

# Texas Master Naturalist Program

## PREVIOUS COVID GUIDELINES

UPDATE – 8.7.20

The following update to the July 3rd Transitioning Back Document referred to below was shared on Friday August 7th. Points most relevant to Texas Master Naturalist Chapters are highlighted in yellow below.

Subject: Agency COVID-19 Guidance Update  
Date: Tue, Aug 7, 2020 2:23 PM

SENT ON BEHALF OF Dr. Angela Burkham, Executive Associate Director, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

All Extension Employees,

We hope this email finds you well. This is a very fluid time as we see increasing positive cases in some parts of the state, yet in other parts of the state positive cases are decreasing or nonexistent. We very much value the AgriLife Extension statewide network of agents and specialists across 254 counties. It is that very network that has helped our agency respond to the COVID-19 crisis. We know that no one specific guidance can address all the challenges each of you are facing. It is our hope the following parameters will be helpful while taking into account the local health data.

#### Office Staffing Guidance

The maximum percentage of employees in any given physical OFFICE location is 75% until further notice. These percentages are not targets that must be achieved, but rather maximums that may be necessary for critical or department operations to function through the fall. If you or a family member have health concerns or are in a category of greater risk, please work with your immediate supervisor.

- County offices follow continuity of operations plan from the county but they also incorporate the health and safety guidance from AgriLife Extension.
- TAMU Campus Buildings and Transportation: Face masks are required in laboratories, indoor spaces and on public transportation, even if no one else is present based on new guidance from the University. Outdoors, masks are required when a six-foot social distancing radius cannot be maintained. Masks are required in public spaces but not in private offices. All employees at these sites must follow the TAMU guidelines, effective June 15. You may request an exception due to disability by contacting Jennifer Hobbs.
- District Centers and others outside Brazos County owned by the agency: Face masks are required in indoor spaces. Outdoors, masks are required when a six-foot social distancing radius cannot be maintained. Masks are required in public spaces but not in private offices. All employees at these sites must follow the TAMU guidelines, effective June 15. You may request an exception due to disability by contacting Jennifer Hobbs.

#### Internal Agency Face to Face Meetings (employees)

We encourage all meetings of employees to occur virtually. If necessity dictates an in-person format, the number of attendees must be no more than 10 with proper social distancing and face covering mandates observed at all times. If a meeting can be held with 10 people or less, we do encourage you to include a virtual option to ensure information is available to all audiences, including those who may choose not to attend based on personal health concerns.

#### External Agency Face to Face Meetings (public events)

- Group meetings of 50% capacity or fewer people are allowed only if

<https://txmn.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Agency->

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social distancing can be practical with a limited capacity of 50 people. If greater than 50, a preparedness plan must be submitted and approved by supervisor. If employees in large offices do not count against this limit if not part of the meeting in an office and socially distanced.)

- For individuals seeking alternative methods of delivery for traditional face-to-face meetings and educational programs, the Digital Education unit has put together a [resource on best practices and tools](#) that are currently supported by AgriLife.
- All overnight events must submit a preparedness plan and be approved by the supervisor.
- Face coverings are required at all events, unless the county hosting the event is exempt per the Governor's Executive Order on July 2, 2020. All Texas A&M University System facilities require the use of facial covering regardless of County location.
- AgriLife Extension requires a screening form for each participant at all overnight coordinated events and programs and day youth events.

The safety of our employees, attendees and community is our utmost priority. We encourage you to always consider the health and safety of those populations that may be more at risk due to age or health status. In addition, we ask that you continue to use non-pharmaceutical interventions (face masks, proper hygiene, etc.) that keep you and others safe.

### Travel Guidance

There have been no changes to the current travel guidance. Below are the highlights:

- Continue current travel policy limitations for in-state, with approval granted by supervisor. Out of state travel must be deemed mission critical and approved by the CMO or executive director. Employees traveling outside of Texas should review the [CDC's Travel Health Notices](#) prior to travel. In circumstances travel is endorsed at the time, CTE&EA under the supervision of DEEA, in county travel or, requirement is allowed without prior approval. For out-of-county travel submit the travel request form AG-802 and approved by immediate supervisor. <https://aglifefarm.tamu.edu/extension-managers/802.pdf>
- Specialist and those that supervise research site activities - Please submit travel requests (weekly if possible) through your specific locations and dates should be noted by the local pest service.
- Within the state of Texas, all traveling employees should review the current community transmission of COVID-19 in the locations they will be traveling from, to, and to.

[https://txmn.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Agency-COVID-19-Guidance-Update\\_Page\\_2-1.jpg](https://txmn.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Agency-COVID-19-Guidance-Update_Page_2-1.jpg)