



## **For Immediate Release**

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## **Harlingen Facility Converted into Temporary COVID-19 Field Hospital**

**Harlingen, Texas**—Harlingen’s Casa de Amistad has been converted into a temporary COVID-19 field hospital to help relieve overwhelmed intensive care units and emergency rooms in the area.



The Casa de Amistad Alternative Care Site is part of the state’s response to help fight COVID-19 in the Rio Grande Valley.

The 13,000 square foot facility will house up to 96 patients that no longer need acute care but still aren’t ready to go home.

The state is providing the medical beds, equipment, oxygen, and staff to run the temporary alternative care site through a contract with SLSCO a company out of Galveston that specializes in emergency sheltering and field hospitals during disasters.

Each of the 96-beds sits in its own space for privacy and all include an oxygen line should the patient require it.

More than 15,000 people have tested positive for COVID-19 in Cameron County with hundreds if not thousands requiring hospitalizations. The numbers have been just as high in the entire Rio Grande Valley, thus overwhelming local hospitals. For weeks they were all on diversion status and even today, Valley Baptist and Harlingen Medical Center have patients waiting in the emergency room for a hospital bed to free up.

## News From The City of Harlingen

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Mayor Chris Boswell says this site will provide some much-needed relief. “The City’s objective is to support the Hospitals by easing some of the strain on their facilities and staff. The State of Texas has not only transformed Casa de Amistad into a field hospital but brought more doctors, nurses, and other support staff for this facility.”

The COVID facility will accept patients from Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen and Brownsville, Harlingen Medical Center, and Valley Regional Medical Center.

SLSCO will provide up to 125 staff members for each of its three eight hour daily shifts that will include specialized doctors, nurses, and respiratory therapists.

While the state is covering the cost for the operation of the temporary hospital, any costs incurred by the City will be eligible for CARES Act reimbursement.

It’s important to note, that The Casa de Amistad Alternative Care Site is strictly a facility for treating COVID patients already hospitalized. People needing emergency help must go to actual hospitals in the area.

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