



For immediate release: May 26, 2020

### Press Release

Board of Health Meeting on May 28, 2020

The Gallatin City-County Board of Health will hold a meeting on Thursday, May 28 at 7 a.m. The Board will discuss and decide on adopting a local emergency health rule for Phase 2 of reopening in Gallatin County during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The draft emergency rule revision seeks to give Health Department staff and businesses guidance in reopening through provisions that are consistent with [Phase 2 of Gov. Bullock's reopening plan](#).

The governor's latest directive contains an increase in group size from 10 people to 50 people for groups that cannot implement adequate social distancing measures, such as keeping people six feet apart. The governor's new directive also explicitly states that local public health jurisdictions would determine whether groups larger than 50 people could adequately socially distance in a way that would prevent disease spread.

The rule revisions being considered in Gallatin County on Thursday would provide a standard from which to make decisions about requests for groups larger than 50. Specifically, the rule revision states that the inherently unstructured and socially-focused nature of certain gatherings — such as wedding receptions, live music concerts, festivals, and fairs—cannot be conducted with appropriate physical distancing. As a result, such events should be limited to 50 people or fewer.

Under the proposed rule, events greater than 50 people should be held only if the inherent nature of the event allows predictable and manageable social interactions through a structured physical layout, identified seating arrangements, and controls for ingress and egress, such as at a school graduation or religious service.

The draft health rule also includes non-mandatory guidance suggesting that certain businesses consider requiring use of face coverings by staff and customers. In particular, the draft rules states that businesses that provide services where social distancing is difficult and that provide services necessary to daily living (such as grocery stores and pharmacies) should consider mandatory use of face coverings for staff and the public. The draft rule revision would not make use of face coverings mandatory, but rather provides businesses with guidance informed by recommendations from [the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#).



“The idea is to give businesses and individuals guidance that allows them to make decisions based on current recommendations from the CDC and other public health experts,” said Matt Kelley, Health Officer with Gallatin City-County Health Department. “There are some places, such as grocery stores and pharmacies, that almost everyone has to visit. It’s important that people have the choice to patronize businesses that they feel are safe for their personal health circumstances.”

The agenda for Thursday’s meeting can be found [here](#). A draft of the proposed emergency health rule can be found at that same link under the “Related Docs” tab.

Due to social distancing requirements, the Board is encouraging the public to submit comments through email, view the meeting by streaming it online, and participate live by calling in. Details on how to participate virtually can be found [here](#).

The meeting will take place at the Gallatin County Courthouse Community Room, 311 W. Main St. in downtown Bozeman. The meeting will begin at 7 a.m. and be streamed online [here](#).

The Gallatin City-County Health Department Call Center is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for questions about COVID-19. Reach the Call Center by phone at 406-548-0123 or email at [callcenter@readygallatin.com](mailto:callcenter@readygallatin.com).

The most accurate local source of information remains the GCCHD website <https://www.healthygallatin.org/coronavirus-covid-19/>.

