

**EMERGENCY HEALTH RULE/ORDER RELATING TO COVID-19
MARCH 30, 2020**

WHEREAS, § 50-2-116(2)(c)(i) provides that a local board of health may adopt regulations that do not conflict with § 50-50-126, MCA, or rules adopted by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services;

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

WHEREAS, Steve Bullock, Governor of Montana declared a statewide emergency relating to COVID-19 on March 12, 2020 via executive order 2-2020;

WHEREAS, President Donald Trump declared a countrywide emergency related to COVID-19 on March 13, 2020 via presidential proclamation;

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 the COVID-19 will continue to occur globally, including within the United States, Montana and potentially Pondera County;

WHEREAS, the CDC recommends to avoid spreading COVID-19 to increase social distancing between individuals to six feet;

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

WHEREAS, there are confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the state of Montana and in surrounding counties;

WHEREAS, the Pondera County Board of Health has also worked to identify, contact and test individuals who have potentially been exposed to COVID-19, in coordination with the state of Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services and the CDC;

WHEREAS, proactively implementing mitigation measures to slow the spread of the virus is in the best interest of Pondera County and its people;

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

WHEREAS, the circumstances of this outbreak may exceed the capacity of the services,

personnel, equipment, supplies and facilities of Pondera County;

WHEREAS, Governor Bullock issued a Directive on March 15, 2020, closing all public schools and limiting social gatherings and strongly recommending all people practice social distancing to limit the spread of the virus;

WHEREAS, Governor Bullock has issued several additional Directives addressing this emergency situation with the most recent being issued on March 26, 2020, effective statewide at 12:01 a.m. on March 28, 2020, extending through April 10, 2020;

WHEREAS, it is imperative that local governments act in harmony with state government to prevent confusion regarding which establishments are closed and utilize all tools to prevent and delay the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 constitutes an existing imminent danger to the public health, safety, and welfare of the people of Pondera County;

WHEREAS, on March 30, 2020, the Board of Health held an emergency meeting and made oral findings which are incorporated by reference to this order, regarding the danger presented by COVID-19;

WHEREAS, to provide for additional enforcement mechanisms under § 50-2-124, MCA, the Pondera County Board of Health desires to issue an emergency health order;

WHEREAS, additional closures are necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, pursuant to Title 50, Chapter 2, Part 1, and specifically § 50-2-116 of the Montana Code Annotated,

1. **All individuals within Pondera County are directed to stay at home or their place of residence to the greatest extent possible. Non-essential social and recreational gatherings of individuals outside of a home or place of residence are prohibited if a distance of at least six feet between individuals cannot be maintained. All persons may leave their homes or place of residence only for Essential Activities or to operate Essential Businesses and Operations as set forth in the Governor's Directive dated March 26, 2020.**
2. **The following places are closed to ingress, egress, use and occupancy by members of the public, effective March 30, 2020 through April 10, 2020:**
 - a. **All restaurants, food courts, cafes, coffeehouses and other similar establishments offering food or beverage for on-premises consumption;**
 - b. **Bars, taverns, special licensees, clubs and other establishments offering alcoholic beverages for on-premises consumption;**

The above businesses may continue to offer services through delivery, curb-side pickup; or in store pickup subject to the following:

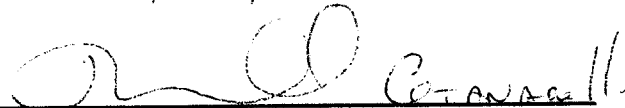
operations as defined in the Governor's Directive of March 26, 2020, are required to cease all activities except minimum basic operations. Businesses may also continue operations consisting exclusively of employees or contractors performing activities at their own homes.

7. To the greatest extent possible, Essential Businesses and Operations (including food service, health care, public health care; human services; essential governmental functions, essential infrastructure; grocery stores; pharmacies; production agriculture; charitable organizations; media; gas stations; financial and real estate services; hardware and supply stores; critical trades; mail and delivery services; schools; laundry services; supply stores; transportation; home-based care and services; residential facilities and shelters; professional services; manufacturing companies; motels; and funeral services) shall practice appropriate social distancing including:
- a. Designating six-foot spacing distances for employees and customers;
 - b. Have hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers;
 - c. Implement separate operating hours for elderly and vulnerable customers;
 - d. Provide online and remote access if possible.

This order is effective upon signing. Violations of this order shall be punished pursuant to § 50-2-123 and § 50-2-124.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Health Order shall be recorded with the Pondera County Clerk and Recorder.

Dated 3/30/, 2020.


Pondera County Health Officer