

**From:** [Anderson, Tim - FNS](#)  
**To:** [SM.FN.SNAP-PDD-COVID](#)  
**Cc:** [Fraley, Philip - FNS](#); [Platin, Dana - FNS](#); [Mardyla-Goddard, Kari - FNS](#); [Morrison, Star - FNS](#); [Anderson, Tim - FNS](#)  
**Subject:** Request to extend adjustments through July - Montana  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 9, 2020 3:07:39 PM  
**Attachments:** [3-18-20 DPHHS Announces Plan to Continue Services While \(002\).docx](#)  
[Executive Order-COVID-19.pdf](#)  
[Phase 2 directive.pdf](#)  
[RE COVID-19 Waiver Extension request.msg](#)

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Good afternoon,

Attached please find a request from Montana to extend two adjustments through the month of July.

Montana is requesting to extend the following adjustments:

- Eliminate the interview at both initial application and recertification – COV-I06
- Extend certification periods and waive periodic reports

Per recent guidance, these requests are to be routed to National Office for review and consideration. I am attaching all the supporting documentation submitted for these requests here. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

*Tim Anderson*

*Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)*

*Mountain Plains Regional Office*

*1244 Speer Blvd., Suite 903*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 19, 2020**

Contact: Jon Ebelt, Public Information Officer, DPHHS, (406) 444-0936  
Chuck Council, Communications Specialist, DPHHS, (406) 444-4391

## **DPHHS Announces Plan to Continue Services While Temporarily Closing Some Offices in Response to COVID-19**

- *DPHHS has technology infrastructure in place to maintain services*

Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) Director Sheila Hogan today announced steps the agency is taking to ensure Montanans continue to have access to various agency programs and services, while still protecting the health and safety of the clients and staff related to the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) situation.

Hogan said in response to COVID-19 concerns, select DPHHS offices with services that require face-to-face interaction with clients and staff will be closed beginning **Friday, March 20, 2020** until further notice. These closures will impact the Offices of Public Assistance, Child and Family Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Medical Marijuana Program, Vital Statistics, Women, Infants and Children, Child Support Enforcement, and the Developmental Disabilities Program.

**“DPHHS has the technology infrastructure in place to continue serving clients during this time,” Hogan said. “For now, we’ll be expanding on the use of various tools already in use until we can resume in-person assistance that we know is important.”**

Here’s the changes Montanans can expect:

### **Offices of Public Assistance (OPA)**

DPHHS will shift additional staff to serve clients through the Public Assistance Helpline at 1-888-706-1535. Currently, the Helpline handles about 1,000 calls a day. There, clients are able to apply for SNAP food assistance, TANF cash assistance or health care coverage. Call scheduling is a convenient feature that allows clients to make an appointment for a call back instead of waiting on hold. Clients can check their SNAP benefits at 1-866-850-1556.

The website [apply.mt.gov](http://apply.mt.gov) is also another option. By opening an online account, clients can apply for, renew, report changes and check their benefits online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To date, about 20,000 clients already have active online accounts.

Clients can also submit applications via the OPA fax number at 1-877-418-4533 or by mail at Field Offices of Public Assistance, PO Box 202925, Helena MT 59620.

Montanans are also encouraged to reach out to OPA office staff through email. A list of OPA office email contact information can be found here:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/OfficeofPublicAssistance>

Current offices are located in Anaconda, Billings, Bozeman, Browning, Butte, Glasgow, Great Falls, Hamilton, Hardin, Havre, Helena, Kalispell, Lame Deer, Lewistown, Libby, Miles City, Missoula, Polson, and Wolf Point.

A tutorial on how to use [apply.mt.gov](http://apply.mt.gov) is available on the agency YouTube page at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtPFbUqjTos> and

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADwEiJA2pSQ>

### **Child and Family Services Division (CFSD)**

The only change at this time will be to family visitations. Rather, CFSD staff will be reaching out to families on their current caseload to arrange the best way to hold visitations through technology such as Skype or Facetime.

CFSD staff will continue to investigate reports of child abuse and neglect, and deliver services and respond to the needs of children and families. Also, CFSD staff will be reaching out to all families in their caseload to make sure cell phone contact information is current. To report suspected child abuse or neglect, please call Centralized Intake at 1-866-820-5437.

### **Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED)**

Child Support payments will continue to be processed and disbursed during this time. Parents and employers are encouraged to make their child support payments electronically at <https://app.mt.gov/csp/>. For case specific questions, CSED staff are available by phone and email.

### **Disability Employment and Transition Division (DETD)**

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Blind and Low Vision instructional staff will continue to support Montanans with disabilities by providing employment, transition, and telecommunication access services via telephone or online where appropriate. DETD staff will be reaching out to consumers on their current caseload to arrange the best way to continue services. DETD contact information: (877) 296-1197 (toll-free consumer line); (406) 444-2590 (voice/TTY); or email [vrinfo@mt.gov](mailto:vrinfo@mt.gov).

### **Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**

WIC offices will be closed to the public. Services will be available remotely and benefits will continue to be issued for anyone currently on the program. Clients may reach out their local WIC

clinic ([www.signupwic.com](http://www.signupwic.com) ) or call the state office to inquire about WIC benefits. The state office may be reached at 1-800-433-4298 or emailed at [montanawicprogram@mt.gov](mailto:montanawicprogram@mt.gov). WIC Benefits issued on EBT cards will continue to be used as usual. Anyone experiencing difficulty with getting formula at their local store is encouraged to contact the state office.

### **Montana Office of Vital Records**

The Montana Office of Vital Records, located at 111 North Sanders in Helena, will continue to serve the public via phone and online for birth and death certificate needs. Please call 406-444-2685 or email: [hsvitalrecords@mt.gov](mailto:hsvitalrecords@mt.gov) or visit <https://dphhs.mt.gov/vitalrecords>. Business needs for clerk and recorders, clerk of district courts, coroners, funeral homes, hospitals and midwives will continue as normal.

### **Development Disabilities Program (DDP)**

DDP will continue to support Montanans via telephone, video chat, online and via individually scheduled meetings as needed. Individuals and families are encouraged to stay in close contact with the case manager and/or regional administrator. Visit <https://dphhs.mt.gov/dsd/developmentaldisabilities/DevelopmentalDisabilitiesRegionalOffices> for local contact information.

**STATE OF MONTANA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 2-2020**

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**EXECUTIVE ORDER DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY TO EXIST WITHIN  
THE STATE OF MONTANA RELATED TO THE COMMUNICABLE DISEASE  
COVID-19 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS**

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**WHEREAS**, the World Health Organization has declared the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus a pandemic;

**WHEREAS**, as of March 10, 2020, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates there are over 125,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 worldwide with over 900 confirmed cases in the United States;

**WHEREAS**, most states in the United States are experiencing confirmed cases of COVID-19;

**WHEREAS**, the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) recognizes COVID-19 as a threat to the residents of Montana;

**WHEREAS**, although there are presently no confirmed cases in Montana, the Montana DPHHS, local health departments, health and medical departments and local jurisdictions have activated response plans and protocols to prepare for the arrival of the virus in Montana;

**WHEREAS**, these partners have also worked to identify, contact, and test individuals in the State of Montana who have been potentially exposed to COVID-19 in coordination with the CDC;

**WHEREAS**, proactively implementing mitigation measures to slow the spread of the virus is in the best interests of the State of Montana and its people;

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19, a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death, is caused by SARS-CoV-2 Virus, which is a new strain of Coronavirus that had not been previously identified in humans and can easily spread from person-to-person;

**WHEREAS**, the CDC identifies the potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 both globally and in the United States as “high,” and has advised that person-to-person spread of COVID-19 will continue to occur globally, including within the United States;

**WHEREAS**, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Secretary Alex Azar, declared a public health emergency for COVID-19 beginning on January 27, 2020;

**WHEREAS**, on March 3, 2020, Governor Bullock formed a Multi-Agency Executive Task Force to prepare the State for COVID-19;

**WHEREAS**, on March 3, 2020, Governor Bullock activated the Montana Disaster and Emergency Services State Emergency Coordination Center;

**WHEREAS**, the Montana State Emergency Coordination Center is coordinating resources across state government to support the Montana DPHHS and local officials in alleviating the impacts to people, property, and infrastructure, and is assessing the magnitude of the incident within the State;

**WHEREAS**, the circumstances of this outbreak may exceed the capacity of the services, personnel, equipment, supplies and facilities of any single jurisdiction and the combined forces of a mutual aid region or regions to combat;

**WHEREAS**, the availability and utilization of all necessary state government services, equipment, and suppliers under this declaration will further the efforts to protect health and safety and to preserve the lives, property, and resources of the people of the State of Montana;

**WHEREAS**, in addition to the disaster/emergency authorities specified in Title 10 of the Montana Code Annotated, Montana law also authorizes the State to coordinate and direct a coordinated public health response to communicable disease outbreaks as specified in Title 50; and

**WHEREAS**, under these conditions pursuant to §§ 10-3-302, 10-3-311, and 10-3-312, MCA, the Governor may mobilize state resources to protect life, health, and property and may expend funds up to the amount determined by the Office of Budget and Program Planning to meet contingencies and needs arising from these conditions.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, STEVE BULLOCK**, Governor of the State of Montana, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor under the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, Title 10, Chapter 3, MCA, and under other applicable statutes, do hereby declare that an emergency exists statewide, as defined in §§ 10-3-103 and 10-3-302, MCA.

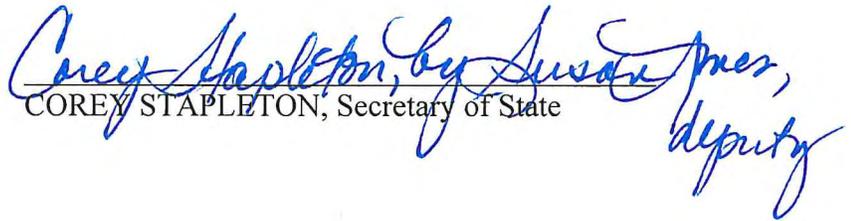
This Order is effective immediately.



GIVEN under my hand and the GREAT SEAL of  
the State of Montana this 12<sup>th</sup> day of  
MARCH 2020.

  
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STEVE BULLOCK, Governor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
COREY STAPLETON, Secretary of State  
deputy

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK  
GOVERNOR



MIKE COONEY  
LT. GOVERNOR

**TO:** Montanans; all officers and agencies of the State of Montana  
**FROM:** Governor Steve Bullock  
**DATE:** May 19, 2020  
**RE:** Directive implementing Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020 and establishing conditions for Phase Two

This Directive provides the conditions for the second phase of the phased reopening of Montana.

Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020 declare that a state of emergency exists in Montana due to the global outbreak of COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus.

For the duration of the emergency, § 10-3-104(2)(a), MCA, provides authority to the Governor to “suspend the provisions of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business or orders or rules of any state agency if the strict compliance with the provisions of any statute, order, or rule would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency or disaster.” Further, the statute authorizes the Governor to “control ingress and egress to and from an incident or emergency or disaster area, the movement of persons within the area, and the occupancy of premises within the area.” Section 10-3-104(2)(c), MCA.

In addition, Montana’s public health laws authorize the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS or Department), acting under the Governor’s direction, to “issue written orders for correction” of “conditions of public health importance,” to “prevent and mitigate conditions of public health importance” through measures including “isolation and quarantine” and “abatement of public health nuisances.” Section 50-1-202, MCA. The Department, under the Governor’s direction, may take action to correct public health deficiencies in “buildings or facilities where persons assemble.” Section 50-1-203, MCA. The Department, under the Governor’s direction, is also authorized to impose quarantine and isolation measures to protect public health. Section 50-1-204, MCA. Montana law provides that these authorities will be utilized to respond to an “outbreak of disease,” § 10-3-103(4), MCA, and to “limit the transmission of the communicable disease.” *See, e.g.,* § 50-1-101(6), MCA.

On March 15, 2020, I issued a Directive closing non-residential public schools in Montana through March 27. On March 24, I extended non-residential public school closures through April 10. The March 24 Directive also closed certain on-premises dining and beverage businesses while expanding and encouraging delivery, takeout, and drive-up options. On March 26, 2020, I issued a Directive providing that, to the maximum extent possible, all individuals stay at their home or place of residence unless engaging in certain essential activities or functions through April 10. This Directive also required the temporary closure of non-essential businesses, provided social distancing requirements, and limited non-essential travel. On March 30, I issued a Directive limiting evictions, foreclosures, and disconnections through April 10. On March 30, I also issued a Directive requiring a 14-day self-quarantine for individuals arriving in Montana for non-work-related travel through April 10. On April 7, I extended these Directives through April 24. I also issued a Directive providing additional guidance related to evictions and providing a rent assistance program on April 13, effective through April 24. I

have also issued other Directives that, unlike these, are effective for the duration of the state of emergency.

Montana's response to COVID-19 has been necessary to slow the spread of new infections. These efforts have been effective. To date, our health care system has not been overwhelmed and we continue to work to increase our testing capacity. Through the collective efforts of all Montanans to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, Montana now has fewer than two dozen active cases and one of the lowest per capita rates of infection in the United States.

Accordingly, on April 22, 2020, I issued a Directive and guidelines for a phased reopening of Montana. The April 22 Directive provided guidance applicable to all phases and established the conditions for Phase One. I expanded some of the conditions for Phase One through an additional Directive on May 8, 2020.

I have developed Montana's phased reopening plan by relying 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-by-county basis. And it contains the ability to adjust phases based on local or regional conditions. In consultation with public health professionals, healthcare providers, business leaders, and emergency management professionals, I have determined that the phased reopening approach described in this Directive is necessary in coping with and responding to the emergency.

This Directive is the next step in Montana's reopening, to Phase Two. I stress, however, that individual responsibility—such as good hygiene, frequent cleaning of highly-touched surfaces, and strict adherence to social distancing—remains Montana's best tool in the fight against new infections. This Directive is not an invitation to forget the lessons that Montana has learned in its fight against COVID-19 these past months. Rather, it is a framework to apply those lessons as we move toward a new normal. In so doing, we must continue to place a special emphasis on protecting those in Montana most vulnerable to complications from COVID-19. That crucial work demands a collective effort by all Montanans. By continuing to take these measures seriously, we protect our family, friends, and neighbors as Montana begins to emerge from its initial encounter with COVID-19.

Local officials should coordinate on a regional basis and continue to assess the conditions in their jurisdictions. As with prior Directives, nothing in this Directive prohibits local public health authorities from adopting more restrictive approaches based on local need.

Therefore, in accordance with the authority vested in me under the Constitution, Article VI, Sections 4 and 13, and the laws of the State of Montana, Title 10, Chapter 3 and Title 50, Chapter 1, MCA, and other applicable provisions of the Constitution and Montana law, I hereby direct the following measures be in place in the State of Montana effective immediately, except where specified:

**Phase-One and All-Phases Guidance to Continue Except Where Modified in this Directive**

- Except where specifically modified in this Directive, the April 22 Directive, the May 8 Directive, and the related guidance applicable to all phases and to Phase One remain in effect.

**Other Directives to Continue**

- The March 30 and April 13 Directives providing measures to limit foreclosures, evictions, and disconnections from service and all of their terms remain in effect through May 24, unless modified by subsequent Directive, except as follows:
  - For individuals who are members of a vulnerable population, who have suffered a significant financial hardship as a result of the outbreak, and who, pursuant to this Directive, remain sheltered at home, the protections of the March 30 and April 13 Directives continue and will expire 30 days after the individual ceases to shelter at home or at the end of the emergency, whichever is sooner.
  - An individual who seeks the protection of these provisions to prevent a foreclosure, eviction, or disconnection after June 1 must make a basic showing to their bank, landlord, or utility that they are (1) sheltering in place under this order, are (2) a member of a vulnerable population, and (3) have been financially impacted as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.
  - Before moving forward with an eviction, foreclosure, or disconnection against an individual who is a member of a vulnerable population, the entity initiating the eviction, foreclosure, or disconnection must provide adequate notice of the opportunity to seek the protection of this Directive by making the showing described above.
  - The rent and mortgage assistance program established in the April 13 Directive remains in effect for the duration of the emergency. Interested individuals may apply at [covidrelief.mt.gov](https://covidrelief.mt.gov).
  
- All Directives set to expire at the end of the emergency retain their effective date and terms, including, for example, Directives providing for increased access to telehealth and telemedicine services and coverage, except to the limited extent their provisions are in conflict with the terms of this Directive.

### **Guidance Applicable to All Phases**

- Individuals should continue to practice good hygiene by adhering the following guidelines:
  - Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces.
  - Avoid touching your face.
  - Sneeze or cough into a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
  - Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.
  - Strongly consider using non-medical face coverings while in public, especially in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing (*e.g.*, grocery/retail stores, pharmacies, public transportation).
  
- People who feel sick should stay at home.
  - Do not go to work or school.
  - Contact and follow the advice of your medical provider.
  - Follow local health department guidance on isolation and quarantine.
  
- Employers should:
  - Develop and implement appropriate policies, in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations and guidance, and informed by industry best practices, regarding:
    - Social distancing and protective equipment.
    - Temperature checks and/or symptom screening.
    - Testing, isolating, and contact tracing, in collaboration with public health authorities.

- Sanitation.
- Use and disinfection of common and 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.
- Encourage voluntary participation of employees in any surveillance testing designed to provide community-wide early warning by local public health officials.

### **Phase Two: Increase in Permissible Group Size to Groups of 50**

- Effective June 1, avoid gathering in groups of more than 50 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing. It is recommended to continue to social distance in gatherings of any size.
- 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.
- Consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidelines, event cutoff threshold is at the discretion of community leadership based on current circumstances in your community.
- Physical distancing guidelines for groups and gatherings do not apply to household members.

### **Phase Two: Individuals and Employers**

- Effective June 1, the below guidelines apply to both individuals and businesses in Phase Two. Individuals and businesses should also follow the Phase Two guidelines provided in the attached Appendix A, also in effect June 1.
- Vulnerable individuals should continue to adhere to the stay-at-home guidance.
- All businesses may operate, provided they adhere to physical distancing and the conditions in this Directive, the Phase Two Guidelines, and all other Directives and guidance remaining in effect. Businesses should follow CDC sanitation protocols.
- Restaurants, bars, breweries, distilleries and casinos remain in the same operational status as Phase One, but with an increase to 75 percent capacity.
- Gyms, indoor group fitness classes, pools, and hot tubs can operate at 75 percent capacity and only if they can adhere to strict physical distancing and they exercise frequent sanitation protocols.
- Concert halls, bowling alleys, and other places of assembly may operate with reduced capacity and must adhere to strict physical distancing guidelines set forth for group gatherings and follow CDC sanitation protocols.

- Child-care facilities can increase capacity consistent with the guidelines and FAQ contained in the April 1 Directive on childcare and if physical distancing guidelines can be implemented, however the 24-person cap per facility no longer applies effective June 1.
- Employers should continue to permit telework as much as possible and where feasible, but refer to guidelines for Phase One where telework is not possible.
- Senior living or assisted living facilities must continue to follow the guidelines of Phase One.
- Outdoor recreation remains in the same operational status as Phase One.

### **Phase Two: Travel Quarantine to Expire June 1**

- Effective June 1, the provisions of the March 30 Directive requiring quarantine for non-work-related arrivals in Montana will no longer be in effect.
- The Montana National Guard remains authorized to conduct temperature checks, assess individuals for COVID-19 symptoms, and to inquire about exposure history of any traveler arriving in Montana from another state or country through air or rail travel, consistent with the terms and restrictions provided in the March 30 Directive.
- The State will execute a robust public health plan in communities most impacted by tourism, including:
  - Surveillance testing of employees.
  - Enhanced contact tracing resources deployed to these areas as requested by local authorities.
  - Ability to surge personal protective equipment to impacted health care systems.
  - Guidelines for operation for businesses that see high-tourist activity.

### **Directive Is Public Health Order and Enforceable By County Attorney**

- 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 to Assist in Administration of this Public Health Order**

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

### **Less-Restrictive Local Ordinances Preempted**

- This Directive is in effect statewide in Montana. In the interest of uniformity of laws and to prevent the spread of disease, all inconsistent emergency county health ordinances are preempted by this Directive, but only to the extent they are less restrictive.

**Authorities: Sections 10-3-103, -104, -302, and -305, MCA; §§ 50-1-202, -203, and -204, MCA; 37 A.G. Op. 132 (1978); Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020; Montana Constitution, Art. VI, Sections 4 and 13; and all other applicable provisions of state and federal law.**

### **Limitations**

- This Directive is effective immediately and expires at the end of the emergency, except where specified.
- This Directive shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.
- Nothing in this Directive shall be construed to limit, modify, or otherwise affect the authority granted by law to the Governor, any department, agency, political subdivision, officer, agent, or employee of the State of Montana except as expressly provided in this Directive or other Directives now in effect implementing Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020.
- If any provision of this Directive or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, this invalidity does not affect any other provision or application of this Directive, which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Directive are declared to be severable.
- This Directive is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the State of Montana, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.