

Texas Medical Board Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 14, 2020

Media contact: Jarrett Schneider, 512-305-7018
Customer service: 512-305-7030 or 800-248-4062

TMB Responding to Gov. Abbott's State Disaster Declaration

Following Governor Greg Abbott's [state disaster declaration](#), the Texas Medical Board, with direction and assistance from the Governor's Office, is implementing procedures to waive certain requirements to help the state's physicians, physician assistants and other health care professionals respond to COVID-19.

"During this critical time, medical providers will need to focus their attention and energy on the health and well-being of our fellow Texans. The Texas Medical Board will be doing all that it can to help assist Texas physicians, and other licensees under our authority, in making sure they stand ready and able to treat patients across the state," said TMB President Sherif Z. Zaafran, M.D.

Governor Abbott approved TMB's request to **temporarily suspend** Texas Occupation Code 111.005 (a)-(b) and Title 22, Chapter 174.6 (a)(2)-(3) of the Texas Administrative Code. The Texas Medical Board asserts that strict compliance with these laws could prevent, hinder, or delay timely delivery of necessary medical services in relation to efforts to cope with the declared disaster.

This suspension is in effect until terminated by the Office of the Governor or until the March 13, 2020 disaster declaration is lifted or expires.

Pursuant to this development, the following new procedures are in effect during the declared disaster period:

- **Allowing Phone Consults.** Telemedicine, including the use of telephone only, may be used to establish a physician-patient relationship. This expanded use of telemedicine may be used for diagnosis, treatment, ordering of tests, and prescribing for all conditions. The standard of care must be met in all instances.
- For **ALL** license and permit holders regulated by the TMB, the agency will take into account extenuating circumstances surrounding the completion of license/permit renewal requirements such as renewal deadlines and completion of continuing education hours.

Due to the developing nature of the public health event, the TMB is monitoring other regulatory issues that may affect our licensees' managing COVID-19 patients. TMB will provide any updates on these issues on the TMB website at www.tmb.state.tx.us.

TMB will continue working to protect the public's health and safety during the public health emergency.

For the latest COVID-19 information for health providers and the public, visit the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) COVID-19 web page at dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/.

###