

2024 JUL 23 PM 5:34

DISASTER DECLARATION

**BY THE COUNTY JUDGE OF EL PASO COUNTY, TEXAS
DATE ORDER ISSUED: JULY 23, 2024**

DELIA BRIONES
COUNTY CLERK
EL PASO COUNTY, TEXAS

WHEREAS, in March of 2021, Governor Abbott established “Operation Lone Star,” (“**OLS**”) a program that deploys the Texas National Guard and Texas Department of Public Safety (“**Texas DPS**”) to the southern border; and

WHEREAS, increased targeted arrests made by Texas DPS along the El Paso border have resulted in two strategic mass arrests of several hundred individuals at a time; and

WHEREAS, Texas DPS is presenting these arrestees to the El Paso County Sheriff for detainment and the District Attorney for potential prosecution in mass, creating a chaotic and unsustainable burden on El Paso County’s criminal justice departments ever since the first mass arrest took place on March 21, 2024; and

WHEREAS, this process of arrest, detainment, potential prosecution, and adjudication in El Paso County requires a variety of local resources including, but not limited to, pre-trial processing of the arrestees, a mental health assessment, a determination of eligibility for a court-appointed attorney, an appearance before a magistrate judge to determine bond eligibility, fingerprinting, photographing, jailing, and providing meals and any medical care that may be needed for all arrestees; and

WHEREAS, OLS funds will provide limited relief to the overwhelming financial burden placed on an already economically disadvantaged community; and

WHEREAS, this increase of targeted arrests, and in two instances mass arrests, made by Texas DPS have resulted in a significant and unanticipated financial hardship on El Paso County; and

WHEREAS, although El Paso County continues to be one of the safest communities in the nation and remains committed to helping process asylum seekers in a humane and compassionate manner, I am issuing this disaster declaration because it is required to be eligible to receive OLS funds, which will be used to assist with processing the individuals who are being arrested by Texas DPS, in an effort to relieve some of the financial strain on El Paso County and its taxpayers; and

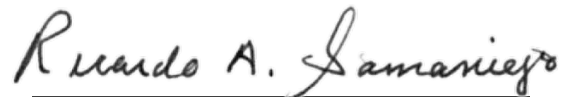
WHEREAS, I am issuing this disaster declaration pursuant to Texas Government Code Chapter 418, which authorizes the issuance of a local disaster declaration when there is an occurrence or imminent threat of loss of property resulting from a man-made cause.

NOW THEREFORE, TO BE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR OLS FUNDS AND IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE INCREASED ARRESTS ON THE EL PASO BORDER I, COUNTY JUDGE FOR EL PASO COUNTY, TEXAS PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY VESTED BY TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE CHAPTER 418, HEREBY ISSUE THIS DISASTER DECLARATION (“ORDER”) PURSUANT TO SECTION 418.108(A) OF THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE. NOW THEREFORE BE IT ALSO PROCLAIMED:

1. That this Order will continue until rescinded in accordance with the above cited statute, but in no instance will this declaration continue for more than seven days without being authorized by the El Paso County Commissioners Court.
2. This Order shall be promptly publicized and filed with the County Clerk.
3. This Order shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance.

ORDERED this the 23rd day of July, 2024.

EL PASO COUNTY, TEXAS



Ricardo A. Samaniego
El Paso County Judge