



Montana Association of Counties

Serving Montana Counties Since 1909

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COORDINATION WITH PUBLIC HEALTH & LAW ENFORCEMENT

PLEASE NOTE THAT FEDERAL AND STATE GUIDANCE IS CHANGING RAPIDLY so the links in the document should be used regularly.

Updated information from CDC is imbedded in the links below and the main source of federal policy information can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services is maintaining an updated Coronavirus site at <https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/cdepi/diseases/coronavirusmt>.

Governor Bullock declared a State of Emergency in Montana and information related to the Emergency Declaration can be found at <https://dphhs.mt.gov/aboutus/news/2020/stateofemergencydeclared>.

BUSINESS CLOSURES, OFFICE CLOSURES & QUARANTINE

- Quarantine and isolation measures vested in public health officials can be found in [Title 50, Chapter 1](#). These provisions allow for the closure of offices, buildings, and quarantine or isolation of people in an effort to protect and promote the public health. Public health professionals do not exercise this authority lightly, and their authority is clearly supported in statute.
- [7-4-2211 \(2\)](#) requires “The sheriff, the county clerk, the clerk of the district court, the treasurer, the county attorney, the county auditor (in counties in which that officer is maintained), and the county assessor shall keep their offices open for the transaction of business during the office hours determined by the governing body by resolution after a public hearing and only if consented to by any affected elected county officer, every day in the year except legal holidays and Saturdays.”
- **We encourage local elected officials to coordinate closely with your law enforcement and local public health officials in making decisions about office closures, work hours, or other community restrictions during this public health emergency, specifically as they relate to the closure of public offices and the duties of local elected officials.**

Should an incident or occurrence make staffing and operations impossible or a detriment to public health, we recommend the governing body declare an emergency under [Title 10, Chapter 3, Part 4](#). These emergency declarations should be done in consultation with your Sheriff’s Office and with your local health official in an attempt to coordinate roles, responsibilities, and authorities in advance of any unintended consequences.

- Cooperation and a collaborative response are needed at this time. Governing boards, law enforcement, and public health officials need to work together to ensure that essential operations, public safety, and public health remain the top priority.

- Consider, where possible, canceling or adjusting non-essential in-person employee meetings and gatherings of 10 or more individuals for the time being. Please work with staff to develop alternatives for conducting these meetings and use good judgment when determining which meetings are essential.
- Agencies should assess the need for conferences and large gatherings of 50 people or more and whether alternative accommodations can be made to mitigate exposure. If it is determined a conference is essential and cannot be delayed or conducted by other means, refer to local health authority guidance on strategies to mitigate exposure.
- Work with staff to develop alternatives for conducting these meetings to minimize risk, including the use of remote meeting technology.