



For immediate release: August 25, 2020

### Press Release

Board of Health Meeting on Aug. 27

At its regularly scheduled monthly meeting, the Gallatin City-County Board of Health will consider extending its Phase Two reopening emergency rule and a new emergency rule to allow for visitation at long-term care facilities. Both measures are designed to make practices and rules in Gallatin County consistent with statewide directives.

The virtual meeting will begin at 7 AM on Thursday, Aug. 27. The rules that the Board will consider on Friday can be found at [this link](#) under the “Related Docs” tab.

The Board will discuss and decide on extending [a local health rule relating to Phase Two of reopening](#), which was adopted by the Board on May 28. The measure would extend current rules related to bars and restaurants, hotels and other public accommodations, gyms, public pools and spas, and personal care establishments such as barber shops, beauty salons, and body art establishments. As proposed, the Phase 2 extension would not change current requirements for those types of facilities.

The Board will also discuss and decide on a new local emergency rule that would allow for limited visitation at nursing homes, skilled nursing facilities, and senior and assisted living facilities in the county. Under current local emergency rules, nursing homes and assisted living facilities are prohibited from allowing visitors in order to protect residents from COVID-19. The new rule would allow some visitation consistent with safeguards required or recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Those safeguards include requirements for surveillance testing, symptom monitoring, adequate staffing, and an absence of known COVID-19 cases in the facility for at least 28 days.

The rule related to nursing homes and assisted living centers would make Gallatin County’s rule consistent with statewide regulations. Currently, Gallatin County’s prohibition on visitation is more stringent than statewide rules.

Local boards of health may adopt rules that match or are more stringent than statewide directives, but local counties are not allowed to be less stringent. Both rules being considered Thursday would make Gallatin County consistent with state regulations.



The meeting will also include a report from Health Officer Matt Kelley.

Public comments can be provided at [this link](#). The Board will accept written comments until 4 PM on Wednesday, Aug. 26.

To participate virtually in Thursday's meeting, please register in advance at [this link](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Registration will remain open the day-of and throughout the meeting.

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](#).

