



COVID-19 IMT

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News Release FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Carbon County Confirms First COVID-19 Case

RED LODGE, MT - On April 1, Carbon County Public Health Officer, Bill George, MD announced the first confirmed case of COVID-19 (novel Coronavirus) within Carbon County, Montana. The patient is a male between the ages of 40 and 49 and is recovering while under a county-issued isolation order. To protect the patient's privacy, no further details will be released. The Carbon County Public Health Department will monitor the patient, as well as any of the patient's close contacts.

"We are taking every step we can to mitigate the spread of the virus and keep Carbon County safe," said Dr. George. "In addition to keeping abreast of latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), we have been observing and learning from other communities that have already been faced with these challenges, and will use their experiences to institute best practices and guidance for prevention in our own community."

This particular case is reported to have been spread from travel outside the state. DPHHS and the Carbon County Public Health Department are immediately following up to learn more details about the individual's exposure risk, travel history, and to identify and communicate with anyone who may have been in close contact with the patient. The patient will be quarantined. Those who came in close contact with the individual will be monitored for 14 days for fever and respiratory symptoms per CDC guidance.

This case highlights the need for people travelling to Montana from outside of the state to self-quarantine for at least 14 days to reduce the risk of exposing residents to possible infection. The Governor put a self-quarantine order in effect for travelers to the state effective March 30, 2020. More information about that order and other COVID-19 related orders can be found at covid19.mt.gov.

On March 5th, the Carbon County Commissioners created the Carbon County COVID-19 Incident Management Team (IMT) led by Incident Commanders Tom Kohley, the Carbon County Disaster and Emergency Services Coordinator, and Jason Mahoney, Carbon County Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.

Public health officials are working to trace the origin of this infected individual and will provide guidance in preventing further spread. In the meantime, we all should follow best practices to minimize the risk of community exposure including staying home unless seeking essential goods or services; practicing social distancing of 6 feet and avoiding close contact with people who are sick.

Dr. George advises, “Pay attention to potential COVID-19 symptoms such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath. If you feel like you are developing symptoms, please STAY HOME and contact your healthcare provider by PHONE to discuss the appropriate steps to take. It is important to call your provider first so that precautions can be taken to reduce the risk to others at the clinic or hospital.”

The CDC and state public health officials recommend all Montanans take the following precautions:

Those include:

- **Staying home except for essential goods or services;** avoid non-essential travel.
- **Covering your coughs and sneezes** with a tissue or into your sleeve, and then throwing the tissue in the trash.
- **Washing your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds,** especially after going to the bathroom or before eating. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Avoid touching your face** – especially your eyes, nose and mouth - with unwashed hands.
- **Staying home if you have cold or flu-like symptoms and** avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- **Calling ahead before visiting your doctor:** If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have COVID-19 symptoms. This will help the healthcare provider’s office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.
- **Staying home except to get medical care:** People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to isolate at home during their illness. You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care.

More detailed recommendations are available at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Information on Carbon County’s response to COVID-19 can be found at CarbonAlert.org. Updates are also available through Carbon Alert on Facebook and Instagram. For text updates to your mobile device, text: CovidCC to: 99411. Questions

can be directed to covid19imt@co.carbon.mt.us or call 406-445-7258. For general information on COVID-19, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov). or dphhs.mt.gov

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