

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock
Governor



Mike Cooney
Lt. Governor

TO: Montanans, all officers and agencies of the State of Montana
FROM: Governor Steve Bullock
DATE: March 24, 2020
RE: Directive implementing Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020 extending closures and updating social distancing requirements and guidance

Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020 declare that a state of emergency exists in Montana due to the global outbreak of COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus.

Section 10-5-104, MCA, provides emergency powers to the Governor to "control ingress and egress to and from an incident or emergency or disaster area, the movement of persons within the area, and the occupancy of premises within the area." Moreover, pursuant to § 70-1-202, MCA, the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), at the direction of the Governor, may issue orders to correct conditions of public health importance. This Directive, along with any prior Directive that implements and references the public health authorities of DPHHS provided in Title 50, constitutes a "public health... order[]" within the meaning of § 20-1-103(2), MCA, and is enforceable by the Attorney General, DPHHS, or a county attorney, consistent with that statute and related provisions of law.

To curtail the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in Montana, it is necessary immediately to implement measures to ensure social distancing to prevent the spread of disease. Such an approach will not only reduce the overall number of infections in the state and preserve increasingly scarce health care resources, but it will allow Montanans an opportunity to continue working without being subject to unnecessary risk.

Further, to slow the growth of new infections, I previously directed two series of temporary closures and restrictions in response to the emergency. First, on March 15, 2020, I directed the closure of all non-residential public schools in Montana through March 27, 2020. On March 18, 2020, I issued another Directive with guidance that school districts should use the two-week closure period to plan for the possibility of additional closures. Second, on March 20, 2020, I issued a Directive that certain businesses be restricted temporarily from typical on-premise business by members of the public through March 27, 2020, while encouraging the expansion of take-out, drive-up, or delivery options.

The number of infections in Montana and throughout the United States continues to grow. In consultation with public health experts and emergency management professionals, I have determined that to protect public health and human safety it is necessary that these restrictions be extended for an additional two-week period.

In accordance with the authority vested in me under the Constitution, Article VI, Sections 4 and 11, and the laws of the State of Montana, Title 18, Chapter 3 and Title 50, Chapter 1, MCA, and other applicable provisions of the Constitution and Montana Law, I hereby direct the following measures to be in place in the State of Montana effective immediately, except where otherwise specified.