

# Yellowstone County COVID-19 Command

## Media Release

For immediate release

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### Employer precautions needed as gyms, museums reopen Friday

**Billings, MT** – Montana gyms, fitness centers, movie theaters and museums can reopen Friday, but none will be operating as they were before the novel coronavirus arrived in Montana.

The Yellowstone County COVID-19 Command reminds residents of new guidelines from Gov. Steve Bullock and the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. Reopening requires these businesses and others that have already opened to enhance cleaning, limit occupancy and keep people at least six feet apart, unless they are part of the same household.

For example, the state guidance for gyms includes having hand sanitizer stations and disposable towels throughout the fitness center. No group classes are allowed. Only registered members can be admitted and building capacity must be limited to 50%. A six-foot distance must be maintained, even in locker rooms. Gyms must close for part of each day for cleaning.

Fitness center pools may open with occupancy limited to 50% of capacity.

Movie theaters and museums also are required to limit occupancy to 50% of capacity and to use signs and barriers to maintain physical distance between family groups.

“We recognize the tremendous importance of physical activity and fitness, but we want people to be safe. Theaters and museums are part of our local culture, and we want people to enjoy them, but we would urge them to wear a mask, maintain a safe physical distance from others and use proper hygiene measures,” said John Felton, Yellowstone County Health Officer and President and CEO of RiverStone Health.

All employers are encouraged to:

- Continue staff teleworking where possible.
- Consider alternative schedules, staggering shifts.
- Develop and implement health assessments for all employees at the beginning of each shift.
- Monitor workforce for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 infection.
- Close common areas where employees congregate if physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and high-traffic areas often.
- Minimize non-essential staff travel.

Don't let your COVID-19 guard down as Montana and Yellowstone County continue the phased reopening directed by the governor. Basic precautions against spreading the novel coronavirus are more important than ever:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a nickel-sized blob of hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Cover cough and sneezes.
- Wear a cloth facemask or other face covering when out in public.
- Keep your distance of at least six feet from others not in your household when standing in line or inside a business.
- Stay home if you are sick or at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness.

Montana's phased reopening is a time that requires personal responsibility from each of us. Collectively, we can keep our COVID-19 infection rate low and support the many local businesses that are responsibly responding to the pandemic.

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