



Flathead City-County Health Department

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Proposal Submitted 10.9.2020

BACKGROUND

Flathead County is seeing a dramatic rise in COVID-19 cases, related hospitalizations, and deaths. Over the past two weeks there have been 889 new cases. Four additional COVID-19 related deaths of Flathead County individuals were confirmed, bringing the total number of COVID-19 related deaths to twenty-three as of October 9th. Furthermore, COVID-19 Capacity Indicators show that Flathead County is functioning at critical levels in four of the seven categories, including case investigation capacity, community concern, and hospitalizations.

This document provides a background on all the COVID-19 related data in Flathead County and presents a plan forward for the control of COVID-19.

Department Recommendation:

It is the Department's recommendation that the Board of Health approve this plan.

COVID-19 Cases in Flathead County:

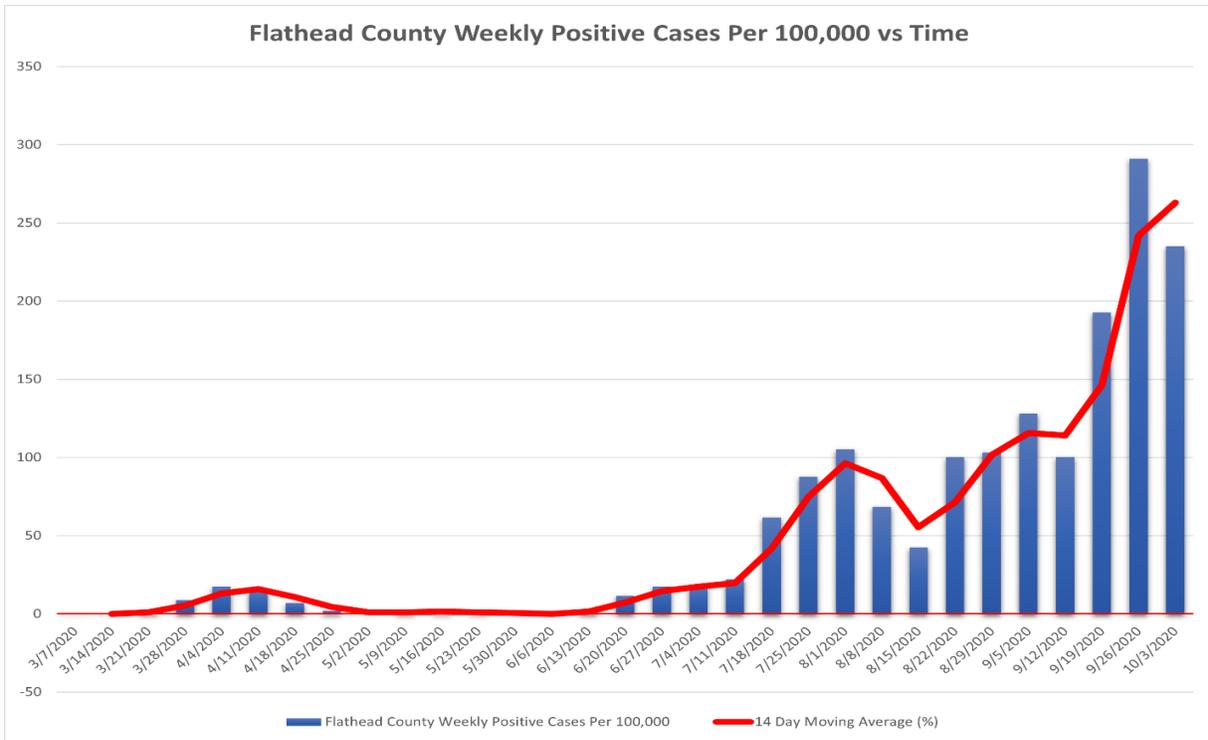
COVID-19 cases have increased dramatically since the beginning of September. The rate of COVID-19 per 100,000 people has increased from 19.2 per 100,000 for the first week of September to 51.1 per 100,000 for the week beginning September 28.

Source	Metric	8/31-9/6	9/7-9/13	9/14-9/20	9/21-9/27	9/28-10/4	10/5-10/8*
FCCHD	New positive COVID-19 cases received	101	143	233	342	380	306*
FCCHD	Average rate of new cases per day per 100,000 people	13.6	19.2	31.4	46.0	51.1	72.0*
DPHHS	% of all tests that were positive	9.3%	4.7%	6.9%	10.9%	9.5%	*

*Incomplete week.

As of October 9, there are 10 long-term care facilities with current outbreaks. This limits the ability of the hospitals to discharge patients into these facilities. There are at least 14 bars and restaurants with outbreaks since the beginning of September. There are outbreaks linked to the large events including at least four churches, four weddings, three political events, and two trade shows.





In the past seven months, there have been twenty-three deaths in Flathead County from COVID-19. That is greater than the nineteen total Influenza (flu) deaths in Flathead County for the past four years. In Montana, there have been 197 COVID-19 deaths year to date compared to 17 Influenza deaths in 2019/2020.

Flu Season	Flathead County Influenza Deaths
2019/2020	0
2018/2019	3
2017/2018	9
2016/2017	7

In seven months, Flathead County has had more people die from COVID-19 than die in motor vehicle crashes for the past two years. In 2017 in Flathead County, 11 people died from motor vehicle crashes and 9 people died in 2018.

Capacity Indicators:

The Flathead Capacity Indicators provides criteria and associated data to be considered by the Department when making decisions related to addressing impacts associated with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Green indicates that everything is going well while red indicates that the current needs are exceeding capacity.



Flathead County Community Capacity Indicators, Updated 10.8.2020

Capacity	Source	Metric	Status Breakout	8/31-9/6	9/7-9/13	9/14-9/20	9/21-9/27	9/28-10/4	10/5-10/8*
Case Investigation Capacity	FCCHD	New positives received per investigator per day (7 day rolling average)	Green: 0-3 cases Yellow: 4-5 cases Red: 6+ cases	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
	FCCHD	Adequate capacity to conduct contact monitoring	Green: Sufficient Capacity Yellow: Low Capacity Red: Critical Capacity	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red
Community Concern	FCCHD	Calls to COVID phone line (Weekday rolling average)	Green: 0-50 calls per day Yellow: 51-74 calls Red: 75+ calls	Yellow 65.4	Red 98.4	Red 113.2	Red 161.0	Red 152.2	Red
Healthcare System Capacity	KRH	Hospitalized COVID-19 Patients	Green: 0-11 hospitalized Yellow: 12-14 hospitalized Red: 15+ hospitalized	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red
	KRH	PPE Availability	Green: Sufficient Capacity Yellow: Low Capacity Red: Critical Capacity	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Testing Capacity	MIDIS	Average Diagnostic test turnaround time for cases (Rolling average)	Green: less than 36 hours Yellow: 36 hours – 3 days Red: More than 3 days	Yellow 2.9	Red 3.4	Yellow 2.3	Yellow 2.4	Yellow 2.5	Grey
	KRH	Sufficient laboratory testing supplies (test kits, swabs, reagent)	Green: Sufficient Capacity Yellow: Low Capacity Red: Critical Capacity	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

Health Department Response:

It would be an understatement to say the Department’s staff have been taxed by the rise in case numbers. Currently, eleven permanent staff have been reassigned from their typical job duties to COVID-19. An additional twenty-two temporary staff are currently helping assist, most of them part-time. The hiring of new staff to address capacity is ongoing but the Department has been unable to find assistance in a fast-enough manner to address the large increase in cases.



CONTROL MEASURE PLAN

The goal of this plan is to let the community know in advance the control measures that will be put in place if the COVID-19 cases reaches a certain level. The data to determine if this plan will be implemented will not be measured until the week of October 26 – November 1st to allow Flathead County the opportunity to change the trajectory of the cases through routine public health measures including social distancing, wearing a mask, not attending large events, staying home when ill and following isolation/quarantine orders.

New restrictions:

If the number of new cases is at an average of 50 per day per 100,000 residents for the week of October 26 – November 1st or any Monday-Sunday week following November 1st (this is 375 cases per week in Flathead County). The following restrictions will go into effect at 5pm the following Wednesday afternoon*:

- Social gatherings will be limited to no more than 25 people, regardless of the ability to socially distance
- The capacity at bars, restaurants and churches will be set to 25%
- Any business that sells alcohol would have to close by 10pm

*Schools and school activities and sports will not be included in the order

Data calculations:

- The population of Flathead County will utilize the Census Estimate of 106,134
- All cases will be calculated on a Monday through Sunday week.

Length of time of restrictions:

- One month from initiation of the order.

Public awareness:

Recognizing that the state COVID-19 website numbers have not always been accurate due to a delay in data entry, we will be posting the daily numbers on our website by 6pm each day. This will allow the community to easily track the numbers.

In addition, in preparation for questions/comments we will issue the draft Health Office order and clarifying documents (guidelines and FAQs) by Monday October 26th. This allows a minimum of one week for businesses to review, seek guidance and prepare. The first possible implementation order for would be November 4, 2020 at 5pm.

