

CARES Act Extension Liaison Outreach Plan
April 17, 2020

PURPOSE

The following is an outline for the implementation of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's outreach and training on the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act of 2020 (CARES) Act. The CARES Act includes a number of programs to address the issues that state and local governments are facing as they work to protect their communities during this challenging time. Through digital engagement, including online courses, AgriLife Extension will utilize its unique, one-of-a-kind statewide reach to educate local officials serving counties, municipalities, communities and schools on the federal relief package.

- First online course—targeting local officials (city and county), and school districts—to be available on AgriLife Learning by 4.23.20.
- Designated Extension liaisons to take the TrainTraq by 2:00 pm Thursday 4.23.20 to become familiar with content. All agents take TrainTraq by 5:00 pm Friday 4.24.2020.
- AgriLife Learning course available to local officials (city and county) and school districts for those that wish to engage in online learning, rather than communicate directly through respective agent representative.
- NOTE: Additional online courses will be developed as more information is made available. This plan will be revised to accommodate a possible Phase 2 with a 'general public' target audience.

EXPECTATIONS:

County Extension Agents and County Extension Directors in all 250 County Offices will be charged with making contact (primarily email) with each of the officials in their counties in each of three categories – County Commissioners Courts, Cities/Municipalities,), and Schools (Both public and private). First email contact by County Extension Liaisons to their designated elected officials is be made after viewing the Traintraq CARES Act training and by 4:00 pm on Thursday, April 23, 2020.

These officials will be notified of the availability of an online course for local elected and appointed officials to provide insight into the CARES Act, and its possible applicability to their entity. County staff members may choose to divide up the entities and make contact with those they are assigned to. It is imperative that each entity is contacted, initially by email. Follow up contacts may be made by email or phone, depending on the preference of the entity.

Agents are expected to participate in the CARES Act training on Friday, April 17, at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom. This training will provide an overview of the material from the CARES Act.

Recording at:

<https://texashelp.tamu.edu/employee/coronavirus-communication-and-resources-for-employees/>

In addition, Agents will be required to participate in the same training as the elected officials via TrainTraq to make certain all our personnel are aware of the material shared with elected officials. <https://traintraq.tamus.edu/CourseDetails.aspx?cnum=2114116>

PROCESS and PROTOCOL

(All references to website pertain to EDEN (texashelp.tamu.edu), employee password protected)

1. Extension Liaisons email (read receipt) to local organizations and partners regarding AgriLife Extension's CARES Act Educational Initiative. Extension Liaisons use the template on the website and send to their designated local official contacts after they have viewed the Traintraq version and by 4:00 p.m. on April 23, 2020. The template should be personalized in the bottom header with the senders location, return address, phone number, fax etc. The signature block should be personalized with name, title, cell number and email.
2. Within 3 business days of initial contact, Extension Liaisons follow up with identified contacts if they have not had a response, with an additional email regarding the available trainings. This is to be completed by 4:00 pm Tuesday, April 28, 2020. An expectation of making weekly contact to each local official will continue until a decision is made to discontinue such contact. It is imperative for Extension Liaisons to ensure they understand to whom and by what manner they are to make weekly contact to each jurisdiction and school district. As the response matures and it becomes apparent that weekly contact is no longer needed, Extension liaisons should concur with their DEAs to determine the date by which to cease weekly contact with local officials.
3. Virtual Assistance Center (Questions) – for questions received from community entities, they may be submitted to Caresact@ag.tamu.edu. This email is supported by state and federal specialists and coordinated by Dr Monty Dozier, Program Leader for Disaster Assessment and Recovery. Response will be given within 72 hours of submission
4. Rebuild Texas Hotline – (979) 458-6098
5. A Tool Kit document is located on the website for Extension Liaisons to reference and give as an additional resource to the web-based training. This is a comprehensive list of URL's and phone numbers outlined in the training.

6. Questions and Answers – There will be a running list of common Questions and Answers on the website.