



Missoula City-County Health Department

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

301 West Alder Street | Missoula MT 59802-4123
www.missoulacounty.us/HealthDept

Phone | 406.258.4755

Fax | 406.258.4781

MEDIA RELEASE

Press Contact, General:
Alisha Johnson
Public Information Officer
406-830-5363

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Health Officer Updates Local Orders

Missoula Health Officer Ellen Leahy updated local orders that were initially issued on April 24, 2020.

The orders allow businesses and individuals providing grooming, beauty, body art, piercing, massage, spa, and similar services to open May 11 with a service plan that supports employee health screening, social distancing, face-covering use, and enhanced cleaning and sanitizing.

The limit on events and gatherings such as fairs, concerts, races and sporting events, and private parties outside the home was raised to 50 people. Events with 50 or fewer must maintain six-foot social distancing. This does not replace the governor's requirement to limit groups to 10 people when distancing cannot be maintained.

Farmers' markets may open for the sale of unprocessed agricultural products starting May 23. The market must have a plan to support social distancing, including the flow of customers and limiting the number of people in the market at one time. Vendors must space tables six feet apart. Vendors, employees, and volunteers are required to screen for symptoms and have provisions for personal hygiene and enhanced cleaning and sanitizing.

Schools may hold graduation, providing that they have a plan to keep families separated by six feet and can limit the total number of people to 250 based on guidance for large gatherings. The schools must provide a plan to support social distancing, personal hygiene, and sanitation.

The local orders will remain in place until the governor moves to Phase Two, or the health officer rescinds or modifies them.

Governor Bullock's announcement on May 7 regarding the opening of gyms, fitness studios, some pools, movie theaters, and non-tactile museums are not affected by the local order. These facilities may open May 15 providing they can follow the requirements outlined by the governor.

"We are at a different place than we were on April 24 when the original orders were issued. We had nine active cases. We were still getting new cases of COVID, and we were following two dozen close contacts," said Cindy Farr, Incident Commander with the Missoula City-County Health Department's COVID-19 response. "We are now at zero active cases and haven't had a new case in over two weeks."

Farr adds that while the outbreak appears to be winding down that COVID-19 is still a risk. The health department encourages community members to practice personal and community protective measures. Monitoring for symptoms, staying home when sick, washing hands, social distancing, and staying home as much as possible are still prevention measures that matter. Additionally, the Health Board's recommendation for wearing cloth face coverings in public spaces can decrease community spread.

"Keeping cases down at this point comes down to behavior and contact tracing. We can do the contact tracing and provide guidance to our community, but we still need the community's help," said Farr.

"Behavior matters. Social distancing and helping businesses and organizations follow the provisions is not only helpful for them but helpful for the community."

If you have questions about how the local orders affect your business or organization, please call 406-258-4755.