



March 10, 2021

Governor Gianforte Administration
Charlie Brereton, Health Policy Advisor

Dear Mr. Brereton,

MNA is extremely grateful and hopeful that with the many vaccines approved now for Covid-19 (three brands approved for emergency use operations) and the Governors covid task force along with public health officers and healthcare providers providing guidance and leadership in getting the shots efficiently into Montanans' arms, MNA kindly asks for the Governor to take the next step and make them widely available to everyone who wants one. MNA believes the Governor has covered those most vulnerable and with the adjusted age down to 60, please take the next step and open them up to all Montanans who would want to get a Covid vaccine.

MNA continues to applaud the counties and localities that have continued a mask mandate in spite of [Governor Gianforte's lifting of mask mandate](#) on February 12, 2021, especially in light of the many Covid variants coming into play. Governor Gianforte noted that he will leave it up to the counties, cities, and localities, so we encourage his support of those counties, cities, and localities where they continue the mask mandate. Data proves that mask mandates help limit potential exposure to covid-19 by contributing to reducing community transmission of COVID-19, [CDC agency researchers](#) wrote.

[CDC researchers](#) have reaffirmed that mask mandates are associated with reductions in COVID-19 case and hospitalization growth rates and deaths, with similar data pointing to increases in cases, hospitalizations and death, particularly in the absence of mask mandates. [Surges in cases and deaths](#) that occurred in many areas nationally were attributed to the lifting of these restrictions.

MNA encourages the re-opening and continued openings of our businesses and schools, however, not without social distance guidelines, adherence to mask wearing by all, and of course, hand hygiene. MNA kindly asks, please wear a mask until our vaccination rates and public health guidelines recommend otherwise.

Sincerely,

Montana Nurses Association Board of Directors:




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