

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

May 8, 2020

1. **Monday's COVID-19 Update** - Monday's update will include Chief Health Official John Felton and John Staley, Community Response.

COVID-19 Information:

- Final Coronavirus Relief Fund Advisory Council Report
- Governor's Phase One Includes Gyms, Movie Theaters and Museums
- Governor's \$10 Million for Child Care
- Governor's \$123 Million Available for Emergency Grants
- Phase 1 City Park Use

2. **Domestic Violence** – updated stats through April 30th with a comparison for the past 5 years for March and April. The first full year with the strangulation statutes was in 2018, which resulted in a wholesale reduction of cases for the entire year.

March	In custody	Warrant requests	Total	% Increase from Previous year
2016	34	30	64	/
2017	41	46	87	+ 35%
2018	33	24	57	-52%
2019	26	27	53	-3%
2020	51	47	98	+ 85 %
April	In custody	Warrant requests	Total	% Increase from Previous year
2016	33	38	71	/
2017	32	39	71	Steady
2018	37	31	68	-4%
2019	39	42	81	+ 19%
2020	56	57	113	+ 39%

3. **Facilities Tour** – On Tuesday, May 12th Councilmember Mike Boyett, Kevin Iffland and I will be touring the BOC, Evidence Building and the Water Reclamation Facility. The tour will begin at 1:00 pm at the BOC, 1:30 pm at the Evidence Building and 2:30 pm at the Water Reclamation Facility. If any councilmembers would like to join us please let wynnette (657-8433 or maddoxw@billingsmt.gov) know by 10:00 am on Monday, May 11th.
4. **Fiscal Year 2021 Proposed Budget Work Session** – Tuesday, May 12th Human Resources, Legal, Police and Fire will present their FY2021 budgets.

5/4/20 – City Council Work Session

Question: CM Neese asked to see what the impact on the Tax and Assessment Per Capita chart would be if the increase in PD1 were to occur due to the shift from the General Fund.

Answer If the proposed shift of PRPL to PD1 occurs, that would increase the Tax and Assessment Per Capita from \$468 to \$505. The shift would increase the total assessment amount by \$4.1M.

Additional discussion occurred about the tax and assessment per capita chart relating to number of parcels, age of citizens, and total number of taxpayers in the community. I am working on obtaining additional information from the Department of Revenue that could assist in the demonstration of this data. I will update once this is received.

Question: 9 printed copies of the budget were requested

Answer Books are being printed and will be delivered to Councilmembers homes.

5. **Amend Park Synthetic Turf Fields** - The Billings Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the Amend Park Development Council is excited to announce the Groundbreaking of the new Synthetic Turf Fields at Amend Park. Once completed, the synthetic turf fields, state of the art LED field lighting and grandstand seating for 500 spectators will greatly expand the recreational opportunities for South Billings, and to our community as a whole. Please, enjoy our Virtual Groundbreaking video as we celebrate this monumental project! https://youtu.be/GxjAZ_sPnHw

Have a wonderful weekend!



Governor Bullock Coronavirus Relief Fund Advisory Council Recommendation Report

May 2020



Dear Governor Bullock,

Congress recently passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). The CARES Act established a Coronavirus Relief Fund of \$150 billion for states, tribes and in certain circumstances, local governments dealing with the impacts of COVID-19. Montana has received \$1.25 billion of this federal allocation from the U.S. Treasury Department.

On April 15th, you announced the Coronavirus Relief Advisory Council comprised of a diverse, geographically dispersed group of unselfish Montanans who committed to work together to provide guidance and process for the \$1.25 billion. On the afternoon of the announcement, every person on the Advisory Council attended a virtual meeting to begin a process that gathered ideas while awaiting further guidance from the federal government. You would be proud of the effort, commitment, and robust dialogue that started across Montana shortly after that call. Despite the communication challenges presented by COVID-19, virtual meetings and individual efforts began in earnest to compile ideas.

In a little over two weeks from start to finish, we present to you this report of our recommendations attempting to reach our goal to provide advice and guidance as to how best to deploy Montana's CARES Act funds to reinvigorate Montana's path toward economic recovery and revive our communities. While not every comment is reflected in this report, we can assure you everyone was heard in a collaborative process supported by detailed proposals submitted by committee members.

We are all honored that you trusted us to work hard, despite unique business and personal challenges with COVID-19. The unwavering support and effort from your staff (particularly Tom Livers, Amy Sassano, Ryan Evans, Adam Schafer, and Ken Fichtler) was critical. Our collective urgency was not defined by the CARES Act, but by a genuine desire from everyone on the committee to return to the strong, robust economy that Montana experienced prior to this unprecedented pandemic. We feel it is essential to deploy funds quickly and effectively to citizens of Montana.

Thank you for the opportunity. We stand ready to be steady, conscientious, and representative advisors on how best to assist Montanans now, as well as throughout the next phases of Montana's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely

Larry Simkins, Chair
Governor's Coronavirus Relief Fund Advisory Council



Coronavirus Relief Fund Advisory Council
Advisory Members and Business/Organization

Larry Simkins	The Washington Companies
Charlie Beaton	The Big Dipper Ice Cream
Scott Brown	The Base Camp
Eric Bryson	MT Association of Counties
Tim Burton	MT League of Cities and Towns
Nick Checota	Logjam Presents
Randy Chesler	Glacier Bancorp
Bill Coffee	Stockman Bank
Colin Davis	Chico Hot Springs
Shalon Hastings	Fly FisHer Adventures, Small Business
Jacquie Helt	Service Employees Int'l Union (SEIU)
Mike Hope	Bar and Restaurant Owner (Rockin R)
Llew Jones	State Representative, Small Business Owner
Casey Lozar	Federal Reserve Bank
Jim Markel	Red Oxx Manufacturing
Janice Mattson	Mattson Farms
Liz Moore	MT Nonprofit Association
Jim Peterson	Rancher, former Senate President
Kevin Riley	1st Interstate Bank
Mark Semmens	D.A. Davidson (Retired)
Jon Sesso	State Senator, Small Business Owner
Jason Smith	Montana Indian Affairs Office
Sarah Walsh	PayneWest Insurance
Joe Willauer	Butte Local Development Corporation

Staff Resources

Adam Schafer
Deputy Chief of Staff
Governor's Office
444-3111
aschafer@mt.gov

Amy Sassano
Deputy Budget Director
Office of Budget and Program Planning
444-0619
asassano@mt.gov

Ken Fichtler
Chief Business Development Officer
444-5470
Ken.Fichtler@mt.gov

Tom Livers
Budget Director
Office of Budget and Program Planning
444-3616
tlivers@mt.gov

Ryan Evans
Assistant Budget Director
Office of Budget and Program Planning
444-3163
ryanevans@mt.gov



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SECTION I – COMMITTEE PROCESS

On April 15th, Governor Steve Bullock appointed the Coronavirus Relief Advisory Council. The Council is comprised of a diverse and geographically dispersed group of Montanans committed to work together to provide guidance for the \$1.25 billion allocated to the State of Montana through the CARES Act. A collective process has been at the forefront to ensure the best recommendations and guidance to help Montana families and businesses. Since inception of the Council, virtual meetings were held twice a week with each meeting including an update from Governor's staff on issues pertinent to the Council, followed by discussion and idea-sharing among the Council members. Despite the communication challenges presented by COVID-19, the virtual meetings were a success and individual and coordinated group efforts began to compile ideas. A Council email box and a Microsoft Teams site were established for Council members to ask questions and share ideas, and to allow for transparency and integrity in the overall process. Over the last two weeks, ideas have been submitted around the clock, which speaks volumes to the dedication of the Council, and their overall attentiveness to the urgent situation at hand brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

SECTION II – CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND GUIDANCE FROM U.S. TREASURY

During the first half of the Advisory Council's process, we eagerly awaited guidance from the U.S. Department of Treasury as a basis to help inform our decision making, and ultimately our recommendations. On April 23, the U.S. Treasury supplied supplemental guidance on use of the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Although the guidance still leaves many important questions yet to be answered, the supplemental guidance did provide enough information for the Council to continue its work and to formulate formal recommendations. Below is a selection of the guidance that is most applicable to our recommendations, grouped by topics of guidance that is now known, and the guidance that remains unclear or not included in the recent supplemental:

Known Guidance

- If a government has not used funds it has received to cover costs incurred by December 30, 2020, as required by statute, those funds must be returned to the Department of the Treasury.
- Expenditures must be used for actions taken to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency. These may include expenditures incurred to allow state, territorial, local, or tribal governments to respond directly to the emergency, such as by addressing medical or public health needs, as well as expenditures incurred to respond to second-order effects of the emergency, such as by providing economic support to those suffering from employment or business interruptions due to COVID-19-related business closures. Further, the CARES Act also requires that payments be used only to cover costs that were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020.



- Eligible expenses include COVID-19 related expenditures for specific items including, but not limited to: medical expenses; public health expenses; payroll expenses for public safety, public health, health care, human services, and similar employees whose services are substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency; expenses to facilitate compliance with COVID-19 related public health measures; and expenses associated with the provision of economic support such as grants to businesses experiencing impacts from business interruption or closure.
- Coronavirus Relief Funds may not be used to fill shortfalls in government revenue or be used to replace lost revenue, to duplicate reimbursement of expenses already reimbursed by the federal government, or workforce bonuses other than hazard pay or overtime.

Guidance Not Available or Known

- Guidance on financial reporting, specifically sub-recipient grant reporting, is currently unknown, though various channels of professional organizations anticipate guidance on recipient and sub-recipient reporting is forthcoming.
- Guidance on using Coronavirus Relief Funds to match other federal funds such as FEMA is unknown.
- Guidance on the terms by which the State has the ability to loan funds directly to entities, or guidance on the State's ability to pass through funds to other entities for them to loan funds, is unknown.

SECTION III – GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Although important and necessary for strategic and practical purposes, there is great humility in attempting to define a single set of overarching guiding principles in a time of such intense need caused by a worldwide pandemic. No set of principles can encompass all situations or circumstances for each individual, business, or organization, particularly with limited resources that must be spent in accordance with the limited guidance contained within the CARES Act. Even so, guiding principles were developed to help frame the discussion and facilitate the work of the Council in an attempt to efficiently and effectively identify the best ways to address the needs of those most directly and severely impacted by the effects of COVID-19. The Council's Guiding Principles follow:

Guiding Principles

- Focus on those impacted most.
- Stay focused on strategies and funding not already allocated elsewhere, ensuring there is no duplication of efforts or funds.



- Deploy funds quickly, while preparing for the long-term challenges and acknowledge all needs might not be apparent now or readily known, particularly for businesses that may need to remain closed for longer periods into the future.
- Prioritize leveraging of funds when possible, encourage utilizing and leveraging existing programmatic infrastructure that is underutilized, consider existing distribution channels for allocation of funds, and consider public/private partnerships when appropriate. In other words, do not recreate the wheel.
- Focus on assistance that can be used now and that is not built into any future base allocation for state or local budgeting purposes.
- Consider how targeted investments now in COVID-19 impacted areas may impact the overall health and well-being of Montanans moving forward, and how investments now may impact the future economic strength and diversity of the State of Montana and its residents.
- Keep it simple, as the complexity of the initial federal relief injection into Montana left many worthy recipients without assistance for a variety of reasons.

SECTION IV – METHODS OF FUND DISTRIBUTION

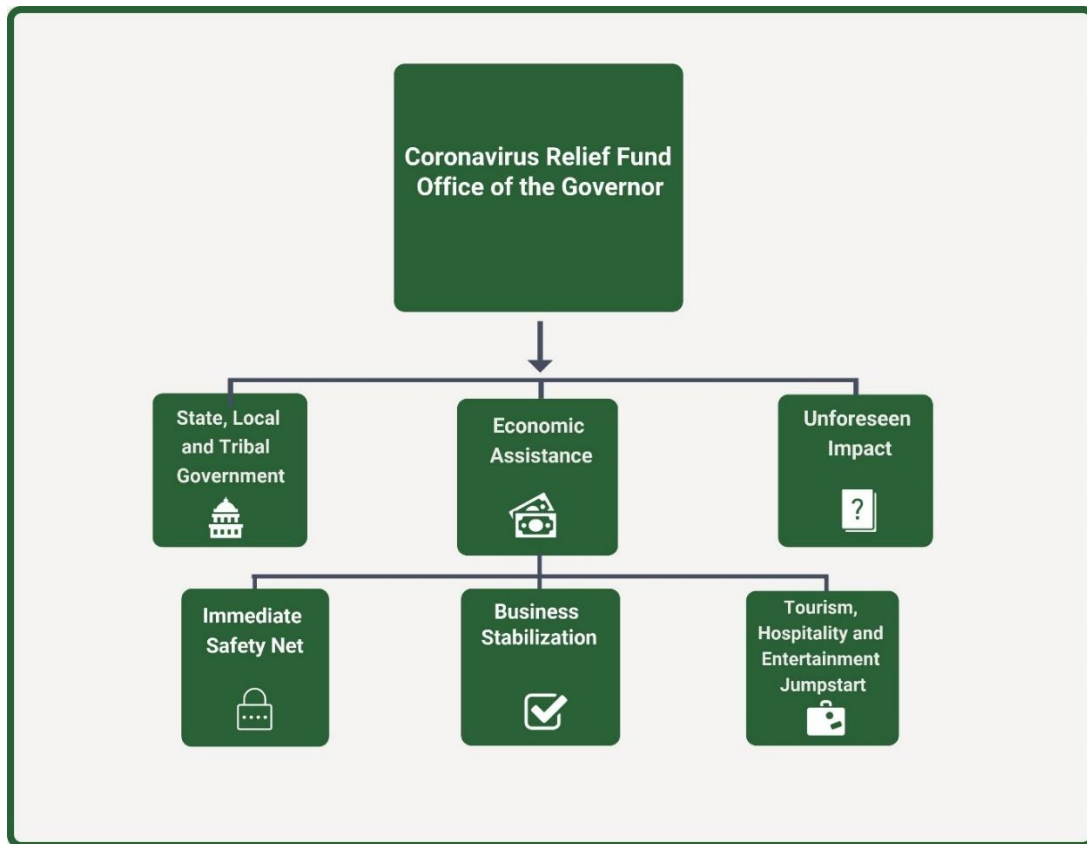
As was stated in the Guiding Principles above, the Council recommends the Governor prioritize leveraging of funds, encourage utilizing existing programmatic infrastructure that is underutilized, consider existing distribution channels for allocation of funds, and consider employing public/private partnerships for the distribution of funds. The Council views this guiding principle as the means to most efficiently deploy funds to those most impacted by COVID-19 and recommends the Governor consider not only existing state programs as conduits for funding allocation, but also partners beyond state government. In this, the following entities should be considered as channels for delivering funding to COVID-19 impacted individuals and entities:

- Regional or Local Economic Development Organizations
- Regional or Local Banking, Financial, and Lending Institutions
- The Montana Board of Investments (BOI); and/or the Montana BOI in partnership with Regional or Local Banking, Financial, and Lending Institutions
- Existing and/or Refocused State of Montana Programs



SECTION V – PROPOSED FLOW AND ALLOCATION OF FUNDING

The Council established three primary silos of funding: State, Local and Tribal Government; Economic Assistance; and Unforeseen Impacts.



In an effort to align with the expertise on the Council, and to effectively identify the best way to establish an immediate safety net for individuals, businesses and nonprofits, the Council focused our time and efforts on Economic Assistance.

The Council has compiled recommendations particular to Economic Assistance for the Governor in the following sections of this report, with specific emphasis on sub-areas focusing on:

- Immediate Safety Net
- Business Stabilization
- Tourism, Hospitality and Entertainment Jumpstart

Perhaps noticeably and notably absent from our specific sub-area recommendations are concepts pertaining explicitly to the State, Local, and Tribal Government silo shown in the flow chart above. This in no way should be construed as the Advisory Council not recognizing a pressing and apparent need for assistance for entities, individuals, and services largely or wholly dependent on funds from



state, local or tribal government, such as K-12, the Montana University System (MUS), Corrections and Law Enforcement, and the Courts. Rather the Council chose to dedicate our collective time to fleshing out ideas and recommendations most apparent in the Economic Assistance silo. And while in no way would we recommend that any single eligible individual or entity under the over-arching umbrella of government, K-12, MUS, and others be specifically precluded from obtaining assistance under the Economic Assistance silo, if appropriate, we do contend that the Governor, in consultation with local and tribal governments, is better positioned to address funding and reimbursement needs of the almost 200 city/town, county, and tribal governments across Montana throughout the duration of the emergency.

With these caveats in mind, the following sections include the distillation of our comments, ideas and considerations into formal recommendations pertinent to each sub area for your consideration.

SECTION VI – ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

In the following sections, we outline the recommendations pertinent to each Economic Assistance sub area.

IMMEDIATE SAFETY NET

The Council's Immediate Safety Net Recommendations are intended to deploy funds immediately (i.e. over the coming days and weeks) to those that are negatively impacted as a result of COVID-19, with particular attention to people, businesses, nonprofits and other entities that have fallen through the cracks with limited or no access to existing programs or to funding contained in the CARES Act.

IMMEDIATE SAFETY NET FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Food Security

- **Provide Enhanced Support for Individual Food Security through Food Banks and Food Pantries**
 - The 167 food banks and pantries across the state report since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic impacts in Montana, demand for food is up 10 - 20% in rural Montana, and up 100 – 200% in some larger Montana communities. Considering food is a basic and immediate need, the Council recommends **direct grant assistance** to food banks and food pantries serving Montana communities. Further, the Council recommends the Governor consider ways to





facilitate the provision of food from local producers to food banks, particularly if there is risk of food being left to waste.

2. Providers of Social Safety Net Services

- **Provide Enhanced Support for Providers of Immediate Social Safety Net Services** – Acknowledging the term “social safety net service” is expansive, the Council recommends prioritized **direct grant assistance** to entities directly impacted by COVID-19, or directly assisting or caring for those impacted by COVID-19. Such entities include but are not limited to: emergency shelters; behavioral health and substance abuse providers; homeless shelters; direct care workers; child care providers; disability services; emergency services; urban Indian health centers; child protection; domestic violence; first responders; senior services; and economic and workforce development.

3. Individuals, Business, and Nonprofits

- **Provide Rental and Mortgage Assistance to Individuals, Businesses, and Nonprofits** – Assisting Montanans and their businesses to remain economically viable and afford to remain in their current home or business location is a priority identified by the Council as an immediate need. Therefore, the Council recommends **direct grant assistance** be deployed to individuals, businesses and nonprofits for assistance to pay monthly rent or mortgage payments, or to assist an individual with paying the costs of their property taxes if a recipient is an owner of property.

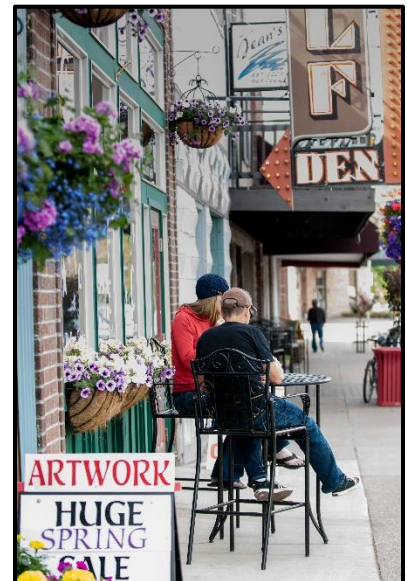
BUSINESS STABILIZATION

The Council’s Business Stabilization Recommendations are intended to deploy funds over an immediate to mid-term (i.e. the coming weeks and months) time frame, with particular attention to businesses and nonprofits (ranging from sole-proprietors and independent contractors to larger Montana businesses) that are negatively impacted as a result of COVID-19, have been or currently are subject to closure, and may have fallen through the cracks with limited or no access to existing programs or to funding contained in the CARES Act.

BUSINESS STABILIZATION FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Direct Support

- **Support for Montana Businesses** – The Council anticipates current and lingering financial difficulties for many, varied-sized Montana businesses. The Council recommends **direct grant assistance** be provided to Montana businesses, with priority given to businesses that are or have been subject to statewide closure, and/or have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible uses of assistance could include general inventory, personnel costs, and operating





costs associated with utilities, supplies, property and other taxes, and fees. When applicable, in addition to traditional and/or refocused State of Montana programmatic funding channels, the Council recommends the Governor consider additional funding channels and fund delivery methods through local and regional economic development organizations, banks, and the Montana Board of Investments. Further, the Council recommends funding be allocated in an amount that provides the greatest benefit for the most in need.

- **Support for Montana Nonprofits** – Likewise, the Council anticipates current and lingering financial difficulties for many, varied-sized Montana nonprofits. The Council recommends **direct grant assistance** be provided to Montana nonprofits, with priority given to nonprofits that are or have been subject to statewide closure, have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and whose mission is to serve a population impacted directly or indirectly by COVID-19. Eligible uses of assistance could include general administrative costs, personnel costs, operating costs associated with utilities, supplies, property and other taxes, and fees. When applicable, in addition to traditional and/or refocused State of Montana programmatic funding channels, the Council recommends the Governor consider additional funding channels and fund delivery methods through local and regional economic development organizations, banks, and the Montana Board of Investments. Further, the Council recommends funding be allocated in an amount that provides the greatest benefit for the most in need.

2. Sustainability

- **Assistance to Businesses and Nonprofits through Forgivable Loans, Low/Zero Interest Loans, or State of Montana backed Lines of Credit Guaranty** – Acknowledging that the sizable allocation to Montana under the CARES act is finite with substantial demands on it, that some businesses and nonprofits may need more than a one-time infusion of immediate assistance, and that some entities may require larger sums of assistance over a longer period of time that could willingly be paid back, the Council recommends funding be allocated to assist businesses that may have mid-to-long-term (e.g. in the coming months and years) sustainability needs based on the likelihood that they may be closed for the foreseeable future, or are linked to an industry that may be not as quick to recover. When applicable, in addition to traditional and/or refocused State of Montana programmatic funding channels, the Council recommends the Governor consider additional funding channels and fund delivery methods through the Montana Board of Investments and/or local and regional banks and lending institutions to administer lending programs to assist those Montana businesses with unique situations. This recommendation anticipates that





funding will be necessary to address particularly unique situations that some businesses and nonprofits may endure that are not explicitly addressed in any previous or forthcoming recommendation. The Council acknowledges that further federal guidance pertaining to this recommendation is pending and will be necessary to help guide how this recommendation is ultimately implemented.

TOURISM, HOSPITALITY AND ENTERTAINMENT JUMPSTART

The Council's Tourism, Hospitality, and Entertainment Jumpstart recommendations are intended to deploy funds over an immediate to mid-term (i.e. coming weeks and months) time frame, acknowledging that funds should be deployed to best align with the time when the business types contained in the tourism, hospitality, and entertainment industry can safely reopen to Montana consumers and in-state/out-of-state tourists. Particular attention is given to businesses and nonprofits (ranging from sole-proprietors to larger Montana businesses and nonprofits) that are most impacted as a result of COVID-19, have been or currently are subject to closure, and may have fallen through the cracks with limited or no access to existing programs or to funding contained in the CARES Act.

TOURISM, HOSPITALITY AND ENTERTAINMENT JUMPSTART FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS:



1. Direct Immediate-to-Mid Term Assistance

- **Support for Montana Businesses and Nonprofits** – As stated before, the Council anticipates current and lingering financial difficulties for many, varied-sized Montana businesses and nonprofits, particularly those in the tourism, hospitality, and entertainment industry who face an uncertain time of when they can safely reopen. The Council recommends **direct assistance** be provided to Montana tourism, hospitality, and entertainment businesses and nonprofits through grants and loans, with priority

given to businesses that are subject to continued closure, have businesses focused on accommodating in-state and out-of-state tourists, and have been (and will continue to be) most negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Revenue tests from 2019 to 2020 and possibly utilizing North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes as a starting point for identifying industries may help quantify targeted assistance. For instance, providing grants for lodging tax or live entertainment gate and concession shortfalls would provide a measurable mechanism for support. Specific uses of funds could include sustaining reduced payrolls, distressed inventory from refunded ticket or event sales, costs associated with evolving health guideline compliance, or other costs associated with sustaining operations through mandatory closures, up to and through the reopening phase. Further, the Council recommends funding be allocated in an amount



that provides the greatest benefit, for the most in need, over the longest period of time, in an effort to sustain those businesses with opening dates not yet known.



2. Longer Term Sustainability

○ **Assistance to Businesses and Nonprofits through Forgivable Loans, Low/Zero Interest Loans, or State of Montana backed Lines of Credit Guaranty** – Acknowledging that the sizable allocation to Montana under the CARES act is finite with substantial demands on it, that some businesses and nonprofits - particularly in the performing arts, live entertainment, and other business/nonprofits dependent on large crowds and tourists - may need more than a one-time infusion of immediate assistance, and that some entities may require larger sums of assistance over a longer period of time that could willingly be paid back, the Council recommends funding be allocated to assist businesses that may have mid-to-long term

(e.g. in the coming months and years) sustainability needs based on the likelihood that they may be closed for the foreseeable future, or are linked to an industry that may be less quick to recover. Assistance could take the form of restructuring assistance, term extensions and interest rate buydowns. When applicable, in addition to traditional and/or refocused State of Montana programmatic funding channels, the Council recommends the Governor consider additional funding channels and fund delivery methods through the Montana Board of Investments and/or local and regional banks and lending institutions to administer lending programs to assist those Montana businesses with unique situations. This recommendation anticipates that funding will be necessary to address atypical situations that some businesses and nonprofits may endure that are not explicitly addressed in any previous or forthcoming recommendation. The Council acknowledges that further federal guidance pertaining to this recommendation is pending and will be necessary to help guide how this recommendation is ultimately implemented.

SECTION VII – OVERARCHING THEMES AND OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

During the Council's work, there were several themes that transcended any particular sub-area of need for assistance. That is to say that some assistance is and will be applicable to any individual, business, nonprofit, or other entity that has been negatively impacted as a result of COVID-19, whether that be through immediate safety net efforts, business stabilization efforts, or the jumpstart phase of Montana's COVID-19 response. Specific themes and recommendations that are overarching in nature include:

- 1. Facilitate Coordinated Testing, Tracing, Distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Strike Team Efforts** – This would allow coordinated, statewide processes and information pertaining to testing and tracing efforts as we all learn more about the prevalence, occurrence and incidence of COVID-19 across Montana and our nation as a whole. Moreover, this would



allow funding to help support the provision of protective supplies to entities that can then furnish services in ways that will keep Montana among the safest states in the nation. This would also provide for State coordinated strike team efforts and funds to address local or regional flare-ups of COVID-19.

- 2. Facilitate Statewide Guidance and Coordination with Local Public Health Departments** – This will allow businesses and nonprofits to safely open and operate under a single-set of guidance that is easily understandable and practical to implement. This will also help make consumers feel that it is safe to return to a particular business. Further, coordinated efforts on statewide guidance could, in part, be disseminated via Montana print and online newspapers. This would provide assistance to an industry whose sales and advertising budgets have been impacted by a decline in overall business activity attributable to COVID-19.
- 3. Provide for Ease of Access to Funding and Simple, Straight-Forward Reporting Requirements** – This would allow impacted individuals and entities with little experience seeking government funding to access funds quickly and efficiently, and to have straight-forward, predictable and pre-prescribed expectations for if/how they will be expected to report on how they used particular assistance granted or loaned to them or their business.
- 4. Facilitate State of Montana Guidance and Resources that are Clear and Concise for Coronavirus Outreach to Individuals, Businesses, and Potential Financial Partners** – This would allow for individuals and entities to reach out to one, single, coordinated source of information and guidance on topics varying from sanitation guidance to financial assistance available from state and federal government. Further, this would provide potential financial partners charged with distributing funds through grants or loans, when applicable, with greater clarity and guidance on who should qualify to receive economic relief in an effort to ensure that funds are not deployed to many with little or no meaningful impact from COVID-19.
- 5. Provide for Equity, Prioritization, and Accountability of Funds** – This allows for distribution of funds in transparent ways to entities that need it most, regardless of their administrative resources to apply for funds, geographical location, size of business, economic stature, or other standing or influence.
- 6. Provide for a Dedicated Holdback of Coronavirus Relief Funds for Unforeseen/Unknown Impacts and Provide a Backstop of Coronavirus Relief Funds as Supplemental Funds to Augment Recommended Funding that May End Up Being Insufficient** – This would allow the Governor to respond to issues as they arise that might currently be unforeseen or unknown, and to potentially augment funding for any of the Council's recommendations that are of particular benefit. Further, this would provide a backstop for the provision of existing



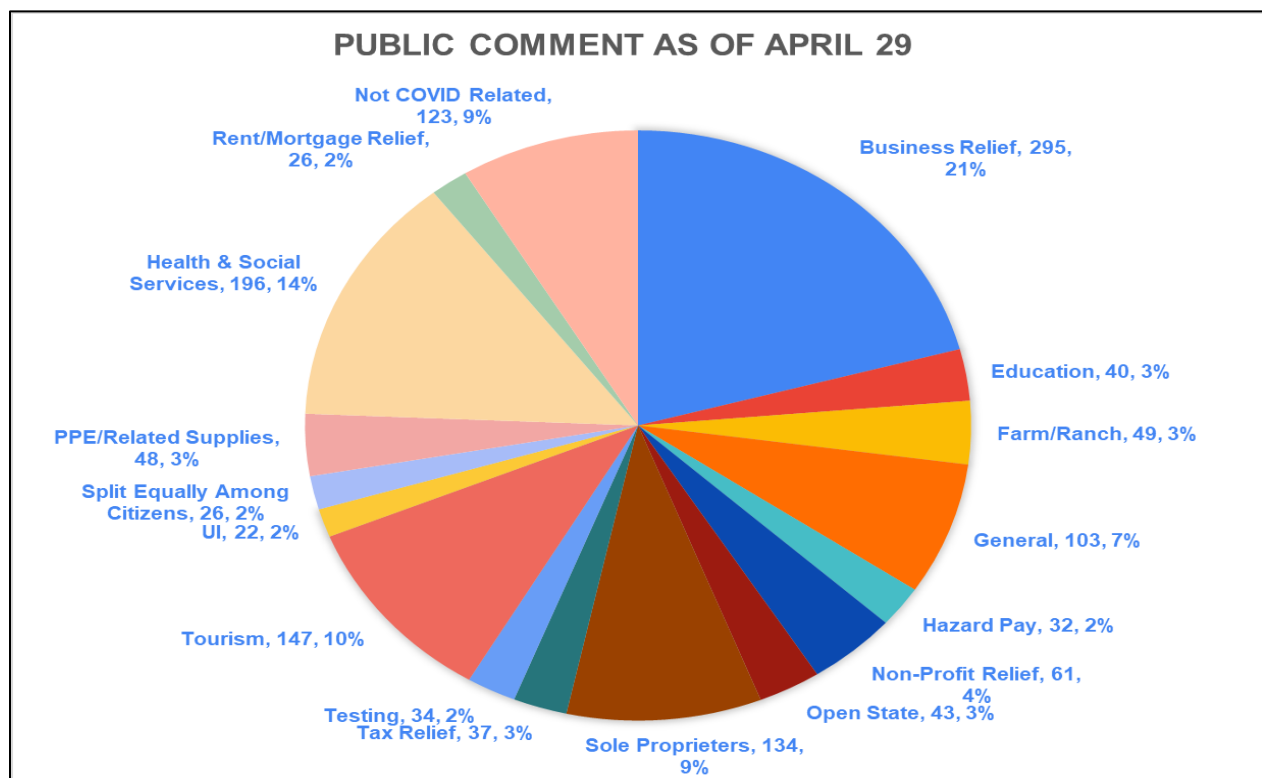
government services in future years under the new economic uncertainty brought on by COVID-19.

7. **Consider Continued State and Local Flexibility, When Possible, Towards State and Local Levied Taxes, Fees and Assessments** – This allows state and local governments the ability to gauge in real-time the relationship between their residents' immediate needs versus their immediate ability to pay.

SECTION VIII – OTHER FEEDBACK

Over the past two weeks, the Council has received significant feedback from professional organizations and coalitions, businesses, nonprofits and individuals. The formal written feedback received by these groups is included in Section X as an appendix of your hardcopy report for your reference as you begin the task of operationalizing the Council's recommendations.

Additionally, parallel to our Council process, your staff set up a public comment portal where individuals could submit ideas for use of the Coronavirus Relief Fund. As of this report, more than 1,400 public comments have been received. At each Council meeting, we were given an update on the status and content of public responses through the public portal. Based on the public feedback received, it is heartening to see that the public ideas most frequently submitted are very much in alignment with our recommendations contained in this report. For your reference, the following graph illustrates the types of ideas submitted through the public portal comment process.





SECTION IX – CLOSING THOUGHTS AND REMARKS

In no way could one report of recommendations comprehensively and satisfactorily address the many, varied needs created by COVID-19 across our great state. That said, we hope the recommendations provided in this report give you guidance on how best to deploy Coronavirus Relief Funds to those who need it most, when they need it most. Further, we appreciate the opportunity to provide recommendations on behalf of the Montana business and nonprofit community – large to small, east to west, urban to rural, and everywhere and everyone in between. We stand ready to be steady, conscientious, and representative advisors on how best to assist Montanans now, as well as throughout the next phases of Montana’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



SECTION X - APPENDIX

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock
GOVERNOR



Mike Cooney
LT. GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Thursday, May 7, 2020

CONTACTS:

Marissa Perry, Communications Director, Governor's Office, (406) 444-4514

Erin Loranger, Press Secretary, Governor's Office, (406) 444-9725

**Governor Bullock Announces Additional Phase One Guidelines to Include
Gyms, Movie Theaters, and Museums**

MONTANA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced additional Phase One guidelines that will allow gyms and fitness studios, movie theaters and museums the option to reopen beginning Friday, May 15 as long as they adhere to strict guidelines limiting capacity, requiring social distancing, and imposing thorough sanitation requirements.

“In consultation with public health experts, we have determined that these businesses can carefully reopen under strict capacity, social distancing, and sanitation guidelines,” Governor Bullock said. **“As Montana continues to aggressively manage the virus and we move forward with the plan to reopen, I am again reminding Montanans that social distancing is vital to continue curbing the virus. All of us must do our part to stay open and stay on a path of decline in positive cases.”**

“So far, Montana businesses and customers are working together to practice the social distancing and hygiene measures necessary to restart our economy, restore our collective sense of well-being and keep each other safe. I am confident we will all do our part during this important next step,” said John Felton, President and CEO of RiverStone Health.

“Health and wellness has always been our goal, and the advent of the coronavirus has only sharpened that focus. Our commitment is to our members, and our communities, keeping them safe. The protocols established by the state and the fitness industry will be instrumental in this endeavor. We want to bring back the physical and mental well-being of Montanans, get past this pandemic and return to what we do best - helping you stay fit and healthy,” said Doug Mahlum, Montana Athletic Club.

The reopening date is set at May 15 at the request of the businesses and local public health to allow time to prepare and ensure guidance is being followed.

Under the updated guidance developed with input from public health officials, fitness studios, gyms and pools in gyms can begin operating at 50 percent capacity and with strict guidelines including requiring staff to sanitize frequently touched areas and equipment during hours of operation, train workers on symptoms and handwashing technique as well as posting relevant signage instructing members with symptoms to stay home. Hand sanitizer must be available, employees should wear masks and guests should wear masks when possible. Additionally, a six-foot distance must be maintained between equipment and in locker rooms. Personal training may be allowed if social distancing can be maintained. Indoor group classes may not be offered and outdoor group classes can be conducted as long as social distancing is maintained and in groups of 10 or fewer if appropriate physical distancing is not possible.

Gym pools are allowed to operate at half capacity as well. The CDC has indicated that properly maintained pool water inactivates the virus. It is critical that pools that have shut down during this time or reduced maintenance follow proper reopening procedures and sampling to ensure the water is safe for use before opening. In the event a confirmed COVID-19 case is associated with a facility the facility should clean in accordance with CDC's facility environmental cleaning procedures for workout areas, seating, locker rooms, and other areas of the establishment frequented by swimmers. Pool classes may continue if social distancing can be observed and swimmers should maintain a six foot distance in the pool at all times. Guidance was also issued this week to allow pools at licensed public accommodations (Hotels, Motels, Bed and Breakfasts, Tourist Homes, etc) to operate if at a 50 percent capacity and with additional social distancing and safety measures.

Non-tactile museums and movie theaters will be allowed to open under the updated guidance. Interactive museums or museums that allow touch interactions and displays and live performance theaters cannot operate.

Museums and theaters must keep their capacity at 50 percent and maintain six feet between non family members or the immediate party. Signage must be posted instructing those who have COVID-19 related symptoms to stay home. Facilities must increase cleaning and sanitizing of frequently touched surfaces and control customer flow to maximize distancing. Hand sanitizer or hand washing stations must be available and each venue should create and implement a written COVID-19 response plan. Cleaning and sanitizing should be completed no less than every two hours. Facilities should install shielding between workers and attendees whenever possible.

Theaters should increase cleaning time period between events, performances and showings to ensure that commonly touched areas such as arm rests and railings are cleaned frequently. Ushers should monitor and enforce social distancing in theaters. At museums, gift shops are also limited to 50 percent capacity.

The full guidance will be posted at <http://covid19.mt.gov> and is included below. The directive for establishing conditions for Phase One will be updated to reflect these additions.

Montana is still under phase one of the Reopening the Big Sky phased approach and adjustment of the phases is at the discretion of the Governor. Other places of assembly such as performance

theaters, concert halls, bowling alleys, bingo halls, music halls, and pools that are not in gyms or at a licensed public accommodation shall remain closed. Gatherings should continue to be avoided in groups of more than 10 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing. Senior living and assisted living facilities must continue to restrict visitors. The 14-day travel quarantine remains in effect.

Guidance for gyms and fitness studios

Gyms and fitness studios contribute to the health and wellness for many Montanans. As such, and in recognition of the continued progress toward recovery that Montana has made, beginning Friday, May 15, 2020 they will be allowed to operate at 50% capacity with sanitization and social distancing requirements met.

In the event a confirmed COVID-19 case is associated with a facility, the facility should be thoroughly cleaned in accordance with the CDC's facility environmental cleaning procedures for workout areas, seating, locker rooms, and other areas of the establishment frequented by patrons.

- Only registered members can use the facility, no day passes or walk-in.
- Facility must have a dedicated staff available during operating hours to wipe down frequently touched areas on a regular basis and monitor gym zones to ensure that users are wiping down equipment properly.
- Train workers on symptom awareness and proper handwashing technique.
- Signage must be posted with the following or substantially similar wording:
 - “Patrons with fever, shortness of breath, a cough, or other COVID-19 symptoms must refrain from using the gym”
 - Signs shall be positioned for effective visual observation by gym guests, such as at the front desk and in locker rooms.
- Front desk should track occupancy to ensure facilities stay at or below 50 percent capacity.
- Hand sanitizer must be made available at front desk and at stations throughout the workout area.
- Approved sanitizer for cleaning equipment after use must be provided at stations throughout the workout areas along with disposable towels. Reusable towels shall not be used to clean equipment.
- Post signs throughout workout area reminding patrons to wipe equipment after each use.

- Masks should be worn by all staff.
- Masks are encouraged to be worn by guests when possible.
- Six-foot distance should be maintained between equipment. Cardio studios should limit guests to every other piece of equipment to achieve this.
- Guest using free weights shall maintain six feet of separation except when a spotter is necessary. In this instance, workout groups shall be limited to two people.
- Sitting areas must be closed for use.
- Food vendors must follow applicable COVID-19 procedures for restaurants and retail food service. Vendors should be encouraged to use single-service items whenever possible, especially for condiments and similar foods.
- Social distancing must be maintained in dressing rooms and other common areas. No congregating in these areas may be allowed.
- After closing, establishments must clean using an EPA approved disinfectant. Twenty-four-hour establishments must close from 11:30 pm to 12am so that proper disinfection can happen.
 - Facility must develop a checklist to ensure that no equipment is being missed during disinfection. Checklist should include large items, such as treadmills and smaller items, such as weights and bands.
- Frequently touched surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized regularly throughout the day and disinfected each night after closing.
- Personal training sessions may be offered with strict adherence to social distancing guidelines and masks are encouraged to be used by the trainer and trainee.
- Indoor group classes may not be offered.
- Alternatively, group classes may be offered outdoors with strict adherence to social distancing guidelines and should avoid gathering in groups of more than 10 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing.
- Additional time between group classes outdoors must be provided so that a designated gym employee can disinfect any equipment and other cleanable surfaces before the next class begins.

Guidance for Pools at Gyms

Gym pools are allowed to operate with reduced capacity of 50% of normal bather load and basic compliance with social distancing requirements.

The CDC has indicated that properly maintained pool water inactivates the virus. It is critical pools that have shut down during this time or reduced maintenance follow proper re-opening procedures and sampling of chemical parameters to ensure water is safe for use, prior to opening to the public. Operators should work with their Certified Pool Operator and/or local/state sanitarian if questions arise regarding re-opening.

In the event a confirmed COVID-19 case is associated with a facility the facility should clean in accordance with CDC's facility environmental cleaning procedures for workout areas, seating, locker rooms, and other areas of the establishment frequented by swimmers.

Gym Pools:

- Only registered members can use the facility, no day passes or walk-ins
- Train workers on symptom awareness and proper handwashing procedures
- Pool classes may continue; if:
 - All social distancing requirements must be observed during class; and
 - Any equipment used can be easily cleaned and disinfected between users.
- Youth swim lessons may be offered in-line with previous guidance for Phase 1, which includes youth activities should avoid gathering in groups of more than 10 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing.
- Front desk/gate attendant tracks occupancy, incoming and outgoing to ensure maximum occupancy does not exceed 50% capacity of normal bather load;
- Signage must be posted with the following or substantially similar wording.
 - “Members with fever, shortness of breath, a cough, or other COVID-19 symptoms must refrain from using this facility.”
 - Signs shall be positioned for effective visual observation by members, such as on the entry way door
- No congregating in waiting areas, patrons should wait in an appropriately spaced line or way that observes social distancing
- Locker rooms should be monitored by a designated staff member to ensure they are not becoming crowded and that social distancing is being observed
- Signage must be posted on the locker room door with the following or substantially similar wording, “Observe social distancing while using this facility. No loitering in common areas.”
- Social distancing should be applied in all common areas
- 6-foot spacing between unassociated members (i.e. not family members) in the pool.

- 6-foot spacing between groups of no more than 10 (i.e. family groups and unrelated individuals must maintain 6-foot separation) in the pool.
- Space pool deck tables and chairs to facilitate a 6-foot distance.
- Recommend, where possible, use of buoys and floating pool ropes to mark off lanes or areas of pool for separation of large swimming areas.
- Recommend, where possible, marking stairs and walkways with directional arrows to keep in/out traffic separated.

Guidance for theaters and museums

In the event a confirmed COVID-19 case is associated with a facility the facility should clean in accordance with CDC's facility environmental cleaning procedures for areas of the establishment frequented by patrons.

This guidance applies to non-tactile museums. Interactive museums or museums with sections that allow touch interactions with displays are not to be open under this guidance.

This guidance applies to non-live performance theaters such as movie theaters. Live performance theaters may not be open under this guidance.

General Guidance for theaters and museums

- Maximum number of attendees is 50 percent of normal capacity while maintaining 6 feet between non-family member groups.
- Signage must be posted with the following or substantially similar wording:
 - "Patrons with fever, shortness of breath, a cough, or other COVID-19 symptoms must refrain from using this facility."
 - Signs shall be positioned for effective visual observation by patrons, such as on the entry way door.
- Increase cleaning and sanitizing of frequently touched surfaces, including door handles, chairs and tables.
- Keep social distancing of at least 6 feet between non-family member groups or immediate party.
- Food vendors must follow applicable COVID-19 procedures for restaurants and retail food service. Vendors should be encouraged to use single-service items whenever possible, especially for condiments and similar foods.
- Facilities should try to control customer flow in a manner that maximizes social distancing such as signage or ropes and directing flow in one direction.

- Provide hand sanitizer or hand washing stations throughout the venue whenever possible.
- Each venue should create and implement a written COVID-19 response plan.
- Increase cleaning and sanitizing of restrooms to no less than every two hours whenever possible.
- Provide clear plastic shielding between workers and attendees whenever possible, such as event cashiers and food vendors.
- If possible do not use tables. Tables should be covered with single-use material and discarded between users, showings, performances or every two hours, whichever provides maximum spread protection.
- Train workers on COVID-19 symptom awareness and proper handwashing procedures.

Additional measures that apply to theaters

- Increase cleaning time period between events, performances and showings. Ensure that commonly touched surfaces such as arm rests and railings are cleaned frequently.
- Ushers should monitor and enforce social distancing practices in theaters and encourage additional distance between guests as appropriate.
 - Ushers should limit the number of people in lines to no less than 6 feet between families or immediate party.

Additional measures that apply to museums

- Gift shops should limit entry to 50% capacity and clean commonly touched surfaces frequently.

###

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock
GOVERNOR



Mike Cooney
LT. GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

CONTACTS:

Marissa Perry, Communications Director, Governor's Office, (406) 444-4514

Erin Loranger, Press Secretary, Governor's Office, (406) 444-9725

Jon Ebel, Public Information Officer, DPHHS, (406) 444-0936

**Governor Bullock Announces \$10 Million Available for Child Care Facilities
in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic**

MONTANA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced \$10 million in federal CARES Act funding is now available to Montana childcare providers to continue serving Montana families with essential workers and assist with efforts to reopen after closing due to COVID-19.

The \$10 million dollars is funded through the CARES Act Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG). It is not part of the \$1.25 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund allocated to Montana.

“We know many Montana families have been balancing working and caring for children at the same time over the last several weeks and need sustainable and safe childcare options to continue working or to go back to work,” Governor Bullock said. **“This funding will provide much-needed financial assistance to providers, as well as support Montana families.”**

The \$10 million in Child Care and Development Block Grants will provide support for existing childcare providers, assistance for low-income families participating in the Best Beginnings Scholarship Program, and will fund emergency temporary childcare for essential workers.

Approximately half of the funding will provide assistance to existing licensed and registered childcare providers. Funding can be used to continue paying staff or go toward increasing sanitation and other measures to operate safely.

“Childcare providers do an excellent job of ensuring safe and healthy environments for Montana’s children,” Sheila Hogan, Director of the Department of Public Health and Human Services, said. **“I appreciate all they do to meet the needs of families in their communities, and I’m hopeful this funding will help them through this unique and challenging time.”**

Providers registered to care for up to six children are eligible for a \$3,000 emergency payment. Group providers that care for 7-12 children can receive \$5,000 and centers licensed for 13 or more children are eligible for \$8,000. Providers will be able to apply for this assistance through their local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies.

About 30 percent of the funding will benefit low-income and at-risk children through Best Beginnings scholarships. DPHHS will continue paying for Best Beginnings childcare through the scholarships even if the child is not in attendance during the statewide emergency. These scholarships will allow families to resume care when they can return to work, and keep childcare providers open long term.

“This is particularly important because we want to support the continuity of care for children,” Jamie Palagi, Early Childhood and Family Support Division Administrator for DPHHS, said. **“Maintaining relationships between a childcare teacher and the child is crucial for children’s security and positive development.”**

DPHHS will reimburse childcare facilities that are temporarily closed once they reopen.

The remaining 20 percent of the funding will be available to support temporary childcare needs. For example, this funding can help health care facilities establish temporary emergency childcare for their employees.

Specific information about how to access or apply for this funding is online at [BESTBEGINNINGS.MT.GOV](https://bestbeginnings.mt.gov).

###

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock
GOVERNOR



Mike Cooney
LT. GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tuesday, May 5, 2020

CONTACTS:

Marissa Perry, Communications Director, Governor's Office, (406) 444-4514

Emilie Ritter Saunders, Director of Communications & Public Affairs, Commerce, (406) 841-2557

Governor Bullock Announces \$123 Million Available in Emergency Grants

Grants available May 7 to support homeowners, renters, small businesses, public services

MONTANA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced that families, small businesses, non-profits, health services centers and individuals across Montana hardest-hit by impacts of COVID-19 will be eligible to apply for grants through nine new programs created in response to the emergency.

Guided by more than 1,400 public comments and his Coronavirus Relief Fund Advisory Council, Governor Bullock is making \$123,550,000 available in the first round of emergency grants funded through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

“Montanans have made it clear it’s imperative that we step in and do everything possible to ensure small businesses can responsibly reopen, non-profits continue to serve our vibrant communities, homeowners can stay in their homes, and Montanans most in-need have access to services,” Governor Bullock said. **“We’re all in this together and I know Montana will emerge from this challenge even stronger than before.”**

Beginning Thursday, May 7, Montanans out of work, families with limited resources, small businesses, non-profits and others can apply for financial relief for things like rental and mortgage assistance, business and non-profit grants, grants to serve seniors and those living with a disability, food banks and local food producers.

The following new programs join the state’s suite of existing support services and direct federal appropriations:

- The **Montana Business Stabilization Grant program** will provide working capital for Montana-owned small businesses with 50 or fewer employees that have sustained a loss of revenue due to COVID 19. Current funding available is \$50 million, the maximum award amount per business is \$10,000.
- The **Montana Innovation Grant program** is intended to help companies scale up, improve capabilities, or drive expanded distribution of products or services developed in response to COVID-19. Non-profit and for-profit businesses of less than 150 employees with primary operations in Montana that have created an innovative product or service intended to directly confront the COVID-19 emergency can apply for grants of up to \$25,000. Current funding available is \$5 million.
- **Montana Food and Agriculture Adaptability Program** grants are available to food and agriculture businesses to help increase community resilience amid the COVID-19 pandemic and other economic disruptions. Examples of eligible projects include those focused on accessing new markets, projects which strengthen and expand local food systems, and other business adaptations that decrease food and agricultural waste. Current funding available is \$500,000, with a maximum grant award of \$10,000.
- **Emergency Housing Assistance Program** will provide rent, security deposit, mortgage payment, and/or hazard insurance assistance as-needed for Montanans who have lost a job or substantial income loss as a result of COVID-19. Initial payments may include up to three months assistance where the eligible household can demonstrate arrears for April and May, with continuable inability to make their June payment. Montana Housing will pay the difference between 30 percent of the household's current gross monthly income and their eligible housing assistance costs, up to \$2,000 a month. Household income limits range from \$75,000-\$125,000 based on family size. Montanans receiving other forms of housing assistance are not eligible. Total funding available is \$50 million.
- **Public Health Grants** are available to local and tribal health departments and urban tribal clinics to help in the response to COVID-19 and to meet the needs of their communities. Each organization is eligible to apply for funding. Current funding available is \$5 million.
- **Stay Connected Grants** ranging from \$500-\$2,000 per applicant are available to reduce social isolation among Montana's seniors. Eligible applicants include area agencies on aging, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and tribal elder services. Grant funds can be used to fund technologies and other efforts to encourage physically distant forms of social interaction for elderly Montanans during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Current funding available is \$400,000.
- **Food Bank and Food Pantry Assistance** of up to \$50,000 per applicant are available to increase food security for Montanans hardest hit by the COVID-19

pandemic. Eligible applicants include community organizations providing food assistance to Montanans with limited resources, food banks, food pantries, community cupboards, and entities with infrastructures already in place to begin new food distribution programs. Current funding available is \$2 million.

- **Social Services Nonprofit Grants** of up to \$10,000 per applicant are available for nonprofit organizations impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency to retain existing programs and services, employees, or organizational viability for provision of future services and operations. Eligible applicants are registered, Montana-based social service nonprofits that were operating prior to February 15, 2020. Current funding available is \$10 million.
- **Telework Assistance Grants** of up to \$1,000 per individual will go towards purchasing equipment to assist Montanans with disabilities access telework equipment. DPHHS will partner with a local non-profit organization to assess and support assistive technology needs of individuals with disabilities during COVID-19. This assistance will help ensure people with disabilities have the equipment needed to adapt to the change in working environment due to COVID-19. Current funding available is \$650,000.

A comprehensive information resource and application portal is available at COVIDRELIEF.MT.GOV. The application portion of the website will go live at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 7. To prepare for the application, businesses and non-profits should have their tax ID, proof of business registration, a brief description of how the grant will be spent, and a brief description of how COVID-19 has impacted operations. Homeowners and renters should have bank account information available and verification of job or income loss.

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CITY OF BILLINGS
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION & PUBLIC LANDS
390 N 23RD STREET
BILLINGS, MONTANA 59101
(406) 657-8371/657-8372
FAX: (406) 247-8641



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

TO: ALL AREA MEDIA

FROM: Paul Reinhardt, Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator

DATE: Tuesday, May 5th 2020

RE: Phase 1 Park Use Updates

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Please announce the following:

In accordance with guidance received from Yellowstone County Health Officer, John Felton, The City of Billings Parks and Recreation Department has updated the following Park Uses:

- Tennis Courts have reopened for use by the public. Tennis nets have been replaced at all available courts.
- Basketball Courts and Volleyball Courts will remain closed for the time being.
- Playgrounds remain closed for the time being.
- The Billings Parks and Recreation Department has been asked to disseminate the process for youth sports leagues and organizations to begin utilizing City parks for play under the Governor's Phase 1 of "Reopening the Big Sky." The following statement from John Felton outlines the process how each league or organization will proceed:

"In the interest of the protecting the public's health, during the current COVID-19 pandemic, access to use of City parks by organized youth sports leagues and teams will only be granted after the team or league presents evidence of the Yellowstone County Health Officer's approval of plans addressing factors as required by the Health Officer (e.g., sanitation protocols, processes to assure appropriated physical distancing, etc.)"

In essence, the process involves the following 3 steps:

1. Each league or organization will need to develop their guidelines and plan for Phase 1.
2. Each league or organization will need to submit their guidelines and plan for approval to the Yellowstone County Health Department.
3. A copy of your Yellowstone County Health Department approved plan must be submitted to Kory Thomson, thomsonk@billingsmt.gov Recreation Superintendent, before any Park Use Permits will be issued or reinstated.

For questions or to submit your plan, please contact John Felton at 651-6474 or email john.fel@riverstonehealth.org.

For Park specific information, please contact the Parks and Recreation Department at parkinfo@billingsmt.gov or by phone at 406-657-8371.