



Missoula City-County Health Department

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

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MEDIA RELEASE

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MCCHD Releases Health Officer Order Regarding Minimum Requirements for School Athletic Events with Spectators in Missoula County

The Missoula City-County Health Department (MCCHD) released a [Health Officer Order](#) regarding minimum requirements for school athletic events with spectators in Missoula County this morning. The Order, which updates [pre-season guidance](#), allows for a maximum of 500 spectators at school athletic events if the host school or district has allowed for spectators.

The Order informs how school sporting event organizers must continue coordinating and managing public health safety for athletic events with spectators, which turn a school-related activity into an event subject to requirements of the local health board and health officer orders to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the county.

Each school or district is responsible for making the decision to host spectators or not. If a school or district decides to allow for spectators, the school or district is responsible for determining whether and how to allocate tickets for home and away spectators. Health Officer Ellen Leahy notes, "While this Order applies to all school sports, this update is designed to bring football games with spectators in Missoula County into better alignment with changes that the other six AA counties recently enacted."

MCCHD encourages the community to continue following recommendations for events and gatherings during Phase Two. The total spectator requirement is a minimum requirement, not a goal -- schools may enact more stringent requirements for any athletic event. The practice of keeping the number of players in other sports to as few as possible has already reduced COVID-19 exposure and transmission, as well as the number of students, staff, or public that were quarantined despite the increasing case numbers this week.

Please connect with our Environmental Health Division at 406-258-4755 for questions and assistance when planning spectator events associated with school athletics. Our Public Health Information Line remains open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm to field general COVID-19 inquiries.

Local schools hosting athletic events are the best point of contact for information about specific games.

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