alvaro Hernandez – Endeavors
10. Andrew Van Chau – Brazos River Rotary
11. Melinda Garcia – United Way
12. Jacqueline Washington - Endeavors
13. Lori Marcus – Texana Center
14. Anna Gonzales – Fort Bend Health and Human Services
15. John Lockhart – First Baptist Church of Richmond
16. Amy Harkins Ph.D. – Easter Seals of Greater Houston
17. Loretia Jelks – On the Road Lending
18. Elise Kaufman – Friends of North Richmond
19. Annie Derry – Endeavors
20. Joseph Higgs – TMO
21. Mia White – Houston Tool Bank
22. Spencer Walker – Mental Health America
23. Alvalon Sykes – Attack Poverty
24. Vickie Bernal – Katy Christian Ministries
25. Tom Pretti – Katy Responds
26. Stacy Christ – Harvey Home Connect
27. Quynh-Anh McMahan – The George Foundation
28. Michael Youngblood – City of Richmond
29. Eun Breuer – East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry
30. Clif Cummings – Fort Bend County Chaplains Association
31. Jimmy Fenwick – Sugar Land Methodist Church
32. AP Vo – The Alliance
33. Michelle Gonzalez – SVDP
34. Renee Teel – Christ Church Sugar Land
35. Michelle Dobbins – Baker Ripley
36. Dylan McNally – Harvey Home Connect
37. Walter Junious – Living Waters Church
38. Nadar Afshari – Endeavors

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39. Rashmi Singh – Sewa International

40. Schottsie Hill - Epiphany of the Lord

## Updates

Mary Vazquez – United Way

We would like to give everyone the opportunity to talk about what future meetings will look like as we continue working through this pandemic. There are lots of meetings and calls going on, so we would like to make the most of everyone's time and ensure everyone is getting the information they need as we plan our response. The Fort Bend Recovers meeting will focus on the immediate needs as it relates to COVID and planning for the long-term recovery efforts that we will need to address as a group. Moving forward, we will begin meeting every Tuesday from 10-11.

Fort Bend Recovers Steering Committee would like to focus on the immediate response. Workgroups have been created to assist in this effort. Brand Baca is leading a weekly call on Monday from 2-3 pm that will tackle basic needs such as food distribution and other immediate needs. Lori Marcus leads the Behavioral Health and Spiritual Workgroup. Anna Gonzalez is leading a workgroup that is helping with the Project 1800 Collaborative. Please contact them if you are interested in joining these respective calls.

211 Texas United Way HELPLINE continues to provide reports daily for calls related to COVID. 47,352 calls have been answered in our 4-county service area (Fort Bend, Waller, Harris and Montgomery counties). In Fort Bend County we have received 2,895 calls seeking help with rent and utility payment assistance, food pantry assistance and general COVID information. Needs are continuing to increase.

The Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund has launched their first round of funding and those payments have been issued to basic needs providers in our community to address some of the surge in needs. Subsequent rounds are underway with the next one being in May.

Caroline Egan – Fort Bend Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management

There are over 800 confirmed cases in Fort Bend County. Ninety-seven (97) people have recovered from COVID and there have been 18 people deaths. This information can be found on the Response Hub along with race and ethnicity data at: <https://www.fortbendcountytexas.gov/your-county/covid-19-alerts>.

Last Thursday, President Trump announced the federal government's plan to reopen the economy as a 3-step process, and last Friday Governor Abbott announced that Texas is looking to start reopening the economy. He will open state parks and allow retail businesses to open their doors. We will be hearing more as the governor has a press conference scheduled for later today. The other big announcement is schools will not reconvene physically for the remainder of the school year. They will continue to operate classes online.

In talking to a lot of nonprofits yesterday on the basic needs' food distribution call with Attack Poverty, Mayors in our jurisdiction and other partners state the biggest concern from the governor's

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announcement is the need for child care. As people go back to work, what will things look like for those who have children at home? The governor has appointed a task force to look at reopening the economy and childcare is a component of that.

In Fort Bend County we are still figuring out what this means for us. We are looking for more guidance from the state before deciding but in the meantime we still have a stay-at-home order in place. The order is really helping curve the number of cases we have in the county.

As of last week, testing is open to everyone at the Access Health/Fort Bend County testing site. The testing site has doubled its capacity, offering more tests to accommodate the influx of people wanting testing. There is no longer a screening tool, people should call 281-238-2363 to arrange an appointment time for testing (this information can also be found on our Slack page). Additionally, people can use [www.sbchelp.org](http://www.sbchelp.org), to arrange a call back from the phone bank that is responsible for setting testing appointments. This system was set up to cut down on extensive wait times. This information can be found on the Response Hub as well.

Fort Bend County wants to stand up a testing site in the Missouri City area, however it is still in the planning phase.

Hospitals may start doing elective surgeries again so the group doing testing at the Financial Center has indicated that they may conclude testing at the end of the week. They are still working to confirm this. The Smart Financial Center and the Access Health site is free of charge.

Tommy from Houston Responds mentioned that city of Houston and Harris county are looking into ordering individuals to wear masks out in public. Fort Bend County is also looking into a similar order. However, they share the concern that if such an order is put in place, they will need to supply masks to the public. They are looking into it.

Fort Bend County is providing transportation free of charge.

The county is doing a donation drive for PPE. They have received resources and are in the process of distribution to first responders and county departments. They are also trying to supply some of the resources to non-profits and VOAD members. Stay tuned, there is more to come on this.

Lori Marcus – Texana Center

The Behavioral and Spiritual Workgroup met this morning. They are planning to put together a website (Padlet) of resources to include sections on connections with self, faith, community, and creativity. After the site is set up, papers with QR codes will be included in bags that are supplied to the community at food distribution sites. This will allow individuals to connect to the site to access various resources.

Moving forward, the group will meet every Thursday at 8:30 a.m. If you would like to be a part of the call contact Lori from Texana Center at [lori.marcus@texanacenter.com](mailto:lori.marcus@texanacenter.com).

Elise Kauffman – Friends of North Richmond

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Attack Poverty and other partners had a great call yesterday with about 20 people. As a group we evaluated what it would look like for the group to continue to move forward and provide basic needs. We also reviewed distribution centers' hours of operations, changes and updates, and childcare services.

We are working to update the resource sheet that contains all the basic needs resources available in Fort Bend County as well as some in Harris County. In the next week or so these resources will be integrated into the county's response hub. We are looking into what organizations need PPE and creating a survey to understand who needs it, how we can provide it and what it looks like to do it.

Emerging needs include perishable food, hygiene products and cleaning supplies.

Anna Gonzalez – Fort Bend Health and Human Services

Health and Human Services employees called all the seniors identified for Project 1800. We followed up with 300 of them, providing them with toiletry items and gift cards. They are also needing perishable food items like meat. We would like to go through a second round of reaching out to them. Second Mile, county employees and other organizations have assisted in calling the seniors.

In the last two months, social services has received over 7,000 calls. Most of the calls have been geared towards rent and utility assistance. The more nonprofits that we have out there that can provide financial assistance would be a great help to us.

There is a need for us to reach out to apartment complexes that house seniors. This is the community that needs to stay home and not be at the grocery store. We need to find creative ways to get them what they need.

Rashmi Singh – Sewa International

Sewa will be handing out hand sanitizer to organizations that made requests through our google document around noon Saturday.

Lacretia Jelks – On the Road Lending

On the Road Lending is helping 200 families with \$500 to use however they wish. It doesn't have to be put towards a car note. These funds are only available to individuals that are already working with our organization and fit into the low to moderate income bracket. We have been receiving a lot of calls from random people and unfortunately, we cannot help them. To date, we have given money to 134 families.

Eun Breuer – East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry

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East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry provides financial assistance to residents in East Fort Bend County. Please call 281-261-1006 for assistance.

AP Vo – The Alliance

The Alliance has a weekly support group on Wednesdays. Take a little time for yourself and join us if you can. The link to sign up is below:

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=JuOZX\\_B83US8kpn6KOoADp6Iz-nsTD5JkXyK1I8SqnbUOUo0UEFIQzZLSzBGRFFIVkVWTUtOTkJOVy4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=JuOZX_B83US8kpn6KOoADp6Iz-nsTD5JkXyK1I8SqnbUOUo0UEFIQzZLSzBGRFFIVkVWTUtOTkJOVy4u)

Adjourn