

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Campbell County Adjusts Operations

Gillette, WY—March 19, 2020 10:16 a.m. The coronavirus situation has presented many challenges to communities, and the Campbell County community is not an exception. Rapidly changing recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Public Health are being assessed regularly by Campbell County and our diverse departments as we consider the potential closures of facilities.

As of right now, there are still zero confirmed coronavirus cases in Campbell County. Wyoming Counties reporting confirmed cases include Sheridan, Fremont, Laramie, Park and Teton. Kim Deti, Public Information Officer for the Wyoming Department of Health, indicated the state is not seeing widespread transmission at this time.

First and foremost, we want to assure the public any decision we make, whether it be to close a facility or remain open, is done with profound consideration of both the impact to the health and safety of our community and our employees, as well as the economic impact our decisions will have throughout the entire county.

One of the most significant challenges we are all facing is a lack of information specific to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Globally, we have only had approximately three months to learn about the virus. As a result, many questions remain unclear, leaving us to navigate uncharted territory.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading easily from person-to-person. The evidence we have from other countries indicates that 80 percent of the population who contract the disease will have mild to moderate symptoms and will recover without any complications. The evidence is also indicating that older adults are more likely to have severe symptoms. The most affected groups are those aged 65 and older and individuals with underlying health conditions such as heart, respiratory, and renal disease, as well as diabetes.

When a decision is made to close a facility, it is done so out of an abundance of caution to protect the most vulnerable of our population. Campbell County departments are strongly encouraged to find ways to continue providing services while observing social distancing recommendations. However, there are certain services and programs the County offers that can only be delivered face-to-face.

After thoughtful consideration, the following departments have closed to the public:

- Parks and Recreation facilities through April 5;
- Rockpile Museum until April 2;
- Public Library System until April 6;
- Children’s Developmental Services will be closed starting Monday, March 23rd, and will remain closed through April 5th.

All other Campbell County departments remain open at this time. However, we strongly encourage the public to conduct as much business online or over the phone as possible. Tax payments can be made on the Treasurer’s website, as well as renewing license plates. Additionally, the Treasurer’s Office has placed a drop box outside their office for those who do not want to enter the office. The Assessor’s Office is encouraging the public to contact them by phone as opposed to in person. The Clerk’s Office has placed bins outside of the Clerk’s Office for titles and vault recordings, for those who do not want to come into the office. Anyone wishing to obtain a marriage license is requested to schedule an appointment by calling (307) 682-7285.

Additionally, the Wyoming Supreme Court issued an order outlining the implementation of modified procedures for Circuit and District Courts, which are in effect from March 18 to April 10, 2020. The order will be reviewed no later than April 1, 2020, to determine if the order should be extended or canceled. The modifications include:

- 1) In-person proceedings should be suspended, with exceptions for:
 - The protection of constitutional rights of criminal defendants;
 - Civil and criminal jury trials already in progress as of March 18, 2020;
 - Orders of protection;
 - Emergency child protection orders;
 - Petitions for temporary injunctive relive;
 - Emergency protection for elderly and vulnerable persons;
 - Proceedings directly related to the COVID-19 public health emergency; and
 - Other exceptions as approved by the Chief Justice or deemed necessary by a district or circuit judge.
- 2) The use of telephonic or video technology for statutorily and/or constitutionally required hearings;
- 3) Continuance of any proceedings not addressed in bullets one or two;
- 4) All civil trials, hearings, and motions should be postponed or rescheduled for a later date;
- 5) Reasonable attempts should be made to reschedule all criminal trials (subject to the requirement that defendants be provided a speedy trial);
- 6) Courtroom attendance should be limited to attorneys, parties, necessary witnesses, victims, and essential court personnel;
- 7) Any proceeding involving a participant who is ill or in a high-risk category should be rescheduled;
- 8) In-custody defendants who are symptomatic of coronavirus should not be transported to court facilities;

- 9) When evaluating whether a proceeding is required, the courts should consider whether the proceedings will require the parties, their attorneys, essential court personnel, or the public to act in a manner inconsistent with the current recommendations from local, state, and federal public health officials,
- 10) Unless public safety compels otherwise, judges should issue summonses instead of bench warrants
- 11) Clerks of court are urged to consider using drop boxes for conventionally filed documents, if possible;
- 12) Individuals attempting to enter restricted areas in violation of the Wyoming Supreme Court's order shall be denied entrance by courthouse security officers or authorized individuals;
- 13) Court employees should discourage all persons from congregating outside courtroom doors and should encourage social distancing inside the courtroom or in other court areas;
- 14) Individuals with legitimate court business who are ill, caring for someone who is ill or in a high-risk category are advised to stay home and request a continuance by calling the appropriate clerk of court;
- 15) Litigants and attorneys in both criminal and civil cases are encouraged to file documents with clerks of court by electronic mail, if possible;
- 16) Judges are strongly encouraged to communicate with their local County Commissioners to ensure that the courthouse remains open to court staff as necessary for required court business.

The Sixth Judicial District of Wyoming ordered additional restrictions. If an attorney, litigant or juror required to appear in court that is experiencing flu-like symptoms, a fever, is coughing or sneezing, or has recently travel to an area experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak, should not come to court. Any individual over 65 or has a compromised immune system are also asked to not come to court. Instead, such individuals are requested to contact the court for further instructions.

Circuit Court

Jurors, attorneys and litigants—call or email the Clerk of Circuit Court at (307) 682-2190 or ccgcc@courts.state.wy.us;

District Court

Jurors, attorneys and litigants—call or email the Clerk of District Court at (307) 682-3424 or districtcv19@ccgov.net.

Attorneys and litigants—call or email the judicial assistant for the judge assigned to your case at (307) 686-8517 or jd6@courts.state.wy.us.

We continue to reassess the situation on a daily—if not more frequent basis—and are prepared to implement more restrictive measures as aspects change in the County.