

I want to update you on the actions I am taking to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on Montanans. During this time challenging time, I appreciate your patience and your concerns as we act to ensure Montanans' needs are met.

Both young and older Montanans, in urban and rural communities, have tested positive for coronavirus, making it even more clear that this virus impacts us all and these actions are imperative to protecting our friends and neighbors.

We face extraordinary health risks – and with it even further risks to our economic and social well-being – if we do not act now. I do not take these decisions lightly and they were done so in consultation with public health professionals. Montanans, too, need to take this seriously. It's up to all of us to stop the spread of this virus.

I want to let you know the actions I have taken to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 and the resources available to you and your family:

TRAVEL ADVISORY: This week I issued a travel advisory for Montanans who have traveled internationally to self-quarantine for 14 days after returning to Montana. If you have traveled internationally, please self-quarantine for 14 days and contact your local health department [HERE](#).

STATEWIDE CLOSURE OF HIGH-RISK BUSINESSES: On Friday, I announced measures to close dine-in food service and alcoholic beverage businesses and other activities that pose enhanced health risks, effective at 8 p.m. on Friday, March 20, 2020. This Directive expires at 11:59 p.m. on March 27, 2020, the same day that school closures are set to expire, though the date will likely be extended.

Under the Directive, the following places are closed to use and occupancy by members of the public:

- Restaurants, food courts, cafes, coffeehouses, and other similar establishments offering food or beverage for on-premises consumption.
- Alcoholic beverage service businesses, including bars, taverns, brew pubs, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, tasting rooms, special licensees, clubs, and other establishments offering alcoholic beverages for on-premises consumption.
- Cigar bars.
- Health clubs, health spas, gyms, aquatic centers, pools and hot springs, indoor facilities at ski areas, climbing gyms, fitness studios, and indoor recreational facilities.
- Movie and performance theaters, nightclubs, concert halls, bowling alleys, bingo halls, and music halls.
- Casinos.

TESTING ASSISTANCE: I have announced the State of Montana will pay for COVID-19 tests and treatment for all uninsured Montanans. State funds and potentially federal funds will be used to pay for testing and treatment beginning on March 23. Access to **telemedicine services** are also expanded to ensure Medicaid patients receive quality health care in their homes to prevent unnecessary gatherings at health care facilities and slow the spread of COVID-19. To access this emergency assistance Montanans can call 406-444-7605 or email hspresumptive@mt.gov.

UNEMPLOYMENT: This week, I announced emergency rules to make unemployment benefits

accessible to workers laid off due to COVID-19 and waive the one week waiting period before receiving benefits. The rules will ensure that workers impacted by COVID-19, whether it's because they've been laid off, are quarantined, or need to take care of a family member, can do so without worrying about how they will make ends meet during these difficult times.

Claimants are responsible for staying in contact with their employer and return to work when they have the opportunity. People who are eligible for these benefits can apply online at: www.montanaworks.gov or contact the Unemployment Insurance Division over the phone at: (406) 444-2545.

MONTANA TAX FILING EXTENTION TO JULY 15TH: On Friday, I extended the payment and filing deadlines for 2019 individual income taxpayers to July 15 in accordance with the new federal filing deadline. The deadline for those making estimated tax payments for the first quarter of 2020 has also been extended to July 15. The due date for the second quarter remains July 15 at this time. Tax resources are available at: <https://mtrevenue.gov/taxes/>

SOCIAL DISTANCING: We face the potential for extraordinary health risks from coronavirus in our state. Social distancing is one of the most important primary protective measures to flatten the curve of this virus. **I cannot underscore the seriousness of following these measures to help our neighbors, friends, and families.**

If you have any symptoms, **stay home**. Call your doctor or local public health provider for consultation. Do not drive the doctor's office or emergency room.

You can contact your local county or tribal health departments by finding their contact information through the online map [HERE](#).

The Coronavirus Task Force has an informational phone line at **1-888-333-0461** and Montanans can also email questions to covid19info@mt.gov.

You can also find information on the Task Force actions at COVID19.mt.gov. You can also visit the DPHHS website at www.dphhs.mt.gov for the most up to date and timely health information related to the coronavirus.

Thank you again for your sacrifices and commitment to stopping the spread of COVID-19 in Montana.

It is helpful to hear from Montanans like you when I am making decisions about the future of our state. I understand these are challenging times and Montanans are facing many hardships. But, I have no doubt as Montanans, we can work together and overcome this challenge.

Sincerely,

STEVE BULLOCK
Governor