

# Gov. Abbott signs Pandemic Liability Protection Act, bill takes effect immediately

HOT TOPICS

By David Yates | Jun 15, 2021



Texas Governor Greg Abbott

AUSTIN – On Monday, Gov. Greg Abbott signed the Pandemic Liability Protection Act into law. The Act went into effect immediately because Senate Bill 6 was passed by both chambers by supermajorities.

Authored by Sen. Kelly Hancock, SB 6 provides COVID-19 liability protections for health care providers, businesses, non-profits, religious institutions and schools that follow safety protocols.

Sen. Hancock has openly stated that the bill will not protect “bad actors.”

Texas now joins three-dozen other states that have granted healthcare workers and facilities limited liability protections when battling the COVID-19 outbreak.

Jon Opelt, executive director of the Texas Alliance for Patient Access, says that had the bill not become law, a surge in COVID-related lawsuits would have been expected.

“The Pandemic liability bill does not protect bad actors who are grossly negligent, engage in willful misconduct or are consciously indifferent to their patient’s welfare and safety,” Opelt said. “Instead, it protects all those who put their safety at risk when working in a healthcare setting if they make a good faith effort to provide appropriate medical care.”

Opelt says SB 6 does not preclude a COVID patient or their aggrieved family from filing a lawsuit.

“However, the bill aims to curtail misguided and unwarranted COVID-related lawsuits that stem from alleged misdiagnosis, improper treatment, inadequate staffing, and insufficient safety supplies,” Opelt said. “If the healthcare provider or facility has acted in good faith, they should have liability protection.”