



SHERIFF **BEN WOLFINGER**

# SHERIFF KOOTENAI COUNTY



UNDERSHERIFF **DAN MATTOS**

## MEDIA RELEASE

### For Immediate Release:

**Contact:** Lt. Ryan Higgins  
Office: 208-446-2245  
PIO Cell: 208-758-1045  
[sopio@kcgov.us](mailto:sopio@kcgov.us)

### Office of Emergency Management Activation

**Kootenai County, Idaho:** In light of the recent COVID-19 events and to make sure we as a community are prepared as this event continues to evolve, and to receive any possible federal and state assistance the Kootenai County Board of County Commissioners Chairman Chris Fillios signed a Declaration of Emergency for Kootenai County. This declaration allows the Office of Emergency Management to be activated and brings in additional resources to help the citizens of Kootenai County.

Panhandle Health is the primary agency for this event and any questions or concerns about the COVID-19 virus should be directed to them at 1-877-415-5225. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been activated to assist Panhandle Health and the Citizens within Kootenai County who maybe directly impacted by this event.

With the activation of the Office of Emergency Management we will be able to partner with other agencies to include; other law enforcement agencies within the county, Fire and EMS services, Kootenai Health, Panhandle Health, other Elected Officials and the Board of County Commissioners to provide assistance to the citizens and send out one clear message to the public.

The Sheriff's Office and OEM would like to stress that there is no reason to panic. The activation of the EOC and the declaration is simply to provide the county with the ability to request assistance and funding and bring all the agencies involved together to provide one clear message to the citizens. We would also like to stress that don't believe everything you have seen or heard on social media. There is no indication that the county is going to be quarantined or the borders between the states are going to be closed.

We would encourage those that have not signed up for Alert Kootenai, to do so. You can sign up for Alert Kootenai via the Kootenai County Sheriff's Website at [www.kcsheriff.com](http://www.kcsheriff.com). This will provide you with an avenue to receive information about not only this event any future events or incidents that may happen.

Sheriff Ben Wolfinger

By: Lt. Ryan Higgins