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State of Montana Newsroom

Governor Gianforte Issues New Directives, Executive Order

Governor's Office
February 12 2021

HELENA, Mont. – Governor Greg Gianforte this morning issued two new directives and an executive order.

The first directive rescinds and replaces all prior directives implementing Executive Order 2-2021, which the governor issued on January 13, 2021.

Consistent with the governor's announcement on February 10, the new directive allows the statewide mask mandate to expire. Local jurisdictions may still choose to implement their own mask requirements.

"Since January 5th, I have provided a clear, consistent path to rescinding the mask mandate," Governor Gianforte said. "First, we need to start getting the vaccine to our most vulnerable. Second, we need to protect businesses, nonprofits, places of worship, and health care providers from lawsuits if they make a good faith effort to protect individuals from the spread of coronavirus and follow clear public health guidelines. We have met both criteria, and the statewide mandate expires today."

Governor Gianforte emphasized how providing incentives and encouraging personal responsibility are more effective than imposing impractical, unenforceable government mandates.

On February 10, Governor Gianforte signed S.B. 65 into law which provides a liability shield to businesses, nonprofits, and others who protect their workers, their customers, and their clients from the spread of COVID-19.

"We will provide incentives to protect the health and safety of Montanans, and we will emphasize personal responsibility. Since we're not out of the woods yet, I will continue wearing a mask and encourage all Montanans to do the same to protect themselves, their loved ones, and their neighbors," Governor Gianforte said.

As of this morning, Montanans have administered more than 167,000 doses, and nearly 47,000 Montanans are fully immunized.

The state remains in Phase 1B of its vaccine distribution plan, which the governor updated on January 6 to protect the most vulnerable Montanans, including people 70 years of age and older, Montanans 16 years of age and older who have severe underlying medical conditions, and Native Americans and other persons of color who are at a heightened risk of severe COVID-19-related complications.

In keeping with Governor Gianforte's January 13 directive which removed restrictions on hours of service and capacity for businesses, today's directive continues to encourage businesses to adopt industry best practices or public health guidance to protect their employees and customers.

Today's directive also continues to promote the use of telehealth services, protect vulnerable Montanans from eviction or foreclosure, ease licensing for health care professionals, and reduce regulatory burdens.

The second directive repeals the election-related directive dated August 6, 2020. The governor also issued Executive Order 3-2021 which rescinds Executive Order 15-2018.

"Our Constitution makes it plain as day: the Legislature makes our laws, not the governor and not the courts," Governor Gianforte said. "It's the responsibility of our Legislature to determine how Montana's elections are conducted, and it's the responsibility of our Legislature to determine whether an individual must disclose donations to a nonprofit group."

"These issues are up to the Legislature now, which is where they should have been decided all along," Gianforte said.

View the directive implementing Executive Order 2-2021; Executive Order 3-2021, and directive repealing election-related August 6, 2020 directive HERE.

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ABOUT MONTANA

Population: 1,005,141

Nickname: Treasure State

State Capital: Helena

State Flower: Bitterroot

State Bird: Western Meadowlark

State Animal: Grizzly Bear

State Fish: Blackspotted Cutthroat Trout

State Gemstones: Sapphire & Agate

State Motto: Oro y Plata (Gold and Silver)