



# **STATE OF MONTANA CORONAVIRUS PHASE ONE REOPENING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

State Emergency Operations Center  
Joint Information Center (JIC)

# Phase One Reopening FAQs

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## Information on Inquiries

- Link to Governor’s [Directive](#)
- State Business Inquiry Hotline: **1-800-755-6672**
- State General COVID-19 Hotline: **1-888-333-0461**
- Tourism Informational Hotline: **1-800-847-4868**
- Emergency Housing Assistance Program: COVID19HousingAssist@mt.gov
  - Phone: 406.841.2840, TDD: 406.841.2702, Toll Free: 800.761.6264
- Website, details and maps: [COVID19INFO@MT.GOV](#)
- Follow Montana Dept. of Disaster & Emergency Services on social media:
  - [Facebook: Montana DES](#)
  - [Instagram: Montanades406](#)
  - [Twitter: Montana DES](#)
  - Hashtags: #COVID19MT #FlattenTheCurve #slowthespread #HomeTownHeroes #PublicHealthHeroes #TeamMontana #MTstrong #TogetherMT #StayHomeMontana #406Feet

## General Questions: Phase One

*Before reviewing this document, please first read the actual [Phased Reopening Directive](#). Most questions can most likely be answered by reading the entire Directive. This document may be updated throughout the reopening.*

### What is the intent of the Directive?

- Provides for the phased reopening of Montana.
- Provides local school boards the flexibility to make decisions about the remainder of the academic year.

### How was the directive created?

- Developed based on scientific evidence and data, and in consultation with public health experts, healthcare providers, business leaders, and emergency management professionals. This phased approach is based on up-to-date data and statewide preparedness. It mitigates the risk of resurgence. It protects the most vulnerable. It can be implemented on a statewide, tribal, or county basis. And it contains the ability to adjust phases based on local or regional conditions.
- Places emphasis on protecting those in Montana most vulnerable to complications from COVID-19 by continuing to take measures seriously, we protect our family, friends, and neighbors as Montana begins to emerge from its initial encounter with COVID-19.

### When does Phase one begin?

- Phase one begins a various times depending upon your industry, county, and local jurisdictions as they may choose to implement more stringent measures. Be sure to check with your local City/County Health Department for restrictions or additional requirements.
- Generally speaking, here's a broad overview of the Phase one start dates:

Phase One Start Date	
April 26	Places Of Worship
April 27	Main Street and Retail Businesses Outdoor Recreation Organized Youth Activities
May 4	Restaurants, Bars, Breweries, Distilleries, And Casinos
May 7	School Open/Closure Set by Local Officials

### Do you have the authority to direct the phase one reopening?

- Yes. Montana law specifically authorizes these kinds of measures in response to an outbreak of communicable disease. They're very clearly spelled out in each of our Executive Directives and come both from the authority to respond to emergencies and the public health authority of the state.
- This Directive, along with any prior Directive that implements and references the public health authorities of the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) provided in Title 50, constitutes a "public health . . . order[]" within the meaning of § 50-1-103(2), MCA, and is enforceable by the Attorney General, DPHHS, a county attorney, or other local authorities under

the direction of a county attorney. Local public health agencies are directed to assist in the administration of this Directive, consistent with § 50-1-202(2)(a), MCA.

**How will this phase one be enforced?**

- First and foremost, people don't want to get sick and don't want to get others sick. Montanans understand that. The Governor is confident that most Montanans will take this directive seriously and understand their role in cutting off the chain of transmission to save lives and minimize long term impacts to our economy. This is a public health order that can be legally enforced at local or state levels.
- We encourage anyone who may have a concern about a potential violation of any of the Governor's directives to work with their local agencies to reach a resolution.

**What are the Social Distancing Requirements?**

- Businesses and operations must take proactive measures to ensure compliance with social distancing requirements, including where possible:
  - Designate six-foot distances. Designating with signage, tape, or by other means six-foot spacing for employees and customers in line to maintain appropriate distance;
  - Hand sanitizer and sanitizing products. Having hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers;
  - Separate operating hours for vulnerable populations. Implementing separate operating hours for elderly and vulnerable customers; and
  - Online and remote access. Posting online whether a facility is open and how best to reach the facility and continue services by phone or remotely.

## Individual Guidance: Phase One

### **I do not feel well, do I have to go to work or school?**

- No. People who feel sick should stay home and contact their health care provider for guidance. If you are experiencing the symptoms of COVID-19, you must follow your local health department guidance on isolation and quarantine.

### **I am in the high-risk group, should I resume normal activities?**

- No, all vulnerable or high-risk individuals should continue to follow the stay at home guidance.
- This also applies to those who are living with a high-risk individual. Household members should be aware that by returning to work or other environments where social distancing is not practiced, they could carry the virus back home. Household members who must return to work or other environments should consider isolating themselves from the high-risk individuals.

### **I am a member of an at-risk population, but my employer wants me to return to work anyway. What are my options?**

- You have the right to ask for accommodations for your condition. You may be asked by your employer for proof of your condition from your medical provider. If your employer does not provide reasonable accommodations, you do not have to return to work.

### **If I am unable to return to work because I am a member of an at-risk population, am I still eligible for unemployment?**

- Yes, if otherwise eligible

### **Do I need to be wearing a mask when I leave the house?**

- Non-medical face coverings are not required but are strongly encouraged while in public, especially in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing (grocery/retail stores, pharmacies, public transportation, etc.)

### **Can I go to church during phase one?**

- Yes, places of worship can become operational with reduced capacity and where strict physical distancing protocols can be maintained between non-household members, effective Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Places of worship should avoid gathering in groups of more than 10 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing.

### **Montanan out-of-state day trips clarification:**

- All travelers should carefully review state and local guidance related to travel restrictions for their destination and along the planned route before taking any trips.

**a: I'm a Montana resident and I need to make a day trip to another state for essential business. Do I need to quarantine upon my return.**

- Montana residents are allowed to make day trips to other states for the purpose of conducting essential business without having to quarantine upon return. Travelers should limit human interaction and follow social distancing guidelines.

**Out-of-Staters' day trips into Montana:**

**a: I'm an out-of-state resident and need to make an essential day trip to Montana. Do I need to quarantine before I can take care of the essential business?**

- Day trips into Montana by non-residents for the purpose of essential activities such as medical appointments and purchasing food is allowed. Travelers should limit human interaction, use social distancing guidelines, and are not allowed to spend the night without triggering the start of their quarantine period, where these activities are prohibited.

**b: I'm an out-of-state resident and I want to make a day trip to Montana for non-essential business or leisure/outdoor activity. Do I need to quarantine before participating in that non-essential business/outdoor activity?**

- Non-essential travel for non-residents into the state of Montana is not advised. All non-work travelers coming into Montana are required to quarantine for 14 days in Montana prior to participating in any non-essential activity in Montana.

## Employer Guidance: Phase One

### What does Phase One look like for me as an employer?

- Continue telework where possible
- Consider alternative schedules such as staggered shifts
- Provide accommodations to employees who are members of a vulnerable population or have vulnerable household members
- Close common areas where employees congregate if social distancing cannot be maintained
- Minimize non-essential travel
- Develop and implement appropriate policies, in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations and guidance, and informed by industry best practices, regarding:
  1. Social distancing
  2. Personal protective equipment (PPE)
  3. Temperature checks/symptom screening
  4. Testing, isolating, and contact tracing, in collaboration with public health authorities.
  5. Sanitation
  6. Use and disinfection of high traffic areas
- Monitor workforce for indicative symptoms. Do not allow people with symptoms of COVID-19 to work.
- Collaborate with public health officials when implementing policies and procedures for workforce contact tracing following an employee's COVID-19 positive test result.

### What does the health assessment for employees require?

- A health assessment is a series of questions about an employee's health each day as they report for work. Questions generally will cover if an individual is experiencing a fever, cough, flu like symptoms, sore throat, or general fatigue.
- We recommend using something similar to what is in the employee health agreement for COVID19 found here:  
<https://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/publichealth/documents/FCS/EmployeeHealthAgreement04242020.pdf>
- 1. A new dry cough
- 2. A newly identified shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

OR

- Two or more of the following symptoms:
  - 1. Fever (above 100.0 °F)
  - 2. Headache
  - 3. Chills
  - 4. Sore throat
  - 5. Repeated shaking with chills
  - 6. New loss of taste or smell

- 7. Muscle pain

**How do I verify that my employee is a member of an at-risk population? Can I ask for a doctor's note or other medical verification?**

- An employer may ask for a self-certification from the employee, where in general terms the basis of the at-risk status is explained. The employer can document that the employee was told that the employer was relying on the truth of the certification, and that falsification is grounds for immediate termination of employment.

If an employer chooses to ask for verification that an employee is a member of an at-risk population with regard to COVID-19, the employer needs to consider the following;

Inquiries relating to an employee's medical status likely implicate various federal and state nondiscrimination laws, including without limitation the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA), the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and the Montana Human Rights Act (MHRA). The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has provided some guidance for employers as to medical inquiries related to the current pandemic. The most up-to-date EEOC guidance is [here](#). See Responses C.5 and D.1. Other laws may also be [implicated](#), depending on an employers' approach is an employee chooses to decline to provide medical certification.

Further, employers should be cognizant that medical providers may be too overwhelmed with the present health crisis to provide medical certification at this time. Further, any medical information received must be kept confidential, separate from other employee personnel files, and generally subject to the same parameters as required by the ADA, FMLA, and MHRA. Employers should be aware of the need to treat all employees equally, with regard to requests for medical certification. Employers should also recognize that the Governor's current directives emphasize that any employees able to work remotely should be permitted to do so. If telework is available for an employee, allowing that option may provide a route to avoid asking for medical information.

**What physical distancing requirements are in place for businesses?**

- Social distancing of at least 6 feet between people must be maintained. This can be achieved through different means such as reducing business or seating capacity.

**Is the governor or the health department providing specific information to businesses on how to reopen while complying with social distancing, disinfection, etc.?**

- For further guidance and clarification, local businesses should consult with their local county health department about how Phase 1 measures will be implemented in their county leading up to May 4.
- In addition, DPHHS will be consulting and providing guidance to local jurisdictions, including local county sanitarians, regarding any questions or concerns businesses may have. This would include questions related to cleaning and disinfecting their establishments.



- At this time, DPHHS is working on information to supplement the Governor's directive and will be conducting calls with local sanitarians to provide the information necessary to help them oversee the safe operation of the establishments. State and local staff are working on guidance and instructions that will help business owners respond to and follow the directives.

## General Business Guidance: Phase One

### When do main street/ retail businesses re-open?

- Main street and retail businesses may re-open in accordance with the Phase One Terms of the Governor's Directive on Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

### I own a retail business. May I reopen under Phase One?

- Yes. 'Main Street and retail businesses can become operational with reduced capacity and where strict physical distancing protocols may be maintained.'
- Businesses that reopen must adhere to the following reopening guidelines for Phase One:
  - Health assessments must be conducted for all employees at the beginning of each shift.
  - In establishments where customers wait in line, non-household customers should remain physically distanced (e.g. 6' feet apart).
  - Waiting areas where adequate physical distancing cannot be maintained must be closed.
  - Customers should be encouraged to call for a reservation or appointment prior to entering the establishment. Businesses should use an online wait-listing app if possible.
- Physical distancing of 6' must be maintained between non-congregate (same household) customers, which may require:
  - A reduction in capacity;
  - A reduction in seating in service/waiting areas;
  - Management of waiting areas and lines;
  - Systems that reduce the amount of contact time between customers and staff.
- NOTE: This does not include gyms, or businesses/organizations pools or hot tubs; they will remain closed until Phase Two.

Local jurisdictions may choose to implement more stringent measures, so be sure to check with your local City/County Health Department for restrictions or additional requirements.

### Are dental offices allowed to reopen in phase one since we cannot accommodate the 6 foot rule?

- Dental and medical offices were not closed by directive. Healthcare services, including dental offices, are included in the list of essential services and were never required to close as part of the March 26 directive providing measures to stay at home and designating certain essential functions.

### Phase 1 Guidance for Pools and Hot Tubs at Licensed Public Accommodations (Hotels, Motels, Bed and Breakfasts, Tourist Homes, etcetera)

- Public Accommodation Pools/Hot Tubs are allowed to operate with reduced capacity of 50% of normal bather load and basic compliance with social distancing requirements.
- The CDC has indicated that properly maintained pool water inactivates the virus. It is critical that pools that have shut down during this time or reduced maintenance follow proper re-opening procedures and sampling of chemical parameters to ensure water is safe for use, prior to opening to

the public. Operators should work with their Certified Pool Operator and/or local/state sanitarian if questions arise regarding re-opening.

- If a facility has had a confirmed COVID-19 case they should follow the CDCs facility environmental cleaning procedures for deck areas, seating, locker rooms, and other areas of the establishment frequented by swimmers.

**Public Accommodation Pools and hot tubs** (Pools/hot tubs at Hotels, Motels, Bed and Breakfasts, Tourist Homes, etcetera):

- Only registered guests can use the facility;
- Front desk/gate attendant tracks occupancy, incoming and outgoing to ensure maximum occupancy does not exceed 50% capacity of normal bather load;
- Signage must be posted with the following or substantially similar wording. Signs shall be positioned for effective visual observation by hotel guests, such as on the entry way door:
  - “Hotel guests with fever, shortness of breath, a cough, or other COVID-19 symptoms must refrain from using the pool.”;
- No congregating in waiting areas, patrons should wait in an appropriately spaced line or way that observes social distancing;
- Locker rooms should remain closed, except for showering before and after swimming. Since only registered hotel guests are allowed to use the pool, individuals should change in their rooms;
- Social distancing should be applied in all common areas;
- 6 foot spacing between unassociated swimmers (i.e. not family members);
- 6 foot spacing between groups of no more than 10 (i.e. family groups and unrelated individuals must maintain 6 foot separation);
- Space deck tables and chairs to facilitate 6 foot spacing;
- Recommend, where possible, use buoys and floating pool ropes to mark off lanes or areas of pool for separation of large swimming areas;
- Recommend, where possible, marking stairs and walkways with directional arrows to keep in/out traffic separated.

**I own a dance studio. If we can follow correct social distancing with the correct spacing, ventilation and hand washing guidelines, can I open in Phase 1?**

- No. Adult dance studios, as with gymnastics, pilates, yoga studios, zumba classes, cheerleading, indoor rock climbing, martial arts, indoor basketball and other such facilities are not permitted to be open in Phase 1. These facilities have the same challenges with social distancing requirements, frequency of contacts and sanitation facing health clubs and gyms. Exceptions may be appropriate for businesses offering limited physical rehabilitation, physical therapy or other services in response to direction from a primary care physician. Businesses should confer with their county health officials if they believe those exceptions may be appropriate and should operate under guidelines of personal care services if they are permitted to open during Phase 1.
- However, based on Phase 1 youth sports guidance, dance schools can re-open for practices if the students are children and if physical distancing guidelines can be implemented. This includes limiting group size to 10 people or less and maintaining appropriate physical distancing between groups. Recitals would not be allowed in Phase 1 as they require assembly of a larger group, including instructors, parents, friends, and likely exceeding the limit of 10 people or less. These four criteria

also apply for facilities like gymnastics, pilates, yoga studios, zumba classes, cheerleading, indoor rock climbing, martial arts, indoor basketball and other such facilities

**What does a reduction in capacity mean?**

- A reduction in capacity (in order to safely operate) must be able to provide adequate physical distancing. This would be different for different types of businesses, but generally entails limiting the number of customers in store/shop at same time, or other measures a business would take to ensure distancing is being maintained.

## **Restaurant/Bar/Brewery/Distillery/Casino Guidance: Phase One**

**Can I open my establishment starting Monday, April 26 when main street and retail businesses can open?**

- No. Restaurants, bars, breweries, distilleries, and casinos can become operational on or after May 4, 2020 under strict physical distancing and reduced capacity protocols in accordance with State guidelines.
  - All patrons must be out of bars, restaurants, and casinos by 11:30 p.m. Breweries and distilleries shall follow existing laws on closing time.

**Can I open my establishment to full capacity on May 4, 2020?**

- No. You may open your establishment under strict physical distancing and reduced capacity protocols in accordance with State guidelines.
- Capacity must be limited to 50% of normal operating capacity to allow for adequate group spacing.

**Can a group of 10 be seated together if they are comfortable being that close with each other and trying to follow social distancing guidelines?**

- No, tables must be limited to six people per table.

**Can my bar serve food at the counter?**

- No. drinks and food must be served to customers at a table.

**Can my establishment self-service salad bar be open?**

- No, self-service buffets must be closed.

**My establishment offers self-service drinks. Can my customers still serve themselves fountain drinks?**

- Yes, customers may still serve themselves, however cups, straws, and lids should be behind a counter and handed to customers.

**Can I keep condiments on the table between customers?**

- No, table items including, condiments, menus, napkins, and décor, should be removed from the table unless they can be adequately cleaned between customers.

**Can my bar/brewery still fill growlers?**

- Yes, however growlers and refillable or reusable containers must be cleaned prior to being refilled.

**Where can I find the proper sanitization practices for my restaurant?**

- Materials will be available on the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) food and consumer services website.

**Do my establishment's servers have to put on a new set of gloves each time they serve food or can they bypass the gloves and just follow strict sanitizing guidelines?**

- The Governor's Directive does not require food service handlers to wear gloves. All employees should follow strict sanitizing and social distancing guidelines including frequent handwashing. Servers and kitchen staff must continue to follow all required food safety precautions including no bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods.
- The Department of Public Health and Human Services refers to further COVID-specific FDA guidance at <https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/cdepi/diseases/coronavirusmt#9247810539-food-safety-and-covid-19>. Select "Food Safety and COVID-19" drop-down, then select "FDA: Food safety and COVID-19".

**Do my establishment's servers and customers have to wear masks?**

- Although not required, use of a cloth face covering is recommended for staff where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Recommendations of face coverings for customers are not required by the directive, but may be required by local directives or individual business.

**How long can a customer remain in a business if they are within the capacity limits? Do I have to tell them to leave so other waiting customers can come in?**

- This is up to the individual business owner.
- Systems to encourage minimizing contact time between patrons are encouraged.

**What does my establishment need to clean between customers?**

- All surfaces occupied must be cleaned including tables, chairs, booths, and highchairs.
- Table items including condiments, menus, napkins, and décor should be removed from the table unless they can be adequately cleaned.

**How can my establishment provide for 6 feet of physical distancing between groups or tables?**

- Increase table spacing, removing tables, or marking tables as closed;
- Provide for a physical barrier between tables; or
- Back-to-back booth seating provides adequate separation.

**If I have different “sections” in my establishment including indoor and outdoor seating, are all sections in my establishment included in that 50% maximum capacity?**

- Yes. The 50% capacity applies for the entire establishment.

**Can my establishment sell drinks in glass or do they still have to be in to-go containers?**

- You can go back to serving in glass.

**Can my establishment serve food on plates or still to-go boxes?**

- Yes, you can go back to serving on plates.

**I am a small bar owner where the bar takes up most of the interior. Can I still allow customers into my establishment within the capacity guidelines if they cannot follow the 6-foot social distancing rule?**

- No. Bars must remain closed if they cannot comply with social distancing guidelines, including the 6-foot distancing rule.

**Can my bar place plastic restaurant grade sneeze shields up between the bar and behind the bar, much like grocery and convenient stores, so people can sit at the bar (and six feet between each other?) Can I contact my local health department and work with them to see if this is an option?**

- No, sitting or standing at bars or counters is not allowed per the directive.

**Phase one states that drink refills are not allowed. Can my establishment servers offer customers drink refills in a new glass or cup?**

- Yes, refills may be served only if it is a new glass or cup.

**Will alcohol takeout service/delivery still be allowed?**

- Yes, the ‘expansions for delivery and takeout services, as provided both in the March 24 and March 26 Directives, are extended through the end of the emergency.’

**I own gaming machines. How often do we have to clean machines?**

- Gaming machines must be adequately cleaned between each customer.

**How many gaming machines can my establishment have to safely comply with the social distancing guidelines?**

- Gaming machines that are operational must be spaced 6-foot apart. Machines must be placed out of service if adequate spacing cannot be assured.

**Can casinos still have back-to-back machines if they comply with the 6-foot center to center and 6 foot side-to-side rule since the back-to-backs are high enough that the customers have no face-to-face interaction or contact?**

- Yes, back-to-back machines are allowed as long as they can comply with the center/side distancing rules and machines are adequately cleaned in between customers.

Local jurisdictions may choose to implement more stringent measures, so be sure to check with your local City/County Health Department for restrictions or additional requirements.



## Personal Care Services Guidelines: Phase One

### When can personal care services re-open?

- They may re-open in accordance with the Phase One Terms of the Governor's Directive on Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

### What falls into the personal care services?

- Salons, Massage, Body Art, Barber Shops, etc.

### What are the phase one requirements for my business?

- Operations that require close personal contact for an extended period result in exposing staff and customers to greater levels of risk. These situations require additional safety and health precautions.
- Screen customers prior to appointment for symptoms of fever, shortness of breath or a cough. Customers that have any of these symptoms must be rescheduled.
- Stylist / artist / service-provider and customer would be a "station" that would be 6 feet away from other "stations".
- Provide for 6 feet of physical distancing between stations, this may require:
  - A reduction in capacity;
  - Increasing spacing, removing stations, or marking stations as closed;
  - Providing for a physical barrier between stations;
  - A reduction of seating in service and waiting areas; or
  - Systems that reduce the amount of contact time between customers and staff.

### Do I need to ask people to wear a mask and should I be wearing one as well?

- Utilize a face mask for staff and for customers whenever possible.

Local jurisdictions may choose to implement more stringent measures, so be sure to check with your local City/County Health Department for restrictions or additional requirements.

## Miscellaneous Questions: Phase One

### Guidance on Farmers Markets

- Farmers Markets may re-open only if they can follow strict social distancing and sanitation guidance. That should include clear markings for customers, and it is the responsibility of organizers to ensure that all vendors and customers are adhering to safe and sanitary operating conditions. Please note that additional restrictions may be placed on Farmers Markets by city and county health officials. Farmers Markets are encouraged to explore partnerships for food and produce vendors with local retailers for pickup or delivery services in lieu of regular gatherings if social distancing guidelines cannot be followed.

### Wedding Venue and Reception Areas

- Venues may conduct wedding ceremonies/services if they can operate with strict social distancing in place. These venues should follow guidance for places of worship for the purposes of operating in Phase 1. Receptions exceeding 10 or more are prohibited during Phase 1.

### Why are gyms / hot springs / pools not allowed to operate in Phase 1?

- Under Phase 1 of the Governor's Reopening Directive, gyms, pools and hot tubs may not reopen. Under Phase 2 of the Reopening Directive, they may become operational again with reduced capacity and only if they can adhere to strict physical distancing and if they exercise frequent sanitation protocols. Gyms and pools, by their nature, require individuals to be in close proximity to each other and lack the ability to easily adapt to required social distancing and sanitation practices before each individual use of gym equipment, pool or hot tub. Only once the Governor determines that the state can move on to Phase 2, will these facilities be reintegrated.

### Do gymnastic, Pilates and yoga studios need to follow the same guidance as gyms?

- As a general matter, gymnastics, Pilates and yoga studios are not permitted to be open in Phase 1. These facilities have the same challenges with social distancing requirements, frequency of contacts and sanitation facing health clubs and gyms. Exceptions may be appropriate for businesses offering limited physical rehabilitation, physical therapy or other services in response to direction from a primary care physician. Businesses should confer with their county health

officials if they believe those exceptions may be appropriate and should operate under guidelines of personal care services if they are permitted to open during phase 1.

## School Reopening Guidance: Phase One

### Will my school district be reopening?

- The decision on whether to re-open a school will be left to the discretion of the local school board. If the school does re-open, the earliest it may open for in-person learning is May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

### When will schools be re-opening?

- Beginning, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 all schools will have the option to re-open in accordance with the Governor's directive providing guidance for the phased reopening of Montana and establishing conditions for Phase One. The decision on whether to re-open, will be left to the discretion of the local school board.

### My child is in an at-risk population. Does he/she have to return to school?

- No, it is up to parental discretion. Students who are high risk or who have family members who are high risk will not be penalized for failing to attend and should continue to receive remote support and accommodation until the risks are reduced.

### Are spring sports and activities cancelled?

- These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis by local school boards with social distancing considerations prioritized. According to the Directive, cancelling extra-curricular activities may be an option considered to enhance social distancing efforts.

### Will graduation ceremonies be held?

- This decision will be made locally by the school board. The Governor's Directive offers several options that may be considered by school districts to enable the ability to comply with social distancing considerations, such as providing a live stream of the graduation ceremony, limiting spectator attendance, and conducting multiple ceremonies for larger schools.

### How can social distancing be maintained at schools?

- The Governor's Directive provides numerous suggestions for how schools could implement social distancing protocol:
  - Keep students with the same group and classroom and rotate teachers through
  - Consider reducing bus load to allow for one student per seat
  - Prevent any non-school staff, including parents, from entering the school
  - Cancel extracurricular activities
  - Consider students eating lunch in a classroom to help limit the mixing of students
  - Consider breaking larger classes into smaller groups.
  - Students may alternate school days or attend for half days.

### Does my child need to wear a mask to school?

- Requirements for personal protective equipment (PPE) will vary by school district, however, PPE such as masks are always encouraged.

**What cleaning protocols will be in place when school resumes?**

- Check with your local district for exact details but suggested cleaning and sanitation practices include:
- Frequent disinfecting of door handles, desks and other common spaces.
- Require handwashing in regular intervals.
- Keep libraries, gyms, and playgrounds off limits unless they can be sanitized between groups.
- Provide hand sanitizer.

**I am looking for more information on the Governor's guidelines for re-opening schools. Where do I go?**

- <https://covid19.mt.gov/joint-information-center>

## Outdoor Recreation/Outdoor Retailers: Phase One

### **I need exercise. Can I recreate/fish/camp/hunt in Phase One?**

- Yes. Outdoor recreation can ‘become operational if sites adhere to strict physical distancing between groups and exercise frequent sanitation protocols if public facilities are open’ (e.g. bathrooms, picnic areas, etc.).
- Individuals engaged in outdoor recreation must adhere to the following guidelines:
  - Areas that cannot practicably implement social distancing requirements or sanitation needs must remain closed.
- While public lands, fishing access sites, playgrounds, group-use areas and parks are encouraged to continue to provide outdoor recreation opportunities for local and regional users, this is at the discretion of local and state managers. Visitors should check the status of any closures and restrictions before going to the park/outdoor area in question.
- Individuals can engage in outdoor activity but should still comply with social distancing (6’ from others) and avoid gatherings of 10 people or more. Individuals may go to public parks and open outdoor recreation areas, including public lands in Montana provided they remain open to recreation.
- Montanans are discouraged from outdoor recreation activities that pose enhanced risks of injury or could otherwise stress the ability of local first responders to address the COVID-19 emergency (e.g., backcountry skiing in a manner inconsistent with avalanche recommendations or in closed terrain).
- If you are quarantining (e.g. have come from or traveled out-of-state) you cannot leave for groceries, public outdoor recreation (including hunting/fishing), to go to work or any other activity. You must remain at your place of quarantine for the duration of the quarantine period (14 days). Exceptions will only be made in the event of a medical emergency, fire, natural disaster or other act of God preventing the ongoing healthful habitation of a residence. (See more information below.)
- Local jurisdictions may choose to implement more stringent measures, so be sure to check with your local City/County Health Department for restrictions or additional requirements.

### **I am coming from out-of-state to fish/hunt/camp/recreate. Do I need to quarantine?**

- Yes. The Directive for travelers coming from out-of-state has been extended through the end of the emergency (unless modified by a subsequent Directive).
- Travelers coming from outside of Montana must self-quarantine for 14 days. (See section above for additional information.)
- Outfitters, camp hosts and other outdoor businesses should communicate to potential customers about the 14-day mandatory quarantine for those coming from out-of-state.

### **Will golf courses be able to stay open?**

- Yes. Outdoor recreation can ‘become operational if sites adhere to strict physical distancing between groups and exercise frequent sanitation protocols if public facilities are open’ (e.g. bathrooms, picnic areas, etc.).

- Individuals and businesses engaged in outdoor recreation must adhere to the following guidelines:
  - Areas that cannot practicably implement social distancing requirements or sanitation needs must remain closed.
- In addition to the above, retail/business requirements must be followed to reopen during Phase 1:
  - Health assessments must be conducted for all employees at the beginning of each shift.
  - In establishments where customers wait in line, non-household customers should remain physically distanced (e.g. 6' feet apart).
  - Waiting areas where adequate physical distancing cannot be maintained must be closed.
  - Customers should be encouraged to call for a reservation or appointment prior to entering the establishment. Businesses should use an online wait-listing app if possible.
- Physical distancing of 6' must be maintained between non-congregate customers, which may require:
  - A reduction in capacity (in order to safely operate, must be able to provide adequate physical distancing. This would be different for different types of businesses, but may entail limiting the number of customers in store/shop at same time, etc.
  - A reduction in seating in service/waiting areas;
  - Management of waiting areas and lines;
  - Systems that reduce the amount of contact time between customers and staff.
- Golf cart usage, as well as the usage of frequently touched items like sand rakes, ball washers, and flags must be sanitized between each use, and strict social distancing of non-congregate customers must be observed.
- Local jurisdictions may choose to implement more stringent measures, so be sure to check with your local City/County Health Department for restrictions or additional requirements.

**I am a fishing guide/outfitter. Can we operate under the new Directive?**

- Yes. 'Guides and outfitters may offer services consistent with any ongoing quarantine travel restrictions provided they adhere to social distancing guidelines and sanitation protocols.'
- Outdoor recreation and businesses can 'become operational if sites adhere to strict physical distancing between groups and exercise frequent sanitation protocols if public facilities are open' (e.g. shops, bathrooms, picnic areas, etc.).
- Individuals engaged in outdoor recreation must adhere to the following guidelines:
  - Areas that cannot practicably implement social distancing requirements or sanitation needs must remain closed.
- Guides and outfitters must take care to notify out of state guests of the requirement for 14-day quarantines upon arrival in Montana.
- Local jurisdictions may choose to implement more stringent measures, so be sure to check with your local City/County Health Department for restrictions or additional requirements.

**I own a fly fishing shop. Can I reopen during Phase 1?**

- Yes. Outdoor recreation businesses can 'become operational if sites adhere to strict physical distancing between groups and exercise frequent sanitation protocols if public facilities are open' (e.g. bathrooms, picnic areas, etc.).

- Individuals and businesses engaged in outdoor recreation must adhere to the following guidelines:
  - Areas that cannot practicably implement social distancing requirements or sanitation needs must remain closed.
- ‘Main Street and retail businesses can become operational with reduced capacity and where strict physical distancing preconditions may be maintained.’ (pg. 5)
- In addition to the above, retail/business requirements must be followed to reopen during Phase One:
  - Health assessments must be conducted for all employees at the beginning of each shift.
  - In establishments where customers wait in line, non-household customers should remain physically distanced (e.g. 6’ feet apart).
  - Waiting areas where adequate physical distancing cannot be maintained must be closed.
  - Customers should be encouraged to call for a reservation or appointment prior to entering the establishment. Businesses should use an online wait-listing app if possible.
- Physical distancing of 6’ must be maintained between non-congregate (same household) customers, which may require:
  - A reduction in capacity;
  - A reduction in seating in service/waiting areas;
  - Management of waiting areas and lines;
  - Systems that reduce the amount of contact time between customers and staff.
- Local jurisdictions may choose to implement more stringent measures, so be sure to check with your local City/County Health Department for restrictions or additional requirements.

**Additional considerations (related to recreation/fishing and boating): Guidelines for Services at State Parks, Fishing Access Sites and Wildlife Management Areas:**

- People looking to get outside and enjoy spring will continue to have ample opportunities with Gov. Steve Bullock’s phased approach to re-opening the state, which was announced Wednesday.
  - Most of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks’ sites typically open and operational at this time of year remain so. This includes all FWP fishing access sites, most state parks and those wildlife management areas that don’t have seasonal closures.
  - People heading outside still need to keep in mind Montana’s social distancing directives. Per Gov. Bullock’s “Reopening the Big Sky” plan, all who recreate outdoors should “avoid gathering in groups of more than 10 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing.” They are further asked to “exercise frequent sanitation protocols if public facilities are open” and continue to follow all previously established hygiene measures.

The following FWP updates are in response to Gov. Bullock’s plan announced on 4/22:

- Overnight camping opportunities will resume at most FWP fishing access sites and state parks on May 1.



- Campers between now and May 15 may encounter reduced amenities or limited services that are typical for the opening of early-season recreational sites. Please check the FWP website for specific site restrictions or closures.
- Group sites, including fishing piers, will open May 1.
- At all sites, as in other aspects of life, social distancing guidelines must be strictly followed.
- Visitor centers, park offices and FWP lobbies are still closed to the public at this time.
- Bannack State Park will remain closed until further notice.
- Float recreation on the Smith River will resume May 5. Between now and then, FWP staff will continue to work with local and federal partners on ways to safely allow recreation in this popular state park and river corridor once recreation activities resume.
- Out-of-state travelers are still required to follow the governor's 14-day quarantine directive when they come to Montana, as they carry the risk of spreading COVID-19 to Montana residents. Guidance for those directives can be found at [fwp.mt.gov/covid19](http://fwp.mt.gov/covid19). The directives include the requirements that those in quarantine cannot leave for groceries, recreation, work or any other activity.
- Paddlefish season (yellow tag) closures on the Yellowstone and Lower Missouri rivers are still in effect.
- Paddlefish season (white tag) on the Upper Missouri River will run as usual from May 1 through June 15. However, this year there will be no snag-and-release opportunity. Visit [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov) for information about other paddlefishing opportunities later in the year.
- Most wildlife management areas will remain under their normal seasonal closures until the standard May 15 date.
- The suspension of nonresident spring hunting for turkey and black bear will expire April 24. As in other circumstances, out-of-state travelers must follow the governor's 14-day quarantine directive.
- Hunter education class closures will extend through at least May 7. FWP is working to develop other class opportunities to meet the needs of students, and still align with social distancing guidelines and restrictions on the size of gatherings. As those logistics are finalized, more information will be available.
- As the governor's plan progresses through its three phases, FWP will announce further updates. For more information on FWP's response to COVID-19, please visit [fwp.mt.gov/covid19](http://fwp.mt.gov/covid19). For more information on Gov. Bullock's response, visit <https://covid19.mt.gov/>.

#### **Will private campgrounds be open?**

- Yes, private campgrounds may remain open so long as they are able to comply with the social distancing requirements.
- Travel from another state or country is a common source of COVID19 infection in Montana. Everyone who travels to Montana from another state or country must self-quarantine for 14-days or the duration of their stay, whichever is shorter. This applies to campground stays as well.
- Any person who has already arrived in Montana from another state or country for a non-work related purpose before the date of this Directive must immediately self-quarantine for the

remainder of a 14-day period beginning on the date of their arrival in Montana, or until their departure from Montana—whichever is sooner.

- Exclusions to this directive include public safety, public health, healthcare workers, travelers passing through on their way to another destination, and travelers visiting for work purposes.
- The Montana Department of Commerce will advise persons listing hotels, rental properties, or other short-term rentals in Montana—including but not limited to listings on such services as Airbnb, VRBO, HomeAway, and related services—to include notice of the mandatory quarantine for travelers from another state or country.
- Directive is mandatory, not optional. It can be enforced by DPHHS, the Attorney General, county attorney or other local authorities at the direction of a county attorney.

## Travel and Road Closures

### Is travel allowed? What about for out of state visitors?

- All travel should be limited to essential travel and travel for essential activities. People riding on public transit must comply with social distancing to the greatest extent feasible. When individuals need to leave their homes or residences, they should maintain social distancing of at least six feet from any person who is not a member of their immediate household, to the greatest extent possible.
- Out of state visitors are not restricted at this time, though everyone in Montana is subject to this order and required to minimize risk of exposure and transmission by limiting travel and activities outside of their homes.
- All travelers arriving in Montana for other than work purposes must quarantine for 14-days upon their arrival in the state.

### Are road closures in place anywhere in Montana?

- Road closures (associated with the stay-at-home Directive) are not in effect at this time
- See information on road closures at: <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/alerts.shtml>

### What is considered 'Essential Travel?'

- Essential Travel includes travel for any of the following purposes:
  - Any travel related to the provision of or access to Essential Activities, Essential Businesses and Operations, or Minimum Basic Operations.
  - Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons.
  - Travel to or from educational institutions for purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, and any other related services.
  - Travel to return to a place of residence from outside the jurisdiction.
  - Travel required by law enforcement or court order, including to transport children pursuant to a custody agreement.
  - Travel required for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside the State. Individuals are strongly encouraged to verify that their transportation out of the State remains available and functional prior to commencing such travel.

## Quarantine for Travelers Arriving in Montana: Through End of Emergency

### Do I have to quarantine if I come into the state? What if I'm working?

- Yes, the current requirement for those visiting from out of state is to quarantine for 14 days or for the duration of their visit – whichever is shorter. If Travel to the state is for work-related reasons, then you are exempt. Employees, such as seasonal workers or members of outdoor work crews, are exempt from the quarantine requirement during work hours, but should limit all contact with the public outside of work hours for two weeks. We recommend employers consult with their local health department for additional guidance regarding employee housing,

sanitation, etc. Local public health departments and boards of health also have the ability to implement more stringent restrictions.

**Do people staying at a vacation rental need to self-quarantine?**

- Yes, any visitor from another state or country traveling to Montana for non-work-related purposes, must self-quarantine for 14-days or the duration of their stay.
- Self-quarantine means that the visitor or resident must stay within the boundaries of the property they are residing in while in Montana, and cannot leave those boundaries or interact with other people. This includes the visitor or resident being prohibited from grocery stores, restaurants, gas stations/convenience stores, places of worship/churches, schools, and gatherings.

**Additional Information**

- Travel from another state or country is a common source of COVID19 infection in Montana.
- Everyone who travels to Montana from another state or country must self-quarantine for 14-days or the duration of their stay, whichever is shorter.
- Any person who has already arrived in Montana from another state or country for a non-work related purpose before the date of this Directive must immediately self-quarantine for the remainder of a 14-day period beginning on the date of their arrival in Montana, or until their departure from Montana—whichever is sooner.
- Exclusions to this directive include public safety, public health, healthcare works, travelers passing through on their way to another destination, and travelers visiting for work purposes.
- If you are self-quarantining you cannot leave for groceries, public outdoor recreation, to go to work or any other activity. You must remain at your place of quarantine for the duration of the quarantine period. Exceptions will only be made in the event of a medical emergency, fire, natural disaster or other act of God preventing the ongoing healthful habitation of a residence.
- The Montana Department of Commerce will advise persons listing hotels, rental properties, or other short-term rentals in Montana—including but not limited to listings on such services as Airbnb, VRBO, HomeAway, and related services—to include notice of the mandatory quarantine for travelers from another state or country.
- Directive is mandatory, not optional. It can be enforced by DPHHS, the Attorney General, county attorney or other local authorities at the direction of a county attorney.
- Montana Department of Commerce has at tourism informational line: 1-800-847-4868