Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

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MT Expression Research Report 2020-10

Glenna Hartman & Kara Grau
9/8/2020

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Introduction

COVID-19 has affected and changed many aspects of our lives, including the tourism industry. The state of Montana’s economy is dependent on out-of-state tourist spending. In 2019, the estimated total contribution of nonresident spending to Montana’s economy was $5.42 billion (Grau, 2020). Despite nearly all of second quarter spending having halted due to the pandemic, and both Glacier and Yellowstone National Park visitation being dramatically lower than 2019, July figures indicate that visitation to Yellowstone National Park is actually 2% higher than last year. The spending patterns of these visitors may be different though, with lower expenditure in bars, restaurants and lodging contrasted with spikes in recreational vehicle sales and rentals (Sidney Herald, 2020).

Purpose

The purpose of this report was to analyze and synthesize open ended responses written by tourism-related business owners and managers on a COVID-19 survey as it pertains to Montana.

Methods

The Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) at the University of Montana emailed a survey to tourism-related business owners around Montana as well as to Montana business owners who are members of associations, chambers of commerce, and convention and visitor bureaus. Four separate rounds of the COVID-19 business survey were emailed. The first one captured data from March 11th through March 13th, the second survey captured data from March 25th through March 27th, and the third captured data from May 6th through May 8th. The fourth survey that this report is based on is from data collected from July 23rd through July 28th. It represents a sample of 249 Montana tourism-related business owners/managers. Of the 154 respondents to the quantitative portion of the survey, between 78 to 154 respondents provided comments on each open-ended question. There were 104 who commented on concern about their liability related to COVID; 45 answered about any positive things they can note about changes in their business; 39 answered when asked about concerns related to changes in business; 153 responded when asked questions visitors had for them regarding COVID-19; 134 answered when asked what non-COVID-19 related questions guests had; and 60 had additional open-ended questions.

The full survey received responses from all but 18 Montana counties: Blaine, Carter, Daniels, Deer Lodge, Garfield, Golden Valley, Judith Basin, Liberty, Madison, Petroleum,
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Pondera, Powder River, Prairie, Sheridan, Sweet Grass, Treasure, Wheatland, and Wibaux. The comment section of the survey for this report represents respondents from 38 of 56 counties.

As this is the fourth COVID-19 impact survey to be conducted by ITRR, the following links provide results for all the surveys conducted to date:

- Open-ended Qualitative results for the second survey conducted March 25-27: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/itrr_pubs/406/
- Quantitative results for the third survey conducted May 6-8: https://bit.ly/MTBizR3

Results

Results for this report are reported by the respondents’ primary business association to the tourism industry and were categorized into four types: accommodations (N=122), outfitters/guides (N=21); tourism services (N=51), and; tourism support services (N=49).

Accommodations

The category “Accommodations” consists of hotel/motel, bed & breakfast, rental homes/cabins/condos, campgrounds, and guest ranches (see Appendix A or all accommodation responses). There was a total of 122 respondents in this category, many of whom provided open-ended comments. The comments were categorized or coded according to themes identified. Some comments contained multiple themes and were coded multiple times, thus the following percentages will not equal 100.

Accommodations- What specific areas of liability are you concerned about?

Six major themes related to the question on what owners and managers in the accommodations sector were worried about in terms of liability related to COVID-19 emerged. Fifty-four respondents answered this question. The six themes and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Getting in legal trouble (50%)**: If a guest contracts the disease what is our liability? In a "sue happy" world we wonder if we'll end up in court trying to protect ourselves. We need a mandate from government (fed, state, county) that eliminates protection from virus related suits.
- **Theme 2—Customers spreading COVID-19 (22%)**: Having people with COVID staying at my hotel and spreading to others and becoming a cruise ship. Many people are fighting
us over the mask requirements even though they are coming from areas already mandating them. They are on vacation and want to forget that COVID is a problem.

- **Theme 3**—**Employees contracting COVID-19 (20%)**: If an employee tests positive we are worried about ramifications.
- **Theme 4**—**Not sure/other (13%)**: I'm not sure that I can articulate where my concerns lie.
- **Theme 5**—**Conflicts with customers (7%)**: Enforcing face mask wearing and potentially having to refuse to serve a guest, who may become aggressive/abusive/violent.
- **Theme 6**—**Frustration with government (6%)**: Cowardly approach of government officials who ultimately dump all liability and responsibility on the private sector. Government has been on sabbatical since this started. The rest of us go to work.

**Accommodations- What positive things, if any, can you share about changes related to workforce?**

Twenty-one respondents answered this question. Six themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1**—**Cooperation (38%)**: The team that is left has come together to support each other.
- **Theme 2**—**Nothing positive (19%)**: None.
- **Theme 3**—**Less employees, less concerns (14%)**: No payroll, less paperwork! No worries about employees understanding best practices.
- **Theme 4**—**Easy to find employees (10%)**: Lots of local college age employees looking for work this summer.
- **Theme 5**—**Hard to find employees (10%)**: The extra $600 weekly for the unemployed has finally ended. That should get some people motivated to get off their butts and go work. There are help wanted signs all over West Yellowstone and no one to fill them. It has greatly impacted restaurants here especially.
- **Theme 6**—**Easy to get PPE (5%)**: Easier to get PPE.

**Accommodations- What concerns, if any, can you share about changes related to workforce?**

Six major themes related to the question on what owners and managers in the accommodations sector were felt about changes in the workforce related to COVID-19 emerged. Twenty-seven respondents answered this question. The six themes and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1**—**Abusing unemployment benefits (41%)**: Extra $600 a week in unemployment did not help keep employees and has not encouraged people to go back to work. Especially for those making 2-3 times their normal pay. How to alleviate
employee fears and make adjustments based on COVID facts (still evolving) versus opinions.

- **Theme 2—Issues finding employees (37%)**: Just getting people to apply for jobs has been a big problem.
- **Theme 3—Employees wearing masks (11%)**: Staff and guests are both upset with the mask update. Masks continue to make certain staff members nauseous, one it causes to be light-headed. And others are upset that they are forced to wear a mask just to be able to have a job.
- **Theme 4—Stress about contracting COVID-19 (7%)**: Concern of getting COVID-19 creates a more stressful environment for employees and guests.
- **Theme 5—Less business (5%)**: Because I have to do all the work now, I need to take less reservations so I can handle the workload. Mostly I have month-to-month and shorter extended stays. Less overnights.
- **Theme 6—Other (5%)**: I don’t know that I have concerns. I think for the most part our employees have gained camaraderie as a result of dealing with COVID-19 together.

**Accommodations** - If you interact with visitors in your business, what is the most frequent question you hear regarding COVID-19?

Six major themes related to the questions of what owners and managers in the accommodations sector were asked about related to COVID-19. Seventy-eight respondents answered this question. The six themes and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Is it safe/area mandates (24%)**: How many active cases are in this area?
- **Theme 2—Masks (23%)**: Do I have to wear my mask here? Do I have to wear a mask in town?
- **Theme 3—Cleaning Protocol (22%)**: What are our cleaning protocols.
- **Theme 4—Open for business? (8%)**: I don’t hear questions regarding COVID-19
- **Theme 5—Less business (8%)**: They want to come to Montana ... the question is "are you open?" and how many guests do you host at a given time?
- **Theme 6—Financial questions (6%)**: Are you good to pay the bills and be profitable?

**Accommodations** - If you interact with visitors in your business, what is the most frequent, non-COVID-19, question you hear from your visitors?

Six major themes related to the questions of what owners and managers in the accommodations sector were asked not related to COVID-19 emerged. Sixty-two respondents answered this question. The six themes and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.
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- **Theme 1—Activities in area (45%)**: Guests ask questions regarding the local area, what’s open, what’s available to do, where they can eat, etc.
- **Theme 2—Other/Misc (31%)**: Why are there so many different opinions on the effectiveness of masks by the medical community and others?
- **Theme 3—How business is doing (10%)**: Most are sympathetic and asking how we're doing.
- **Theme 4—COVID related (7%)**: Everything revolves around COVID so no questions that aren't related.
- **Theme 5—Changes to hours, etc. (5%)**: Are we still serving breakfast?
- **Theme 6—Open? (5%)**: Are you open?

Accommodations- Please add any additional comments about the tourism and recreation industry as it relates to your business and COVID-19 that you would like to share.

Seven major themes related to the open-ended comment section of the Accommodations sector. Twenty-eight respondents had a comment. The seven themes and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Closed (25%)**: The tribe has shut down the entire community of East Glacier which is a summer tourist season. No Airbnb rentals, no motels, no restaurants, no income at all. The tribe is showing no sign of financially helping us out.
- **Theme 2—Business doing poorly (25%)**: Had to lower our prices hoping that it would bring some of the customers back or spread the word. Certainly cannot continue next year like it is.
- **Theme 3 —Misc/Other (14%)**: God bless the people creating the vaccine.
- **Theme 4 —Lack of guidance (14%)**: I have been disappointed by the lack of oversight/guidance for hotel/motel owner/operators. Some of us are going above and beyond on our own which costs money when some of our counterparts are doing almost nothing differently whatsoever. The reason we don't have trouble with masks is we closed our lobby and check people in through a plexiglass window. Many people try to enter the locked lobby not wearing masks.
- **Theme 5 —Taking precautions (14%)**: With only 3 rooms, each with its own separate entrance and bathroom, we are very blessed to have guests that are very understanding and flexible with the COVID-19. Wearing masks, social distancing at our facility, in town and the national and state parks, they are willing to take precautions to protect themselves and those around them. Lots of patience and compassion! They feel very safe with breakfast being served in the rooms/garden and the common areas closed to limit exposure.
- **Theme 6—Business doing well (5%)**: I am really surprised that our business has been as strong as it has been. I’m shocked at the number of people traveling without lodging reservations. We are sometimes getting as many as 6 walk ins and we only have 8
rooms. So that tells me travels are not as concerned about the virus as I thought they would be.

- **Theme 7—N/A (7%): N/A**

The following is a word cloud generated from the open-ended responses of the accommodations sector. The larger the word the more frequently it was used in the comments.

![Figure 1- "Accommodations" Respondents: Word Frequency Cloud of Open-Ended Comments](image)

**Guide/Outfitter**

The category “Guide/Outfitter” consists of outfitters who hire the guides and guides who are either independent or contracted by outfitters (see Appendix B for all guide/outfitter responses). The comments were categorized or coded according to themes identified. Some comments contained multiple themes and were coded multiple times, thus the following percentages will not equal 100.

**Guide Outfitter- What specific areas of liability are you concerned about?**

Five major themes related to the questions on what owners and managers in the guide/outfitter sector were worried about in terms of liability related to COVID-19. Eighteen respondents answered this question. The six themes and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.
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- **Theme 1—Clients suing (39%)**: Frivolous lawsuits on how they contracted C-19.
- **Theme 2—Clients spreading COVID-19 (39%)**: Guests unknowingly bringing the coronavirus to town. Or people that may have mild symptoms and still choose to travel. That makes us concerned.
- **Theme 3—Financial concerns (11%)**: If COVID comes back is this going to take our industry to zero. I have seen it first-hand happen to the summer activities. But if it takes all my business model away... I’m just worried I worked all my life for a virus to take it all away in one year.
- **Theme 4—Clients claiming business is not being responsible (5%)**: Bad or poor online reviews due to the perception of not doing enough in response to COVID. One staff member becoming sick and closing our whole business.
- **Theme 5—Not concerned (5%)**: Not that worried.

*Guide Outfitter- What positive things, if any, can you share about changes related to workforce?*

Eight respondents answered this question. Three themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—No good things/business is suffering (50%)**: Nothing. The lack of testing is killing our ability to operate.
- **Theme 2—Need more attention to safety (38%)**: More courteous and respectful behavior within the outdoor recreation business - from retailers to guests.
- **Theme 3—Employees have been great (13%)**: Our employees have been great and worked hard to adapt.

*Guide/Outfitter - What concerns, if any, can you share about changes related to workforce?*

Six respondents answered this question. Three themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Issues with unemployment benefits (50%)**: Hiring seasonal hourly has become more difficult as they can make more on unemployment than they can working.
- **Theme 2—Not taking precautions seriously (33%)**: My main concern is that there will still be some independent contractors who do not take the situation seriously enough and fail to adhere to safety protocols--and may therefore allow COVID transmission when it could have been avoided.
- **Theme 3—Adaptation (17%)**: Nothing personally. In general, the whole way work is done and employees look at work is going to be changed forever. Adaption will be the key.

*Guide/Outfitter - If you interact with visitors in your business, what is the most frequent question you hear regarding COVID-19?*
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

Fourteen respondents answered this question. Six themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Masks (29%)**: Do we have to wear face covering while on the ride?
- **Theme 2—State mandates (29%)**: What restrictions does MT have?
- **Theme 3—Other (21%)**: Not really question, more of a comment that Montana is safest place to travel/visit.
- **Theme 4—Company Protocol (14%)**: Before we were closed it was what our safety protocol was and if we could cater to their family specifically. We also had the opposite questions around if they "had" to wear a mask.
- **Theme 5—Cancellation Policy (14%)**: Cancellation policy.
- **Theme 6—Open? (7%)**: Are you going to be open?

**Guide/Outfitter - If you interact with visitors in your business, what is the most frequent, non-COVID-19, question you hear from your visitors?**

Twelve respondents answered this question. Four themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Misc. (33%)**: What should I bring/what’s the weather?
- **Theme 2—Open? (25%)**: Are you open? If not, what else is there to do?
- **Theme 3—Things to do in area (25%)**: What's open in your area?
- **Theme 4 — How’s business (17%)**: How’s business?

**Guide Outfitter- Please add any additional comments about the tourism and recreation industry as it relates to your business and COVID-19 that you would like to share.**

Six respondents answered this question. Five themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Financial Issues (25%)**: As a guide, I am at the mercy of the outfitter as far as marketing/advertising/booking, cancellations, etc. so I am not able to do much on that front. I have always taken great care for safety and cleanliness of my equipment and the environment, so that really doesn't impact my business operations in times of a pandemic or not. The support, information and discussion from state has been superb, just hoping for the best so I can at least make enough to cover costs and contribute to mortgage and support of my family as it is a short season that I normally make most of my living in; with COVID19 I am down 75%.
- **Theme 2—Business not as bad as expected (17%)**: Business is down but not as bad as I had expected. I am glad that I have kept my overhead low. That way we have less fixed costs and are able to better weather this downturn. Part of our decline has been due to
a loss of business from Canada since the border is closed. I am very disappointed in the leadership in this country. Yes, the virus is a problem; but, it didn't have to be this awful. Had the country shut down sooner, stayed closed longer, and universally mandated the most basic procedures like mask wearing, then we could now be more fully open. It should never have come down to either we have to save lives or we have to save the economy. That is ridiculous. The best way to save the economy would have been to mandate and enforce rules to mitigate transmission of the virus. This would have resulted in lives saved; and, we could have successfully reopened the economy. Because we had no national leadership we have had states, counties, and cities all instigating different rules or no rules at all. Well the virus does not respect city boundaries, county lines, or state borders. The result is that we continue to have hot spots ignite and spread like wildfire across the country, killing citizens and burning down the economy. Stupid!

- **Theme 3—Masks (17%)**: We have been requiring mask since we reopened on May 15th.
- **Theme 4—How's business (17%)**: None.

The following is a word cloud generated from the open-ended responses of the accommodations sector. The larger the word the more frequently it was used in the comments.

![Figure 2 - "Guide/Outfitter" Respondents: Word Frequency Cloud of Open-Ended Comments](image-url)
Tourism Support Services

The next respondent category is “Tourism Support Services” which includes sectors like land management, rental management, tourism promotion/advertising agency, event coordinator/manager, finance/accounting, and association director/chamber/CVB. There was a total of 49 respondents in this category. (see Appendix C for all tourism support services responses).

Tourism Support Services- What specific areas of liability are you concerned about?

Fourteen respondents answered this question. Four themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Getting sued (29%)**: Getting sued if someone thinks they got COVID here? We do extra cleaning but cannot control every person.
- **Theme 2— Misc/Other (29%)**: There is a worldwide pandemic...what's not to worry.
- **Theme 3—Employees getting sick (24%)**: Employees getting sick.
- **Theme 4—Large events spreading COVID-19 (24%)**: Events and creating a possible outbreak.

Tourism Support Services- What positive things, if any, can you share about changes related to workforce?

Four respondents answered this question. Three themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Changing business (50%)**: None, the Covid restrictions are making it very difficult to process “normal” work conditions.
- **Theme 2— Great staff (25%)**: Willingness of staff to work. Our staff has been great with scheduling.
- **Theme 3—People moving to MT (25%)**: More people may be willing to move to Montana for less compensation.

Tourism Support Services - What concerns, if any, can you share about changes related to workforce?
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

Four respondents answered this question. Three themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Employees (50%)**: College going back into session earlier.
- **Theme 2—None (25%)**: None.
- **Theme 3—Adapted business (25%)**: Our mission, vision and purpose (active transportation) have not changed and are probably even more important but our traditional methods of delivering are no longer available and need to be redirected and strengthened.

*Tourism Support Services* - *If you interact with visitors in your business, what is the most frequent question you hear regarding COVID-19?*

Thirty-four respondents answered this question. Eight themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Restrictions (35%)**: Is Glacier Park open and what restrictions do they have. What events are still happening in the area and what has been cancelled due to COVID-19.
- **Theme 2—Masks (15%)**: Do I have to wear a mask?
- **Theme 3—Misc./Other (15%)**: It has changed the way we live.
- **Theme 4—Closed business (12%)**: At this time we are closed to the public until further notice on our ability to reopen with audiences.
- **Theme 5—When will it end (9%)**: When will it be over?
- **Theme 6—None/NA (9%)**: N/A
- **Theme 7—How safe is MT? (9%)**: How safe is Montana? Are there many cases of COVID19?
- **Theme 8—Cancellation Policy (6%)**: Cancellation policy questions.

*Tourism Support Services* - *If you interact with visitors in your business, what is the most frequent, non-COVID-19, question you hear from your visitors?*

Twenty-five respondents answered this question. Five themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Misc. (32%)**: They love getting out and enjoying the sites.
- **Theme 2—Questions about the area (24%)**: How is the fishing?
- **Theme 3—Basic business questions (20%)**: How late are you open?
- **Theme 4—How’s business (12%)**: How are you surviving such a shortness of business?
- **Theme 5—Masks? (4%)**: Are masks really required?
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Tourism Support Services- Please add any additional comments about the tourism and recreation industry as it relates to your business and COVID-19 that you would like to share.

Thirty respondents answered this question. Four themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Are other places open? (50%)**: Is "such & such business" open?
- **Theme 2—Misc./Other (25%)**: The beauty of the state, the openness, so much to do in our area.
- **Theme 3—N/A (10%)**: N/A
- **Theme 4—Economic Concerns (10%)**: Concerns about the economy.

The following is a word cloud generated from the open-ended responses of the accommodations sector. The larger the word the more frequently it was used in the comments.

**Figure 3 - "Tourism Support Services" Respondents: Word Frequency Cloud of Open-Ended Comments**

**Tourism Services**

Tourism services are business that cater directly to tourists and include bars/restaurants, brewery/distillery, convenience store/gas station, auto repair, other transportation services (except airports), specialty retail, general retail, vehicle rental, casino, museum/interpretative center, ski resort, artist/crafter (made in MT). There was a total of 51 respondents to the open-ended questions.
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Tourism Services - What specific areas of liability are you concerned about?

Twenty-four respondents answered this question. Four themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Getting sued (28%)**: If someone catches COVID and it is traced back to our facility, are we liable?
- **Theme 2—Guests spreading infection (28%)**: Employee exposure due to high visitor contact. Clerks checking in individuals from across the state and out of state being at risk.
- **Theme 3—Employees getting sick (25%)**: Employee sickness and potential closure as a result.
- **Theme 4—Other (25%)**: Ability to continue if COVID continues thru 2021.

Tourism Services - What positive things, if any, can you share about changes related to workforce?

Twelve respondents answered this question. Four themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Great staff (67%)**: The few employees we do have are motivated and excited to work. They are also willing to have extra duties in regards to cleaning and disinfecting with no real complaint.
- **Theme 2—Other (17%)**: We have kept people on the payroll but do not know how to fund workers in the future.
- **Theme 3 – Closed (8%)**: None, we've done what we always have to do. Get screwed and then find a way to adapt. We adapted, it's easy if we are open. It’s impossible when we are selectively targeted and closed.
- **Theme 4 – Business better than expected (8%)**: Business is better than I expected so we have work.

Tourism Services - What concerns, if any, can you share about changes related to workforce?

Twelve respondents answered this question. Three themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1—Hard to find workers (58%)**: Gov paid people to stay home, they should of paid people that continued working! How do you expect people to want to come back to work?
- **Theme 2—Other (33%)**: Coordination of process and needs seems to be slipping - not enough communication.
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

- **Theme 3—Money issues (8%):** Depressed sales volume = fewer payroll dollars available. Cannot compete with the enhanced unemployment dollars available.
- **Theme 4—Business better than expected (7%):** Depressed sales volume = fewer payroll dollars available. Cannot compete with the enhanced unemployment dollars available.

Tourism Services- If you interact with visitors in your business, what is the most frequent question you hear regarding COVID-19?

Twenty-seven respondents answered this question. Five themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1 — Misc. (33%):** Government interference in our lives.
- **Theme 2—Guests spreading infection (30%):** Do we need to wear a mask in your shop? (Answer, is yes!)
- **Theme 3 — How keeping business safe (22%):** How often are we sanitizing playground equipment.
- **Theme 4—Lots of visitors (15%):** I thought nobody was traveling - where did all the people come from?
- **Theme 5—Are you open? (7%):** Are you open?

Tourism Services - If you interact with visitors in your business, what is the most frequent, non-COVID-19, question you hear from your visitors?

Twenty-five respondents answered this question. Five themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1 – Misc. (32%):** They love getting out and enjoying the sites.
- **Theme 2—Questions about the area (24%):** How is the fishing?
- **Theme 3—Basic business questions (20%):** How late are you open?
- **Theme 4—How's business (12%):** How are you surviving such a shortness of business?
- **Theme 5—Masks? (4%):** Are masks really required?

Tourism Services- Please add any additional comments about the tourism and recreation industry as it relates to your business and COVID-19 that you would like to share.

Fifteen respondents answered this question. Five themes were identified and their percent coverage in the comments are below with an example quote for each theme.

- **Theme 1 – Business changed (40%):** Everything to do with visitor conversation has changed somewhat due to COVID.
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

- **Theme 2—Financial concerns (20%)**: We are so worried about the future of our nonprofit and the effect this has on our education outreach.
- **Theme 3—None (13%)**: N/A
- **Theme 4—Need more government involvement (13%)**: Governor should mandate that restaurants are reservation based. This will help restaurants with staff scheduling and also with contact tracing if a customer is tested positive for COVID-19.
- **Theme 5—Government overreaction (13%)**: An overreaction by government.

The following is a word cloud generated from the open-ended responses of the accommodations sector. The larger the word the more frequently it was used in the comments.

**Figure 4 - "Tourism Services" Respondents: Word Frequency Cloud of Open-Ended Comments**
Works Cited


Appendix A: Comments by Accommodation Owners/Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A guest holding me responsible for exposure though I have 2 rental homes where their personal practices during their stay are of their own choosing. I have dramatically changed cleaning times, between groups and purchased 3 x linens towels, bedding etc. so there is no chance of any personal use items not being exchanged for the next group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any aspect from customer to employee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathrooms, others gathering socially.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claim for causation of COVID 19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned a guest with COVID19 will stay in our cabins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowardly approach of government officials who ultimately dump all liability and responsibility on the private sector. Government has been on sabbatical since this started. The rest of us go to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer conflict about wearing masks or other related virus issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know where customers have been before coming into office to check in. Could be carriers and not know it. So have to be careful and sanitize check in desk and pens before next customer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee spread illness mostly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees and as owners contracting COVID. With this, if we don't have enough help we cannot run our motel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcing face mask wearing and potentially having to refuse to serve a guest, who may become aggressive/abusive/violent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure staff &amp; guest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest or employee getting COVID-19 and suing the hotel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guests saying they caught the virus here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having people with COVID staying at my hotel and spreading to others and becoming a cruise ship. Many people are fighting us over the mask requirements even though they are coming from areas already mandating them. They are on vacation and want to forget that COVID is a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not have mask available for guest upon check in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm not sure that I can articulate where my concerns lie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a guest contracts the disease what is our liability? In a &quot;sue happy&quot; world we wonder if we'll end up in court trying to protect ourselves. We need a mandate from government (fed, state, county) that eliminates protection from virus related suits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could become employers market come August if no 600 per week is extended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easier to get PPE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone has been cooperative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do the work myself so now I'm really busy... keeps me out of trouble!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you consider this good, then maybe: As a business we have learned how to utilize less people in the future. This will ultimately take away jobs in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots of local college age employees looking for work this summer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luckily, we had a good solid team and only had to lay a majority of our housekeeping staff off for 3 weeks. I believe getting them back to work quickly helped out a lot. We have struggled finding additional staff needed to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My staff have been amazing and 90% have stayed even though pay is less 5% company-wide and more work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work force is working hard at keeping everything clean as they always have before COVID. Some areas they have even gone beyond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need to hire for the year due to COVID.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No payroll, less paperwork! No worries about employees understanding best practices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

None.
None.

Nothing we are closed because of the Blackfeet tribe.

Some employees are more flexible and willing to take on additional roles and reduced hours.

The employees that we have been able to get/keep are amazing.

The extra $600 weekly for the unemployed. Has finally ended. That should get some people motivated to get off their butts and go work.

There are help wanted signs all over West Yellowstone and no one to fill them. It has greatly impacted restaurants here especially.

The team that is left has come together to support each other.

They are young and seem to be in a happy state of denial.

Those that are working are working incredibly hard to meet the additional demand of CV19 and the lack of support employees.

We have a great team.

Because I have to do all the work now, I need to take less reservations so I can handle the work load. Mostly I have month-to-month and shorter extended stays. Less overnights.

Better communication between unemployment & employers. I know I have employees taking unpaid time off to collect the higher unemployment. I called unemployment and they are so overwhelmed they don’t care. It sickens me to think people are abusing the system when there are people out there that really need it.

Concern of getting COVID-19 creates a more stressful environment for employees and guests.

Continued unemployment benefits.

Employees wearing face masks.

Extra $600 a week in unemployment did not help keep employees and has not encouraged people to go back to work. Especially for those making 2-3 times their normal pay. How to alleviate employee fears and make adjustments based on COVID facts (still evolving) versus opinions.

Finding people who will work. Finding people who show up for interviews.

Flathead County is was already one of the laziest work forces in the U.S., then we gave them way too much free money and they don’t want to work. Needless to say... that has crippled this workforce.

Has always had issues hiring in this area.

Having an employee who says she has panic attacks with a mask on, so other employees are wanting to follow and not wear a mask. I myself have a problem with a mask but I’m doing it anyway to lead the example. How do I deal with the one employee?

I don’t know that I have concerns. I think for the most part our employees have gained camaraderie as a result of dealing with COVID-19 together.

Just getting people to apply for jobs has been a big problem.

Lack of folks willing to work.

Less qualified applicants and more people wanting to stay home because of the risk in hospitality.

No J1 or HB 2 Visa workers are here (very few) employees that were able to work 2 jobs in the past are no longer allowed to work at the behest of their sponsor employer due to fear of contracting CV19, or they will lose the sponsorship and be sent home. Stores closing early/shortening hours due to lack of employees and burn out/exhaustion.

Off-work behavior, unemployment pay, fear from media based rumors.

People who do work resent that the business cannot pay them the additional $600 that those on unemployment got. They feel cheated.

Staff and guest are both upset with the mask update. Masks continue to make certain staff members nauseous, one it causes to be light headed. And others are upset that they are forced to wear a mask just to be able to have a job.

Stop the extra money in unemployment. I have 7 open positions and can't hire anyone!

The people that have been on unemployment do not want to come back to work because they will make less money.

The school schedules limit the times they can work (ie: can’t work into September/October)

The unemployment extra $600 benefit, if extended, will make it almost impossible to hire employees as needed. We have found that they would rather stay home than apply for work. It was a huge benefit at the beginning of this health crisis for our employees, now that we are busy and operating and need more employees, this is a detriment to employers. We should no extend the benefit out any longer in states that need to hire staff. Our workforce pool has diminished.

Unemployment and excess payments are demotivating elements in the employment scene.

We are closed because of the Blackfeet tribe & may not recover from the closer so we may never have a workforce

When we have been able to hire new employees, we find they may or may not show up after accepting the position. And, when they do, they may or may not stay. This has resulted in increased recruiting, training, etc. costs at a time when our property can ill afford to absorb unnecessary expense. While this is not necessarily recently unique, it does seem to be occurring more frequently than it did in the past.
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

With the current unemployment benefits, it is very difficult to get people to accept positions. In addition, the lack of our planned 10 J1 visas was tough as we're short in the kitchen and housekeeping.

"Are you open?"
"Have you had any cases at the hotel?"
Are we nervous about being exposed to travelers from everywhere?
Are we open?
Are we safe?
Are you going to be open 30 days from now so I can make a reservation? I can only answer with I plan on being open but my crystal ball is still back ordered from Amazon. The other question is how many COVID cases do you have in the area. I say I can't give a number it is an unknown.
Are you good to pay the bills and be profitable?
Are you open?
Are you open?
Are you still open?
Are you struggling to get staff?
Asking how we are handling it and what we're changing.
Can you make sure all other customers are wearing masks?
Cleaning procedure.
Cleaning procedures, which are posted on website, in lobby, and verbally.
Concern about disinfecting/cleaning procedures.
Do I have to wear a mask? What are your cleaning protocols?
Do I have to wear a mask/face covering?
Do I have to wear my mask here? Do I have to wear a mask in town?
Do I need a mask?
Do we have mandatory mask requirements, are we staying open, and do they have to quarantine.
Do we have safety measures in place?
Do we need masks?
Do you require wearing masks do you know of any active cases?
Do you want me to wear a mask and what is your cleaning protocol?
Guests are asking about closures and restrictions.
Guests very surprised to learn that there are restrictions in the state. They have been hearing MT is safe and not effected by COVID so they had magical expectations that it would be like pre-COVID. Also, they don't understand why some business and attractions are still closed.
Haven't been open most of the spring and summer
How did it affect your business?
How happy people are that Montana has low numbers compared to where they are traveling from and how they shouldn't have to wear masks since it's so low.
How has this affected your business?
How it is hurting the businesses?
How many active cases are in this area?
How many cases are in Park County?
How many cases are there in our area?
How many cases do you have in your county?
How many cases? Should I wear a mask?
I don't hear questions regarding COVID-19.
I'm asked about the cleaning procedures of the cabins and what activities are still available.
If the state or government closes down the town or national park, what is our cancellation policy?
Is COVID-19 in your area?
Is the quarantine in effect?
Is there a mandatory quarantine in Montana?
Local mandate questions, restaurants open question.
Masking guidelines.
Most of them don't take it seriously or they are over the whole thing
Most people are coming to my area to get away from the news and COVID so we don't hear much from them.
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns
& Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

No visitors allowed on the Blackfeet reservation.

None.

Our guests ask about community business availability and hours: diners, grocers, attractions etc.

Questions about quarantine, where can they go or not go. Are masks required, what happens if they don’t wear them. Do I replace all linens etc. with each visit? How do I clean?

Social distancing and requirement inquiries. They appreciate your cleaning methods and feel safe. We have not had much for COVID questions. Those booking rooms do inquire about our methods.

They want to come to Montana... the question is “are you open?” and how many guests do you host at a given time?

To protect our employees, we’ve implemented a policy of no housekeeping in stay-over rooms. Despite explaining what we’re doing and why upon check-in, as well as providing each guest with a letter explaining what we’re doing and why, guests still ask why their room hasn’t been cleaned, bed made, etc.

Want it to be over.

We don’t get any questions, now that the State and Park are open to visitors without the quarantine requirement.

What additional measures are you doing to protect your guests?
What are local regulations?
what are Montana’s rules?
What are our cleaning protocols?
What are you doing about COVID-19?
What are your cleaning protocols?
What are your current protocols? What amenities are open? How long will these protocols be in place?

What are your policies?
What cleaning protocols we follow?
What is open?
What is our protocol?
What measures are you taking for COVID-19?
What restrictions do you have in your state and county. i.e., masks.
What we are doing to prevent exposure.

What’s open?
When will this be over?

Why are liquor stores open and churches restricted or closed??

Why do we have to wear masks inside the house?

Why is Glacier National Park not open on the east side. How can parts of the Blackfoot Nation be open but not the roads into the park.

Why did they close the National Bison range if everyone stays in the vehicle.

Why is half of Glacier National Park closed?

"What can we do in Glacier?"

Are we open?

Are we still serving breakfast?

Are you open?

Can I have a late check out? We have posted a sign saying no. With the cleaning that we have to do it is not possible. I don’t tell them it is also because I’m short staffed. Why don’t you have coffee in the lobby?

Can I make a reservation?

Can I stay longer?

Can they bring pets?

Crowding in the park?

Everything revolves around COVID so no questions that aren’t related.

Getting a LOT of feedback regarding traffic in Missoula.

Getting COVID.

Good places open to eat.

Guests ask questions regarding the local area, what’s open, what’s available to do, where they can eat, etc.

How busy is it in the park?

How do I get to ________?

How far in advance should I make reservations?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How far is Billings?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is business?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is business?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How slow is it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How’s the fishing? What can we do here? Does the wind always blow like this? Have the Parks opened?</td>
<td>Irrelevant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there fishing available for the kids?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is tourism down?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your pool open?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isn’t this a crazy world right now?</td>
<td>Most are sympathetic and asking how we're doing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO visitors allowed on the Blackfeet reservation.</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park (GNP and YNP) open/closure related questions.</td>
<td>Questions about outdoor activities and Yellowstone NP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions about outdoor activities and Yellowstone NP.</td>
<td>Questions about Yellowstone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific questions related to our business.</td>
<td>Things to do, visit, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are still looking for things to do and specifically places to eat.</td>
<td>Upset because not able to travel to State &amp; Federal Park or go into Canada to get to Alaska.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They love Montana and that it is easy to social distance</td>
<td>We are closed because of the Blackfeet tribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things to do, visit, etc.</td>
<td>We try to talk about other topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upset because not able to travel to State &amp; Federal Park or go into Canada to get to Alaska.</td>
<td>What attractions should I visit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are closed because of the Blackfeet tribe</td>
<td>What can do for entertainment around your property?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We try to talk about other topics.</td>
<td>What is open in Philipsburg, where to eat!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What attractions should I visit?</td>
<td>What is there to do in our area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What can do for entertainment around your property?</td>
<td>What parts of Glacier Park are open?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is open in Philipsburg, where to eat!</td>
<td>What restaurants are open?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is there to do in our area?</td>
<td>What time does Old Faithful go off?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What parts of Glacier Park are open?</td>
<td>What time is check-out?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What restaurants are open?</td>
<td>What tourism areas are open?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What time does Old Faithful go off?</td>
<td>When will 2021 reservations open?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What time is check-out?</td>
<td>Where are the bears?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What tourism areas are open?</td>
<td>Where can one get something to eat in town?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When will 2021 reservations open?</td>
<td>Where can they get groceries, are restaurants open and available. Can they go in YNP what is open?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where are the bears?</td>
<td>Where can we see wolves?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where can one get something to eat in town?</td>
<td>Where is a good place to eat?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where can they get groceries, are restaurants open and available. Can they go in YNP what is open?</td>
<td>Where should we eat?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where can we see wolves?</td>
<td>Where to eat and what to see.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where is a good place to eat?</td>
<td>Why are there so many different opinions on the effectiveness of masks by the medical community and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where should we eat?</td>
<td>Why didn’t the East side of Glacier NP open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where to eat and what to see.</td>
<td>Why is the Bison Range closed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why are there so many different opinions on the effectiveness of masks by the medical community and others.</td>
<td>Why is the office closed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why didn’t the East side of Glacier NP open.</td>
<td>Yellowstone and Hebgen Lake Questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why is the Bison Range closed?</td>
<td>Fortunately for us, our Bed and Breakfast is our home and we do not depend on the business for our sole support. We closed in June, opened in July and will close again in August/September.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why is the office closed?</td>
<td>God bless the people creating the vaccine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowstone and Hebgen Lake Questions.</td>
<td>Had to lower our prices hoping that it would bring some of the customers back or spread the word. Certainly cannot continue next year like it is.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I am really surprised that our business has been as strong as it has been. I’m shocked at the number of people traveling without lodging reservations. We are sometimes getting as many as 6 walk ins and we only have 8 rooms. So that tells me travels are not as concerned about the virus as I thought they would be.

I can’t answer all of these questions since I’m closed -

I guess our biggest fear is having the state close down again, mandating another quarantine period for those entering the state would just kill our business. As we already lost our early summer to that ruling and really worry it will happen again.

I have been disappointed by the lack of oversight/guidance for hotel/motel owner/operators. Some of us are going above and beyond on our own which costs money when some of our counterparts are doing almost nothing differently whatsoever. The reason we don’t have trouble with masks is we closed our lobby and check people in through a plexiglass window. Many people try to enter the locked lobby not wearing masks.

I required masks in our building before the State mandate and actually received several emails and calls from people THANKING me for doing so. To date, we have not received 1 complaint about the mask requirement.

I was not able to list the county- it is Glacier. We are the only area (Blackfeet Reservation) in Mt that are not allowed to be so n business.

In our case, the quarantine rules didn’t work because we are a daily cabin rental.

Most individuals want to take responsibility for themselves. If a person works with high risk individuals that person and their company need to take the responsibility. If you are in a susceptible position take precautions and change your like style.

My motel is down and the RV park is packed, turning away people. Several long term in the RV park.

N/A.

N/A.

Our community attracts a unique visitor clientele for area health mines (7-14 day stays). We also have State agencies (DPHHS & DOC) who hire traveling nurses. Currently a road construction crew is in the area for road work. I am lodging 2 workers and 1 traveling nurse. My remaining 5 rooms will cater to other ‘extended’ stays for health mine guests, and people visiting the area (usually family). And usually arrive from out of state.

Our major concern right now is fires. With reduced revenue this year a bad fire season would be a major blow.

People don’t understand why it is so busy. They expected no one else to be travelling. That they were the only ones with the idea to travel now. Guests are frustrated and upset that it is busy.

People want to come, but hard to stay when so much is shut down.

Please keep the wearing of masks mandate. Only way we are going to get out of this pandemic.

Since the Governor issued his newest guidelines on wearing a mask. We have seen more Montanans wearing masks, which we appreciate and well tell them so. We have ask the Beaverhead County Health Department and have not received a satisfying answer on why business are not contacted during this crisis. Asked about issuing of supplies, no money was the response. Funding from the state? We know there is funding available. Apparently, masks were issued after our asking, overall announcement not issued, only distributed in our one large city, outlying business in county not aware of distribution. We see a need for overall communication and overall interaction with the Beaverhead County Health Department with businesses throughout the county. The county department may be “stretched”, but duty calls.

The tribe has shut down the entire community of East Glacier which is a summer tourist season. No Airbnb rentals, no motels, no restaurants, no income at all. The tribe is showing no sign of financially helping us out

This is a letter we recently submitted to the Governor regarding the dire circumstances and need for relief for businesses on the east side of Glacier Park. We write to you today with a plea for relief. Our small businesses are located on the eastern side of Glacier National Park, within the exterior boundaries of the Blackfeet Reservation. As you are no doubt aware, the Tribal Council, County Health Department, and Park Service have closed access to the east side of the park and shuttered or severely restricted the businesses here from the St. Mary Valley to the East Glacier area. We fully support the tribe’s actions to protect its people. We write to you in the hope that you will consider the plight of small businesses here in our community. We are not writing to demand the Park open, nor to contradict the Tribe’s coronavirus directives. We are in a different situation than any other group of businesses in the state. We appreciate your full support of the tribe’s measures to protect the residents of the Blackfeet Reservation, and hope that you will also fully support the businesses that bear the direct economic weight of those decisions. The east side closure directly impacts our ability to make an income, pay our bills, and raise our families. The existing relief programs are not tailored to our unique situation. We have been informed individually by Bureau of Business Assistance Chief Wayne Johnston that the Department of Commerce fully understands our situation, and finds us to be collectively in no different a position than any other group of businesses in the state. To the contrary, we argue that local lodging facilities are the only entities in the state required to close their doors regardless of their ability to comply with social distancing and other COVID-19 health directives, and few other businesses can operate viably with all lodging closed and tourists unable to enter the area. We have built our businesses to get through hard times- late openings.

Toug longer than 4 min. Questions awkwardly phrased. Percentages down reflection in hospitality not always the best reflection in hospitality for how dire the situation is. It is the failure to pick up rooms within a 1 week booking window that is so dire. You can be
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pacing evenly with previous Augusts - and still end up 30% down for the month by month’s end. I give this feedback every time and no one ever listens.</td>
<td>We are closed because of the Blackfeet tribe. We may never recover from this loss of revenue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are closed because of the Blackfeet tribe. We may never recover from this loss of revenue.</td>
<td>We have not been able to open due to COVID.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have not been able to open due to COVID.</td>
<td>We need real and honest discussions on the damages being done socially to our children and old people by the virus shutdown. Also, how much the potential monetary gain of a vaccine is shaping the Media message on this pandemic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We need real and honest discussions on the damages being done socially to our children and old people by the virus shutdown. Also, how much the potential monetary gain of a vaccine is shaping the Media message on this pandemic.</td>
<td>With only 3 rooms, each with its own separate entrance and bathroom, we are very blessed to have guests that are very understanding and flexible with the COVID 19. Wearing masks, social distancing at our facility, in town and the national and state parks, they are willing to take precautions to protect themselves and those around them. Lots of patience and compassion! They feel very safe with breakfast being served in the rooms/garden and the common areas closed to limit exposure.</td>
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<td>With only 3 rooms, each with its own separate entrance and bathroom, we are very blessed to have guests that are very understanding and flexible with the COVID 19. Wearing masks, social distancing at our facility, in town and the national and state parks, they are willing to take precautions to protect themselves and those around them. Lots of patience and compassion! They feel very safe with breakfast being served in the rooms/garden and the common areas closed to limit exposure.</td>
<td>Worried about the financial viability and sustainability of a family operated bed &amp; breakfast now and in the future. Having guests come into our home was always an enjoyable experience. That has now changed drastically.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

Appendix B: Comments by Outfitters and Guides

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outfitter/Guide</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As an outfitter, I am concerned about liability should infection occur after contact between a client and me or an independent contractor guide hired by me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As our clientele are non-residents, I have great concern following the Governor’s Spring mandate to enforce a 14-day quarantine for non-resident Travel into Montana. The Spring Bear Season suspension and 14-day mandatory quarantine and COVID forced our business to lose 22 clients of a total 60 contracted bookings for 2021. Quite frankly if restrictions or mandates are enforced this fall our business will not be able to meet its contractual obligation to our clientele.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad or poor online reviews due to the perception of not doing enough in response to COVID. One staff member becoming sick and closing our whole business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients contracting COVID while in Yellowstone and blaming my business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee as well as clients potentially suing if they get the bug.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frivolous lawsuits on how the contracted C-19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guests unknowingly bringing the coronavirus to town. Or people that may have mild symptoms and still choose to travel. That makes us concerned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a customer contracts COVID-19, will they sue me for not following stringent protocols or failing to follow the protocols that I have outlined to my employees? We used to pick up sandwiches for customers. We no longer do that unless they booked before this policy was instituted. If so, we give them an option of a credit instead of lunch so that they can pick up their own sandwiches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If COVID comes back is this going to take our industry to zero. I have seen it first-hand happen to the summer activities. But if it takes all my business model away. I'm just worried I worked all my life for a virus to take it all away in one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If we were allowed to operate I would be concerned that following State or CDC guidelines might not be enough to prevent the spread of the virus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to maintain alleged social distancing requirements in a camp environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liability of clients infecting a guide or vice versa even with precautions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not that worried.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment for liability insurance and utilities water and sewer bills property taxes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People trying to cash in and hold others accountable for their health instead of taking personal responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right now, there is at least a 10 to 15-day delay for getting test results back. This does not work since it is impossible to know whether a person has been infected unless they have symptoms. Livingston is filled with folks who feel like they may have been exposed but have not symptoms. Almost without exception, they are all waiting for their results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spreading COVID.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By the nature of our industry, self-accountability and high-risk tolerance are intrinsic to our employees and clients. Govt and media are creating undue panic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent contractor guides are now paying more attention to all safety protocols. Thinking about protecting both the client and oneself is now part of the daily routine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More courteous and respectful behavior within the outdoor recreation business - from retailers to guests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None. People don’t want to work when the government is paying them not to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing. The lack of testing is killing our ability to operate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our employees have been great and worked hard to adapt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have no work force business is basically down the tubes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring seasonal hourly has become more difficult as they can make more on unemployment than they can working.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My main concern is that there will still be some independent contractors who do not take the situation seriously enough and fail to adhere to safety protocols--and may therefore allow COVID transmission when it could have been avoided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nothing personally. In general, the whole way work is done and employees look at work is going to be changed forever. Adaption will be the key.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When our operations were closed down we could have possible shifted to other work to keep employees working with funding assistance. However, good employees easily found other work and other employees didn't want to with the hope that they would now get unemployment and get more money through that channel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce that isn’t protected or taking every precaution to keep them safe - not adhering to simple protocol of wearing masks/face coverings, staying home if sick, washing/disinfecting surfaces, avoiding large indoor gatherings, not adhering to social distancing of 6’ from others, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger crowd is out of shape, entitled, and whiny.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you gonna be open?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before we were closed it was what our safety protocol was and if we could cater to their family specifically. We also had the opposite questions around if they &quot;had&quot; to wear a mask.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancellation policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to wear a mask?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do we have to quarantine? How might that affect my trip?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do we have to wear face covering while on the ride?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not really question, more of a comment that Montana is safest place to travel/visit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They think it’s a scam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are you doing in response to COVID?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What restrictions does MT have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What restrictions we have in Montana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why do I have to wear a mask?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will Montana close the 2020 Fall hunting season to non-residents like they did this spring and what is the refund policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any restaurants open?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you open?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you open? If not, what else is there to do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you still working?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how’s the river? what are you using (fly type) what’s open to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How’s business?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same as above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel complications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What should I bring/what’s the weather?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What's open in your area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why weren’t you ready for a busy summer tourist season?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a guide, I am at the mercy of the outfitter as far as marketing/advertising/booking, cancellations, etc. so I am not able to do much on that front. I have always taken great care for safety and cleanliness of my equipment and the environment, so that really doesn't impact my business operations in times of a pandemic or not. The support, information and discussion from state has been superb, just hoping for the best so I can at least make enough to cover costs and contribute to mortgage and support of my family as it is a short season that I normally make most of my living in; with COVID19 I am down 75%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business is down but not as bad as I had expected. I am glad that I have kept my overhead low. That way we have less fixed costs and are able to better weather this downturn. Part of our decline has been due to a loss of business from Canada since the border is closed. I am very disappointed in the leadership in this country. Yes, the virus is a problem; but, it didn't have to be this awful. Had the country shut down sooner, stayed closed longer, and universally mandated the most basic procedures like mask wearing, then we could now be more fully open. It should never have come down to either we have to save lives or we have to save the economy. That is ridiculous.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The best way to save the economy would have been to mandate and enforce rules to mitigate transmission of the virus. This would have resulted in lives saved; and, we could have successfully reopened the economy. Because we had no national leadership we have had states, counties, and cities all instigating different rules or no rules at all. Well the virus does not respect city boundaries, county lines, or state borders. The result is that we continue to have hot spots ignite and spread like wildfire across the country, killing citizens and burning down the economy. Stupid!

Just worried and concerned for myself and my country.

None.

Our business was shut down unexpectedly from a local governing body and we tried to answer these the best we could from our unique situation.

We have been requiring mask since we reopened on May 15th.
Appendix C: Comments by Tourism Support Services

| Being liable for someone coming to my business and getting sick or getting my employees sick. |
| Changes in quarantine or testing requirements for states and foreign countries that prohibit my clients from traveling last minute or that I'm unaware of. Things like medical visa requirements are going to really complicate my job. |
| COVID-19 Employee liability issues. |
| Employees getting sick. |
| Events and creating a possible outbreak. |
| Events and Programs participation - liability for our members/participants. |
| Getting sued if someone thinks they got COVID here? We do extra cleaning but cannot control every person. |
| Holdings events, programs and classes. |
| I need to make masks and sanitizer readily available. Since working remotely, I have not taken care of my office space the way I need to be. |
| If we hold an event and someone becomes ill. Will we get sued? If someone works here and becomes ill, will we get sued? |
| People getting sick at community events. |
| Potential altercations between patrons and the theatre or patron to patron altercations. |
| Staff getting sick due to doors open when we could actually be doing our jobs from home, but employer won't let us, affecting our families, irresponsible visitors walking in and not following rules. |
| The businesses are worried about paying bills and hoping to be open next year or they will close and move on to somewhere else, we need to have these businesses for our tax base in Glacier County we have enough issues with funds in our county. |
| There is a worldwide pandemic...what's not to worry. |
| More people may be willing to move to Montana for less compensation. |
| None, the COVID restrictions are making it very difficult to process "normal" work conditions. |
| Realized I had to change cafe, realized it wasn't supporting itself. |
| Willingness of staff to work. Our staff has been great with scheduling. |
| College going back into session earlier. |
| Keeping good employees. |
| None |
| Our mission, vision and purpose (active transportation) have not changed and are probably even more important but our traditional methods of delivering are no longer available and need to be redirected and strengthened. |
| Are your recreation sites open? |
| At this time we are closed to the public until further notice on our ability to reopen with audiences. |
| Cancellation policy questions. |
| Cases in Montana aren't bad compared to other areas. |
| Do I have to wear a mask? |
| Do you have Zinc? |
| How long do you think we will have to wear these stupid masks? |
| How many cases are in Missoula County? Why do I have to wear a mask? |
| How safe is Montana? Are there many cases of COVID-19? |
I did one wedding that I had contracted before the pandemic started. The questions were around compliance with the state guidelines, reducing the number of guests from 150 to 10 participants, holding it outdoors, finding a different venue, etc. Can’t think of just one question. I am not accepting weddings for the foreseeable future.

Is Glacier Park open and what restrictions do they have? What events are still happening in the area and what has been cancelled due to COVID-19.

It has changed the way we live.

Masks. What is open or closed.

N/A.

N/A.

Not much interaction.

That its political.

The Blackfeet Reservation has shut down all the businesses in our area and we have had no help.

They ask how my agency can assist with failing businesses.

Tourism is down in our area and our economy is impacted by this. Businesses have not come back to full operations yet.

We hear a lot about people wanting to relocate to Montana as we are deemed safe.

We interact online and on the phone. We have had just a few questions about Montana Dinosaur Trail Facilities we promote regarding their being open and Montana’s COVID restrictions/policies

What activities they can do while they are here, where they can eat.

What are the restrictions in Missoula County/Montana?

What are the rules for your area, masks, quarantine, is dining available, lodging available, attractions open?

What do you do to keep people safe?

What if I need to cancel? People are afraid to plan and then face penalties or lose their insurance cost.

What is campground availability?

What is open and what is closed? What are the restrictions at tourist attractions and local businesses?

What is open in Montana?

When will it be over?

When will it end?

Whether some measures are working.

Why is the Reservation closed?

Access.

Am I going to continue in business? I say yes.

Are the hot springs open?

Are you having a sale?

Are you still accepting reservations?

Can you survive this?

Concerns about the economy.

Do you have a bathroom?

General outdoor recreation questions.

Hiking related questions.

How much does it cost?

I did not realize how seasonal it is around Glacier National Park?

I still get phone calls regarding visitation, fishing, hunting, camping, etc.
### Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas for what to do in the area.</th>
<th>Is “such &amp; such Business” open?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the Beaverhead/Deerlodge National Forest campgrounds open and is there bears in the Pioneer Mountains.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there camping available. What services in YNP are available.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA - see above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate and outdoor recreation questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send me a birding brochure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The beauty of the state, the openness, so much to do in our area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things to do outside Glacier National Park.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typically callers or online contacts are asking for help developing an itinerary for traveling the Montana Dinosaur Trail.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are often asked for grant money.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What trails are open on Glacier. Attractions?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When will it end?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where are the hiking trails and boat rentals?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will I have access to the National Parks, is everything open?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although I am with the CVB/TBID, I used the Butte Chamber Trolley as my example of bookings. I thought the data would be appreciated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business is basically nonexistent and it’s horrifying that after 5 months, I’m still having to cancel reservations due to COVID. There is no money coming in and money still having to be refunded. No business can survive on negative cash flow. The income in travel isn’t enough to warrant taking out loans to get through this crisis. Because this has dragged on for so long, people are hesitant to book into next year for fear of having to cancel due to COVID or unemployment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am behind the scenes so I do not interact with visitors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need more masks to hand out to businesses and visitors please.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more marketing directed toward visitors regarding mandatory masks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most people coming to our destination are &quot;escaping&quot; their cities due to COVID and potentially bringing it here. Even though masks are mandated now, a lot of businesses and visitors don’t believe they need to follow the mandate and that is really scary to think about.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you for the great work you do and for continuing to provide important questions and results of surveys.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism industry needs help. Chambers/CVB’s/TBID’s/etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We haven’t really been impacted by COVID, but will certainly feel the overall damage to our economy for much too long</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We live in East Glacier and Babb can you please help us.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Comments by Tourism Services

A traveler testing positive and exposing employees and other visitors and no one finds out until after exposure.

Ability to continue if COVID continues thru 2021.

COVID 19 transmission suits by both visitors and employees.

Employee exposure due to high visitor contact. Clerks checking in individuals from across the state and out of state being at risk

Employee sickness and potential closure as a result.

Employees or customers getting infected with COVID-19.

Employees suing for getting COVID while working or from another employee.

Exposure.

I cannot and will not enforce an unenforceable mask "mandate" with customers. I also cannot guarantee that every surface and object in my stores is virus-free.

If someone catches COVID and it is traced back to our facility, are we liable?

If tours commence next season.

N/A.

People getting sick after contact with someone.

Rental liability.

Someone getting sick and exposing others.

Spread of COVID-19 by customer’s not following guidelines.

Staff laid off. Liability with visitors should a museum COVID case be traced

That someone will either sue me/business or "turn me in" for something minor.

The fallout if we are the source of spreading the virus to our visitors.

Visitors are pretty loose with medical reasons to not wear a mask. What if employees become ill?

We are on the Blackfeet Reservation. If a customer tests positive, the tribe will close is down and we could be sued.

We infect a customer.

What is our liability if a staff member or guests can confirm they caught the virus on site?

Will I be able to sell enough books to meet expenses. I need to pay off a $20,000 loan in 3 years.

WORRIED ABOUT OUR FRONTLINE STAFF CONTRACTING COVID AND EITHER THEY OR THEIR FAMILY ENDING UP HOSPITALIZED OR DYING AS A RESULT.

Business is better than I expected so we have work.

I think the team is on a much needed but too early mental health break.

My employees with a military background work very hard and are self-motivated.

None, we've done what we always have to do. Get screwed and then find a way to adapt. We adapted, it’s easy if we are open. It’s impossible when we are selectively targeted and closed.

OUR HERO PAY ($2/HOUR) INCENTIVE DURING PHASES I & II WAS MUCH APPRECIATED. WE HAVE A GREAT TEAM--FRIENDLY & HELPFUL!

Resulted in nonprofit board and director working together to compensate with volunteers for lost workforce due to lack of funding to pay staff. Re-evaluated and restructured how to operate with less payroll expense for the foreseeable future. Came up with alternative solutions to keep museum operating.

Staff is showing great creativity in doing their jobs and finding how to reach audiences and work with the public. The visiting public is exceedingly appreciative to find something open and activities that are still available.

The few employees we do have are motivated and excited to work. They are also willing to have extra duties in regards to cleaning and disinfecting with no real complaint.
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

They are doing their best.

We had many applicants in the spring ready and willing to work the summer season. They expressed appreciation for employment and seemed willing to clean to COVID-19 protocols.

We have been forced to reduce our staff from 27 to 2. The remaining 2 are fabulous people.

We have kept people on the payroll but do not know how to fund workers in the future.

Coordination of process and needs seems to be slipping - not enough communication

Depressed sales volume = fewer payroll dollars available Cannot compete with the enhanced unemployment dollars available

Federal $600 check in addition to unemployment check makes it almost impossible to find new employees as they make more not working.

Gov paid people to stay home, they should have paid people that continued working! How do you expect people to want to come back to work.

Hard to find qualified candidates.

In fact, enough better that we are getting tired while at the same time wondering when it crashes

My college graduates need more reminding and have less attention to details.

None, refer to above.

7

Slows down our newly created annual fund/development/marketing program, and also slows down work on collections preservation.

THE $600/WEEK ADDITIONAL UI BENEFIT CAUSED DISCORD FOR OUR STAFF. THOSE CALLED BACK TO WORK MADE LESS THAN THEY DID ON UI, OTHERS "WORKED" THE SYSTEM BY CALLING OFF SHIFTS TO HAVE REDUCED HOURS AND THEREFORE QUALIFY FOR UI FOR THE WEEK. WE KEPT OUR TEAM ON AS LONG AS POSSIBLE, BUT WE ARE DEFINITELY IN A LABOR SHORTAGE IN MINERAL CO.

The reservation is closed to non-residents. Even if we could open our diner, we would have trouble staffing it.

Are mask required?

8

Are you open?

Do we need to wear a mask in your shop? (Answer, is yes!)

Do you require masks?

Essentially nothing, just do what I always do.

Government interference in our lives.

How many are affected - when they hear our very low number, they are thrilled to be here instead of in MI, NY, CA, TX, AZ... all the hot spots.

How often are we sanitizing playground equipment.

I thought nobody was traveling - where did all the people come from?

Inconsistent enforcement and lack of legal alternative sales channels.

It's a bunch of Bull Shit.

Just general discussion of what's happening in our area.

No one has asked any questions about COVID or Safety. All my customers are sick of the whole thing and don't want to talk about it.

Not open.

Nothing really now that masks are mandatory.

Please are in Montana to be on a vacation from COVID.

That the state does not require mask for visitors coming in.

They question the smaller group sizes for touring the cave. They want to see the cave but have not reserved tickets and try to bribe us to expand the group size.

What activities and locations will be safe?

What are the rules for going through museum with pandemic, and are we open.
Tourism-Related Business Owners Share Concerns & Workforce Challenges due to COVID-19 Impacts

What measures are you taking?
When will it be over?
When will things be normal? When will there be a vaccine?

WHY AREN'T YOU WEARING A MASK? (TO OUR STAFF WHO AREN'T WEARING AS IT IS NOT MANDATED IN MINERAL COUNTY AT THIS TIME)

Why do we have to wear a mask?
Why so restrictive.
Are masks really required?
Are we open and are there camping or tour spaces to reserve?
Can I buy a fishing license here?

Customers are not understanding or patient. They don’t make reservations and expect everything at once within minutes. It is next to impossible to find experienced employees willing to work, so we find ourselves understaffed with trainees. Without reservations it is also impossible to predict how busy it will get.

History related as we are a history museum. Or where is a good place to eat.

How are you guys doing?
How are you surviving such a shortness of business?
How is business?
How is the fishing?
How late are you open?
How much does it cost?
How much is traffic down?
Is that gold?

Lack of legal alternative sales channels (shipping).
None.

Thank you for being open.
They love getting out and enjoying the sites.

When are the smaller museums on property open.

When is the book ~ A Corner of Space and Time: Lee Nye’s Eddies Club Portraits going to be here. Had to get a plug in for it. We had hoped to have it by Easter - Now who knows!
Where else can they visit in our area that is open.

Where is the closest bathroom?
WHERE’S THE BATHROOM? ;-) HAHA!
Where’s the best fishing, hiking, eating, breweries?

Why is the reservation closed? Why did people yell at me when I stopped to take a picture? Why isn’t the East side of Glacier Open?

An overreaction by government.

COVID 19 is essentially nonexistent in White Sulphur Springs. My gold panning business has not been affected. I feel the government has been way too heavy handed and too many lives have been destroyed with all the business failures yet nonessential government workers still get paid.

Everything to do with visitor conversation has changed somewhat due to COVID.

Governor should mandate that restaurants are reservation based. This will help restaurants with staff scheduling and also with contact tracing if a customer is tested positive for COVID-19.
I love the free time I have at home, but am frustrated at how slow things are moving book wise. We did get a MAC Grant for the banners. The Non-profit, I chair, the Bitterroot Trail just received a CCOVID-19 grant from Missoula County for our porta-potties to replace our lost fundraising.

It's time to shit or get off the pot. These half measures are making things harder. Wear a mask 1–% of the time. Be open, even though there is significantly reduced sales volume. Be happy and friendly to all the people coming in from outside and potentially bringing their contagion with them, because without their dollars our economy collapses.

No additional comments.

None.

The Blackfeet Reservation and Glacier’s East side entrances are closed. Without tourism dollars or serious economic help, many businesses on The East side of Glacier will not survive. The tribe plans to keep everything closed until they get a vaccine. Our businesses may well face two solid years of zero income. Many of us cannot remain viable given those circumstances. Please help!

The town of Craig is as busy as I've ever seen it -especially on the weekends -as there are TONS of area folks coming to float and/or fish the Missouri River. There are also lots of out-of-state folks doing the same, many/most are DIY anglers or floaters.

Tourism businesses have been hit really hard, we need additional support, especially for new or seasonal businesses which have expanded recently and invested a lot, like we did. We need subsidized loans directed specifically to the tourism industry.

We are so worried about the future of our nonprofit and the effect this has on our education outreach.

We had required staff and visitors to wear masks since reopened, so the Governor requiring it for our county, due to the COVID-19 count, made it much easier on our frontline staff when visitors refused. We lost a few members due to our facemask policy, but we gained more because of the policy. Before the Governor’s mandate, roughly 2% of our daily visitors refused to wear a mask and left.

We have some confusion with face masks. These have been required in the cave since May 22nd when we started offering 2020 tours (twice we cannot provide 6 ft distancing). ALL had to wear them unless held by a parent. The governor’s new mandates are more liberal and that complicates our explanations.

We have totally suspended operations for this season due to health concerns.

We need to be safe and prudent but we cannot afford to shut our state down again. Continue to education and support so we can move slowly and safely forward.