



# CAMERON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Esmeralda Guajardo, MAHS  
Health Administrator

James W. Castillo II, MD  
Health Authority

## For Immediate Release

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Contact: Esmeralda Guajardo, (956) 247-3685

### **Tuberculosis Contact Investigation Underway in Two Nursing Homes in Cameron County**

Cameron County Public Health has been working with Harlingen Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and Veranda Rehabilitation and Healthcare, two nursing homes within Cameron County, on a tuberculosis (TB) contact investigation. It is estimated that over 600 current and former residents and employees may have been possibly exposed to TB and are recommended to be tested.

“The symptoms for tuberculosis are very similar to other respiratory illnesses, such as COVID-19 and the flu, that if it goes undiagnosed for a long period of time, a contact investigation of this magnitude will occur,” stated Esmeralda Guajardo, Health Administrator. “The nursing home facilities we have been working with have been extremely cooperative in helping us identify and test individuals who may have been possibly exposed, but our attempts to reach former residents and employees has been difficult that we need the public’s help to reach those no longer at the facilities.”

Cameron County Public Health is asking individuals who resided or worked at the following facilities during the following time periods to be tested:

- Harlingen Nursing and Rehabilitation Center between April 1, 2024 – November 6, 2024, and
- Veranda Rehabilitation and Healthcare between May 24, 2024 – November 6, 2024.

Testing will be provided at no cost to the individuals on Monday, December 9, 2024, from 8am – 8pm at the Harlingen Public Health Center, located at 711 N “L” Street in Harlingen. The TB testing will include a blood drawing from the individual’s arm. Individuals who would like to confirm if they are an identified contact can also call (956) 247-3650.

Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial infection caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* that can affect the lungs and other parts of the body. It spreads through the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or spits. TB symptoms include cough that last three weeks or longer, chest pain, coughing up blood, weakness or fatigue, weight loss, loss of appetite, chills, fever and night sweats.

*For information on the ongoing TB contact investigation, please contact the Cameron County Public Health Helpline at (956) 247-3650, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Additionally, it is encouraged to visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/> for more information on tuberculosis.*

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