

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 2/16/2021

**RAVALLI COUNTY COVID-19 Update  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

Hamilton, Mont. – In response to Governor Greg Gianforte issued new directives and executive order related to COVID-19, last week, Ravalli County Public Health and Health officer, Dr. Carol Calderwood would like to issue the following statement to the residents of Ravalli County.

*Hang tough and continue the good job you are doing, citizens of Ravalli County! Masking is still one very important tool for us all to protect each other, decrease spread to the most vulnerable, and to keep businesses and schools open.*

*Though I foresee continued improvement in testing, treatment, and percentage of community immunity, we are still not out of the woods. We still have moderate community spread, though the majority of cases diagnosed are within close contact groups. (Thanks to the tireless work of Public Health, contract tracers.)*

*For now, I strongly recommend continued masking in settings where people congregate with higher density, such as schools and businesses. Working together as a community, we can continue to move forward, minimizing impacts of the pandemic on health, economy, and society.*

*-Dr. Carol Calderwood*

Public Health continues to recommend following CDC guidelines,

- Wear a mask.
- Watch your distance.
- Wash your hands.
- Keep your cohort group small and stay home if you are sick.

There will not be a mandate in Ravalli County. Ravalli County business and residents have the luxury of choice. However, with choice comes the responsibility and accountability we have to each other in regards to respect of individual space as well as respect to business and their preferred practices. Masking, handwashing and distancing serve to protect. Regardless of your choice, Public Health is asking the community to be respectful. Thank you.

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