

HOUSTON FORENSIC SCIENCE CENTER, INC.

**NOTICE OF SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING**  
***PUBLIC ACCESS WILL BE VIA TELECONFERENCE ONLY***  
**August 14, 2020**

In accordance with Texas Governor Greg Abbott's temporary suspension of certain provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, issued March 16, 2020, notice is hereby given that beginning at 8 a.m. on the date set out above, the Board of Directors (the "Board") of the Houston Forensic Science Center, Inc. (the "Corporation," or "HFSC") will meet via videoconference (Microsoft Teams.) HFSC is conducting this virtual meeting to advance the public health goal of limiting face-to-face interactions and to slow the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19.)

Gov. Abbott's [temporary suspension of certain open meetings laws](#) was issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with section 418.016 of the Texas Government Code. Gov. Abbott specifically suspended certain provisions of the law, which required government officials and members of the public to be physically present at a specified meeting location. The relevant suspensions are in effect until terminated by the Office of the Governor or until the Governor's disaster declaration is lifted or expires. Accordingly, this meeting will not take place in a specified physical location for the public to attend in person, however, the virtual meeting will be available to the public and allow for two-way communication between the Board and members of the public.

As required and in accordance with the Governor's temporary suspension, notice of this meeting, the agenda and the agenda packet are posted online at:  
<https://houstonforensicscience.org/meeting-archives.php>

The items listed in the agenda may be taken out of order at the discretion of the Chair. After the conclusion of the meeting, a recording thereof will be posted to  
[www.houstonforensicscience.org](http://www.houstonforensicscience.org).

**Attending the virtual meeting**

The public is not required to create an account to attend the meeting online and the videoconference can be accessed, free of charge.

To attend the videoconference meeting via computer, please use the following link:  
[https://teams.microsoft.com/dl/launcher/launcher.html?url=%2f\\_%23%2f%2fmeetup-join%2f19%3ameeting\\_MWUzZWE5ZjAtODcwZS00MDdkLWJkYjMtYjU0NWl0OWIyNTew%40thread.v2%2f0%3fcontext%3d%257b%2522Tid%2522%253a%2522f03b68b6-d9fe-4735-8648-33b13ef1c3ed%2522%252c%2522Oid%2522%253a%2522a717bead-e9b6-4660-beb2-a7bdef7a335b%2522%257d%26anon%3dtrue&type=meetup-join&deeplinkId=49dc61be-0032-40a8-a6dc-](https://teams.microsoft.com/dl/launcher/launcher.html?url=%2f_%23%2f%2fmeetup-join%2f19%3ameeting_MWUzZWE5ZjAtODcwZS00MDdkLWJkYjMtYjU0NWl0OWIyNTew%40thread.v2%2f0%3fcontext%3d%257b%2522Tid%2522%253a%2522f03b68b6-d9fe-4735-8648-33b13ef1c3ed%2522%252c%2522Oid%2522%253a%2522a717bead-e9b6-4660-beb2-a7bdef7a335b%2522%257d%26anon%3dtrue&type=meetup-join&deeplinkId=49dc61be-0032-40a8-a6dc-)

[729cc6ab171c&directDI=true&msLaunch=true&enableMobilePage=true&suppressPrompt=true](https://729cc6ab171c&directDI=true&msLaunch=true&enableMobilePage=true&suppressPrompt=true)

or go to <https://houstonforensicscience.org/meeting-archives.php>

In addition to the required free videoconference link, members of the public may call into the meeting by dialing the following teleconference number and entering the subsequent conference ID number: 281-886-3266, **Conference ID:** 948 017 269#

**Callers must mute themselves upon dialing into the meeting to limit interruptions.**

To attend the meeting using a mobile device and through the free videoconference link, the Microsoft Teams mobile application (“app”) must be downloaded (free of charge) to the device. After downloading the app, proceed to the link above and you will be directed to the videoconference, through the app. However, members of the public must be muted to minimize disruption of the meeting.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT

The public is permitted to speak during the public comment agenda item and as permitted by the Chair. However, requests to speak during the public comment period must be submitted via email to the HFSC Secretary of the Board at: [info@houstonforensicscience.org](mailto:info@houstonforensicscience.org) **no later than 9 a.m. Thursday August 13, 2020.**

The request must include the speaker's name, contact number, address and topic of the comment. Speakers should limit their comments to three minutes. The Board Chair may limit both the number of speakers and the time allotted for each speaker. The Chair will call on each speaker by name, during the designated public comment period.

If you have questions regarding attending this virtual meeting please contact Jordan Benton, secretary of the Board of Directors, at **832-993-1924**.

AGENDA

1. Call to order.
2. Roll call; confirmation of presence of quorum.
3. Public comment.
4. Reading of draft minutes from July 10, 2020 board meeting. Consideration of proposed corrections, if any. Approval of minutes.
5. Report from Dr. Stacey Mitchell, board chair, including a monthly update of activities and other announcements.

Reports and presentations by corporate officers, and possible related action items

6. Report from Dr. Peter Stout, president and CEO, including technical updates, outreach efforts, staffing changes and other corporate business items, including steps taken to operate safely and effectively during the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - a. Presentation from Dr. Stout regarding a proposal to consolidate Harris County and City of Houston property and evidence management, including an overview of the state of forensics nationally
7. Monthly operations report from Dr. Amy Castillo, vice president and COO, including a review of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on laboratory operations and an update on backlogs in the forensic biology/DNA and latent print sections.

Reports and presentations by staff

8. Presentation from Mr. Timothy Schmahl, manager of latent prints, and Ms. Aimee Grimaldi, project engineer, on the latent print backlog.
  - a. Mr. Schmahl will provide a brief overview of the latent print backlog and the challenges presented by having more evidence items in each case.
  - b. Ms. Grimaldi will provide an overview of a planned lean six sigma project, the project's risks, timeline, team selection process and goals.
9. Report from Mr. Jerry Pena, director of CSU and digital multimedia evidence, regarding a significant spike in homicides in July and a planned renovation at the vehicle examination building.
10. Report from Ms. Erika Ziemak, quality director, regarding quality assurance, a review of the blind quality control program, testimony monitoring, a stakeholder survey and proficiency tests.
11. Adjournment.

**Certification of Electronic Posting of Notice of the Board of Directors (“the Board) of the Houston Forensic Science Center, Inc. (the “Corporation)**

I, Jordan Benton, coordinator of board relations and executive administration, do hereby certify that a notice of this meeting was posted [online](https://houstonforensicscience.org/meeting-archives.php) at <https://houstonforensicscience.org/meeting-archives.php> on Tuesday, the 11th day of August, 2020, as required by Section 551.043 et seq., Texas Government Code and in accordance with Governor Abbott's March 16, 2020 temporary suspension of certain provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Given under my hand this the 11th day of August 2020.

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Jordan Benton

## Open Meeting Laws Subject to Temporary Suspension

Effective March 16, 2020, and subject to the following conditions, the following statutory provisions are temporarily suspended to the extent necessary to allow telephonic or videoconference meetings and to avoid congregate settings in physical locations:

- those that require a quorum or a presiding officer to be physically present at the specified location of the meeting; provided, however, that a quorum still must participate in the telephonic or videoconference meeting
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.122(b)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.127(a-3), (b)–(c), (e), (h)–(i)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.130(c)–(d), (i)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 322.003(d), (e)(2)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 845.007(f)(2)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 855.007(f)(2)
  - TEX. CIV. PRAC. & REM. CODE § 74.102(f)
  - TEX. INS. CODE § 2151.057(d)(1)
  - TEX. LOCAL GOV'T CODE § 379B.0085(a)
  
- those that require physical posting of a notice; provided, however, that the online notice must include a toll-free dial-in number or a free-of-charge videoconference link, along with an electronic copy of any agenda packet
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.043(b)(2)–(3)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE §§ 551.049–551.051
  
- those that require the telephonic or videoconference meeting to be audible to members of the public who are physically present at the specified location of the meeting; provided, however, that the dial-in number or videoconference link provided in the notice must make the meeting audible to members of the public and allow for their two-way communication; and further provided that a recording of the meeting must be made available to the public
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.121(f)(1)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.122(d)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.125(e)–(f)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.126(d)(1)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.127(f), (j)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.130(e)–(f)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.131(e)(1)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 322.003(e)(3)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 436.054(e)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 845.007(f)(3)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 855.007(f)(3)
  - TEX. AGRIC. CODE § 41.061(c)–(d)
  - TEX. AGRIC. CODE § 41.1565(c)–(d)
  - TEX. AGRIC. CODE § 41.205(d)–(e)
  - TEX. AGRIC. CODE § 62.0021(c)–(d)

- TEX. EDUC. CODE § 66.08(h)(2)(B)
- TEX. FAM. CODE § 264.504(e)
- TEX. FIN. CODE § 11.106(c)(4)–(5)
- TEX. FIN. CODE § 154.355(d)(2)–(3)
- TEX. INS. CODE § 462.059(a)(1), (c)
- TEX. INS. CODE § 463.059(d)
- TEX. INS. CODE § 2151.057(e)
- TEX. INS. CODE § 2210.1051(b)(2)–(3)
- TEX. INS. CODE § 2211.0521(b)(2)–(3)
- TEX. LOCAL GOV'T CODE § 379B.0085(b)(2)–(3)
- TEX. SPEC. LOC. DIST. CODE § 9601.056(c)
- TEX. TRANSP. CODE § 173.106(e)–(f)
- TEX. TRANSP. CODE § 366.262(c)–(d)
- TEX. TRANSP. CODE § 370.262(c)–(d)

- those that may be interpreted to require face-to-face interaction between members of the public and public officials; provided, however, that governmental bodies must offer alternative methods of communicating with their public officials.
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.007(b)
  - TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.125(b)(1), (d)

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