



ORDER of the MISSOULA CITY & COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER
COVID-19 Requirements for Long-term Care, Assisted Living, and Retirement Homes with
Communal Spaces (aka Independent Living) Facilities
Operating in Missoula County
October 16, 2020

WHEREAS, the State of Montana, Missoula County, and the City of Missoula are in a declared state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, on June 25, 2020, the Governor issued a Directive regarding measures related to senior living and assisted living facilities.ⁱ

WHEREAS, local jurisdictions can enact requirements that are more restrictive than State guidelines;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 50-2-118 of the Montana Code Annotated, a local health officer in carrying out the purpose of the public health system shall take steps to limit contact between people in order to protect the public health from imminent threats;

WHEREAS, Epidemiological data indicate a recent increase in COVID-19 transmission in Missoula County;

WHEREAS, Numerous assisted living, long-term-care and retirement homes with communal eating and gathering spaces, also known as independent living facilities, operate in Missoula County;

WHEREAS; At least ten such facilities currently have identified, through testing, as many as 60 positive cases of COVID-19 among residents and/or staff;

WHEREAS; The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that, compared to younger people ages 18-29, the risk of hospitalization from COVID-19 for people ages 75-84 is eight times greater and the risk of death is 220 times greater;ⁱⁱ


WHEREAS, Missoula's local health officer, in consultation with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, has determined that additional measures are required to mitigate spread among the high-risk population residing in retirement homes, long-term care and assisted living facilities and to limit spread among the essential staff caring for these residents and patients;

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT: Effective October 16, 2020, all assisted living and long term care facilities and retirement homes with communal eating and gathering spaces (aka Independent Living) facilities in Missoula County shall institute the required COVID-19 mitigation measures listed in 1 through 13. These requirements are in addition to the governor's directive and other requirements. Facilities under facility-specific health officer orders due to presence of COVID-19 shall follow the more stringent requirements of such orders.

- 1) No visitors are allowed except for end-of-life compassionate care.
- 2) All entryways must have signs posted prohibiting visitors.
- 3) Patients or residents may be outdoors. Facilities that have COVID-19 present shall not allow residents to visit other homes or indoor facilities except for medical purposes.
- 4) New admits and patients being transferred from another health care facility, including those being readmitted after hospital discharge, shall be quarantined for 14 days from the admit or transfer date.
- 5) Only facilities that can maintain strict isolation may admit COVID-19 patients from hospital discharge while the patient's isolation period is still in effect.
- 6) Facilities that are not under facility-specific orders due to presence of COVID-19 may allow group activities if all participants wear cloth face coverings and maintain six feet distance at all times. Facilities that are under specific orders due to presence of COVID-19 among staff or residents shall cancel group activities.
- 7) Facilities that are not under specific orders due to presence of COVID-19 may allow communal dining if all participants maintain six feet of distance at all times and are masked upon entry to and exit from dining. Facilities that are under specific orders due to presence of COVID-19 among staff or residents shall cancel communal dining.
- 8) All staff shall wear at least surgical masks, cloth masks are not acceptable; use universal precautions and related PPE for all personal care; and fit tested N-95's when providing oral care to a suspected or known COVID-19 case and when performing any aerosolizing procedures on any resident or patient, regardless of known COVID-19 status.ⁱⁱⁱ
- 9) Residents or patients shall wear a cloth face covering except when outside or alone in a separate room. Allowed visitors shall wear a cloth face covering when in the facility.
- 10) Any facility that experiences a positive COVID-19 test among staff or residents shall offer testing to all residents and provide testing to all staff regardless of symptoms. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services will provide test kits and analysis, the facility is responsible for collecting the specimens.
- 11) COVID-19 symptom checks shall occur three times daily for all residents and staff.
- 12) Staff are not allowed to work if symptomatic.
- 13) Patients or residents who are symptomatic or receive a positive test result must be immediately isolated.

This Order shall remain in effect until revised or revoked by the Missoula City-County Health Officer.

Signed:



Ellen Leahy, RN, MN, MPH
Director & Health Officer

10-16-20
Date

ⁱ “Directive implementing Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020 and providing measures related to senior living and assisted living facilities.” Governor Steve Bullock, June 25, 2020.

ⁱⁱ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/investigations-discovery/hospitalization-death-by-age.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/using-ppe.html>