

President  
Michael C. Savas, CTIP



Executive Vice President & CEO  
Leslie Midgley, CAE

March 22, 2020

**RE: Title Companies in your County and COVID-19 Response**

Dear Judge:

We write today to urge you to please make it clear in any announcement or further emergency declaration that title insurance businesses remain open alongside the banks and other financial institutions so previously scheduled along with future real estate transactions can continue to occur as needed. Providing this much needed clarity for our industry and consumers in any statement or proclamation would be greatly appreciated.

It is imperative to the real estate economy that title insurance offices remain open alongside the banks. Furthermore, our industry's work—including conducting title searches, examinations, closings and issuing title insurance to protect property owners and mortgage lenders—is crucial to financial sector operations. This fact has been recognized by jurisdictions around the country which have moved to “shelter in place” requirements.

We will quickly underscore for you that Texas allows Remote Online Notarization (RON), which creates a safe and consistent approach whereby an online notary can electronically sign documents. This tool equips us to better restrict the face-to-face requirements of real estate transactions. Our industry members are also implementing several protocols at their business locations to maximize the safety of the community.

Additionally, we would like to emphasize the importance of county operations in sustaining of the real estate economy. We applaud the County Clerks of Texas who are working hard to keep recording real estate transactions and the Texas real estate economy alive.

Thank you for your assistance.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael C. Savas', written in a cursive style.

Michael C. Savas, CTIP  
President