



# SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH FOR RURAL MONTANANS

Rural Montanans face unique challenges that affect their well being.



- **Healthcare Access and Quality:** Geographic isolation and a shortage of healthcare providers make accessing quality healthcare challenging. Many rural residents must travel long distances to see a doctor.
- **Neighborhood and Built Environment:** Inadequate housing conditions and a lack of affordable housing options can negatively impact physical and mental health. Limited public transportation options can restrict access to healthcare, social services, and employment opportunities.
- **Social and Community Context:** Rural residents may experience social isolation due to geographic distance and limited social networks. In addition, fewer community resources and support services are available in rural areas.
- **Economic Stability:** Limited job opportunities and lower wages in rural areas contribute to economic instability, affecting residents' ability to afford necessities.
- **Education Access and Quality:** Rural areas often have fewer educational resources, leading to disparities in educational attainment and long-term health outcomes.

## Helpful Resources

- **Rural Assistance Programs:** Offered by the Montana Department of Agriculture, these include grants, loans, and outreach programs to assist rural communities and ag-related businesses.
- **Rural Community Development Initiative Grants:** These grants help non-profit housing and community development organizations, low-income rural communities, and federally recognized tribes with housing, community facilities, and economic development projects.
- **Rural Business Development Grants:** Provide technical assistance and training for small rural businesses.
- **Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program:** Offers affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas.
- **Montana Office of Rural Health and Area Health Education Center (AHEC):** Provides resources and support to improve health services in rural areas.