



# Department of Public Health and Human Services

Montana Medical Marijuana Program ♦ 111 N Last Chance Gulch STE 4E ♦ PO Box 202926 ♦ Helena, MT 59620

Steve Bullock, Governor

Sheila Hogan, Director

March 23, 2020

The Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) and Medical Marijuana Program (MMP) have important information for patients and providers related to the ongoing international health crisis. Please take a few minutes to read this document as the contents will affect all licensees and registered cardholders in the Montana Medical Marijuana Program. Our goal with the following new policies and recommendations is to limit unnecessary exposure to this dangerous virus as much as possible while maintaining safe access to important medicine for all licensees and cardholders.

## **Background:**

The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) was first identified in December of 2019 and has now reached Montana. On March 12, 2020 Montana Governor Steve Bullock issued an executive order declaring a State of Emergency. On March 13, 2020 President Donald Trump declared a National Emergency. The number of confirmed cases is expected to rise in the coming days and weeks. Many MMP cardholders have health conditions that place them at high risk for complications from infection. The following general recommendations are strongly encouraged:

## **General Recommendations:**

- Eliminate communally handled products, including 'sniff jars' or other items that multiple patients or employees may touch.
- Maintain social distancing. Licensees should find ways to limit the number of patients in their dispensaries and develop practices that limit employees' interactions with cardholders and the public in general.
- Enact stringent, frequent cleaning procedures to disinfect all surfaces regularly touched by employees, patients, or other visitors.
- Utilize home delivery for patients if allowable in your locality. Please note some local jurisdictions do not allow this, so check your local regulations.
- Regularly visit both [dphhs.mt.gov](http://dphhs.mt.gov) and [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov) for the latest updates and guidance.

The Department has submitted policy recommendations to the Governor for consideration to continue to provide medicine to people with debilitating illness, protect patients and providers from unnecessary exposure, decrease the burden on health care professional for non-COVID related care, and slow the spread of infectious disease.

The department will issue additional guidance as soon as possible if these policy recommendations are adopted. Additional questions regarding the MMP and the effects of COVID19 should be directed to [covid19info@mt.gov](mailto:covid19info@mt.gov). General program inquiries (non-COVID19 related) are best directed to [mtmarijuanaprogram@mt.gov](mailto:mtmarijuanaprogram@mt.gov) or via phone at (406) 444-0596. For update-to-date information on the status of COVID19 in Montana, please visit [www.covid19.mt.gov](http://www.covid19.mt.gov)