TO: Montanans; all officers and agencies of the State of Montana
FROM: Governor Steve Bullock
DATE: March 20, 2020
RE: Directive Implementing Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020 and providing for
expanded telehealth

Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020 declare that a state of emergency exists in Montana due to the
global outbreak of COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus.

The demand for health care practitioners and facilities needed to respond to this emergency will put
significant strain on health care systems, and a majority of Montana counties already face shortages of
health care and mental health practitioners. Pursuant to § 10-3-118, MCA, the Montana Department of
Labor and Industry may provide interstate licensure recognition whenever a state of emergency or
disaster is in effect by registering professionals who possesses an active, unrestricted license in another
state. Certain modification of statutes and administrative rules is necessary to achieve this purpose.

Those most at-risk to COVID-19, including older persons, persons with certain underlying health
conditions, and persons with certain disabilities, could greatly benefit by being served by health care
practitioners via telehealth while simultaneously maintaining appropriate social-distancing protocols.
Allowing patients and providers to communicate via telephone or through online communications, as
well as allowing private insurance companies to provide coverage for these services, will greatly
expand Montanans’ ability to have safe options to receive quality care.

In accordance with the authority vested in me under the Constitution, Article VI, Sections 4 and 13,
and the laws of the State of Montana, Title 10, Chapter 3 and Title 50, Chapter 1, MCA, and other
applicable provisions of the Constitution and Montana Law, I hereby direct the following measures be
in place in the State of Montana effective immediately:

- Strict compliance with ARM § 24.101.417 is waived for the purposes of licensing health care
  professionals for the duration of the emergency so that health care facilities may bring in
  additional paid staff to Montana as soon as needed and possible.

- Health care practitioners shall be allowed to perform health care services using all modes of
  telehealth, including video and audio, audio-only, or other electronic media, to treat the
  residents of the state of Montana for all medically necessary and appropriate services.

- Strict adherence to the following requirements of board specific telehealth / telepractice /
telemedicine requirements for these practitioners is suspended to the extent that doing so is
necessary in responding to the emergency and consistent with the purposes of this Directive:
  o Section 37-3-102(14)(b), MCA, and ARM § 24.156.813 (physicians);
  o ARM § 24.189.301(16) (psychologists);
  o 37-15-102(11), 37-15-202(1)(d), MCA and ARM §§ 24.222.907; -.910; -.913; -.916; -
    .920 (speech language pathologists and audiologists).
• Practitioners should be aware that the recent Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services ("CMS") waivers and modifications issued under Section 1135 of the Social Security Act in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency do not expand the list of health care professions or services that will be reimbursed under Montana Medicaid. For example, CMS has not reimbursed physical therapy telehealth services in the past and has not agreed to do so during this emergency.

• To the extent that § 33-22-138(6)(d)(ii)-(iii), MCA, conflicts with the purposes of this Directive, strict adherence is waived for the limited purpose of services provided via telehealth during the emergency.

• Further, to the extent that any other statute or administrative rule would frustrate the purposes of this Directive, strict adherence is hereby suspended during the emergency.

Authorities: Sections 10-3-104 and -118, MCA; Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020; Montana Constitution, Art. VI, Sections 4 and 13; §§ 10-3-103, -302, and -305, MCA; §§ 50-1-202, -203, and -204, MCA; and all other applicable provisions of state and federal law.

Limitations
• This Directive is effective immediately and expires at the end of the declared state of emergency in Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020.
• This Directive shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.
• This Directive is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the State of Montana, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.