



PUBLIC HEALTH

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April 23, 2020

RAVALLI COUNTY COVID-19 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

Contact:

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As of noon today, April 23, 2020, there are no new cases of COVID-19 in Ravalli County. We have had 5 cases. The first 3 cases recovered. The remaining 2 positive cases are in isolation and their contacts have been quarantined. It is expected the last 2 cases will be out of quarantine and isolation this weekend.

Public Health Officer and Incident Commander Dr. Carol Calderwood: "Ravalli County Health Officials and County COVID-19 Incident Management Team will be implementing Governor Bullock's "Reopening the Big Sky" for Montana's phased approach that was announced yesterday.

There is no magic formula for a perfect time to re-engage. Too soon; the virus could gain a foothold in our community and identifying isolation and quarantine patients becomes difficult if not impossible. There is also the possibility of compromising our medical facilities ability to care for our residents. If we wait too long to reopen; residents become disengaged emotionally and economic loss and overall community welfare is at risk.

The success of reopening is critical to people and businesses taking personal responsibility. We all have to self-enforce. COVID-19 is still here. It can still be carried home to friends and family. Now is the time to continue vigilance or the past sacrifices were for nothing.

There is a lot of information in the Reopening the Big Sky. The best source for questions is to call the COVID-19 State hotline at 888-333-0461, or go to COVID-19@mt.gov.

Businesses are only going to succeed and we're only going to be able to move forward if everybody does their part."

The Ravalli County Emergency Operations Center is open from 8am to 6pm, 406-375-6650. The Center is available to answer questions about COVID-19, and record out of State arrivals.

A summary of some of the major points:

Things that did NOT change:

Protecting the most vulnerable, personal health actions – distancing 6ft., wearing masks, handwashing, sanitizing, if you feel sick – stay at home; long term care and assisted living with continued strict protocols and no visitors; and 14-day out of state quarantine, vulnerable stay home, and minimize travel.

We still need to be masking, social distancing, staying home when we're sick, staying away from the vulnerable populations.

Things that DID change:

April 26 – Stay at Home direction is lifted but strongly encouraged for compromised/vulnerable people, churches open still using 6 ft. distancing guidelines.

April 27 – retail stores and main street businesses open [salons, spas, personal care, pet grooming] with reduced capacity and physical distancing. Some of our businesses that are now open are complying, others are marginal – it is up to each person to be safe, and take personal responsibility for safe surroundings.

May 4 – Restaurants, bars, casinos, breweries, and distillers open with reduced capacity, physical distancing and close by 11:30 p.m.

May 7 – Schools can open

Theatre's and Gyms – No decision as to opening date.

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