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**NEWS
RELEASE**

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COVID-19 UPDATE

City Reports Largest Spike To Date, Significant Increase in Testing

EL PASO, Texas—Today the City of El Paso Department of Public Health (DPH) is reporting **five (5)** deaths and **393** new COVID-19 positive cases.

All except one of the patients had underlying medical conditions. They include:

- a male in his 50s
- a male in his 60s
- a female in her 60s
- a male in his 70s
- a male in his 70s, with no underlying medical conditions

The city has increased daily testing from 500 to about 2,500—a 400 percent increase—in the last two weeks and will continue its aggressive approach on increased testing across the county, to find as many COVID-19 infected individuals as possible.

Officials are investigating the source of exposure for the latest increase. Initial reports indicate the majority are likely due to community spread. However, portions of the spike appear to be due in part to additional cases among existing clusters in a detention facility and an elderly care facility.

More than 40 percent of the positive cases are made up of individuals in their 20s and 30s. Officials report that about 1 out of 5 individuals testing positive for COVID-19 are asymptomatic. Although the city has seen an overall increase in hospitalizations, the fatality rate has remained stable. Furthermore, officials assert that the rates will only improve if the community strictly adheres to the health and safety directives.

“We cannot let our guard down. It is imperative that each one of us, individually, take responsibility for our actions and understand the risks of not practicing the safety precautions outlined in the directives,” said City-County Local Health Authority Dr. Hector Ocaranza. “Again, I ask you to limit your interactions, and if you must go out in public practice social distancing, wear a face cover as mandated by the state, frequently wash your hands with soap, and water and if you’re feeling sick get tested and stay home.”

Officials make a strong call to all of those who have tested positive for COVID-19, to remain isolated at home and for all in the same household to remain in quarantine; stating that is the only way we, together will be able to slow down the spread of the disease, protecting those vulnerable loved ones.

For more information, visit www.epstrong.org.

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