



## **New Public Health Order limits large gatherings and events to 250 indoors and 500 outdoors**

*Great Falls, MT* – Effective immediately, Cascade City-County Health Department is issuing a Public Health Order limiting events and gatherings to no more than 250 people indoors and 500 outdoors.

Large gatherings are known to be a cause of the spread of COVID-19, and additional cases impede Public Health's ability to do case isolation, contact tracing, and quarantine of close contacts to cases. CCHD Health Officer Trisha Gardner states that "Cascade City-County Health Department is continuously tracking the COVID-19 situation in Montana and Cascade County. The recent rise in cases is very concerning, and large events are known to be a contributing factor in the increasing caseload. Placing reasonable restrictions on events is a measure we can take to continue to protect our community. All of us must do our part in keeping our families, friends, neighbors, and critical workers safe and healthy so that our communities can stay open for business."

Phase 2 of Governor Bullock's "Reopening the Big Sky" plan declares that "**Groups larger than 50 people should be cancelled unless physical distancing can be maintained.** If you are planning an event with more than 50 people you should consult with your local public health office on a plan to implement adequate social distancing."

The new CCHD Order declares that organizers of events and gatherings between 100 and 500 people must adhere to the following:

- At least 10 days prior to event or gathering, submit a detailed plan to CCHD outlining protective measures and environmental controls to reduce the risk of disease transmission.
  - Event guidance packets can be found at [http://www.cchdmt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2020-05-21-Phase-2\\_CCHD-Event-Guidance\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cchdmt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2020-05-21-Phase-2_CCHD-Event-Guidance_FINAL.pdf).
- Maintain strict physical distancing of 6 feet between individuals or between groups of family members.
- Follow guidance provided by CCHD regarding event planning and ensure plan is adhered to at the time of the event or gathering.

The order will be enforced with a complaint driven process. CCHD will verify the complaint and then refer to Law Enforcement and/or the County Attorney's Office for enforcement against the event or gathering organizer and attendees. Event or gathering organizers may face a misdemeanor charge under MCA 50-2-124 for each attendee at the event or gathering and/or subject to enforcement pursuant to MCA 50-1-103 and 50-2-123.

CCHD continues to urge people to continue practicing all the proven prevention methods that are known to slow the spread of COVID-19, such as social distancing, wearing face coverings, good hand hygiene, and frequent sanitation.

"I cannot stress enough how critical—and easy—it is for everyone to do what they can to help slow the spread of this disease. A few simple steps are needed from each individual, and our community will see the benefit of having fewer cases," urges Gardner.

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**For media inquiries, contact Anna Attaway at 415-590-0916.**

*Due to schedule demands, CCHD's Health Officer Trisha Gardner will be available for interviews beginning on Wednesday, July 15.*