



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 24, 2020

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine Week in Review

For the week ending July 24, 2020

Throughout the week, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine was joined by Lt. Governor Jon Husted, and provided updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as state initiatives.

Last [Saturday](#), Governor DeWine issued the following statement on the death of Congressman John Lewis.

"Fran and I were very saddened to learn this morning of the death of our friend Congressman John Lewis.

"John Lewis changed America.

"In 2004, when I was in the U.S. Senate, Congressman Lewis led a small group of lawmakers to Tennessee and Alabama and showed us history. He opened our eyes with first-hand accounts of the abuse and prejudice he experienced. He told us about his time as a Freedom Rider, when he and fellow activists were badly beaten while riding buses throughout the South to protest segregation.

"He took us to the Rosa Parks Museum and the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church, where Reverend King had been pastor and preached hope and perseverance. We also walked with him to the Civil Rights Memorial, as he led us in singing "We Shall Overcome."

"John also took us across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, AL, where on March 7, 1965 -- known as Bloody Sunday -- he and so many other civil rights protesters were attacked and beaten as they peacefully marched.

"Fran and I had taken our two youngest children, Mark and Anna, with us, and we will all be forever grateful to John for what he taught us on that journey.

"John Lewis was an extraordinary leader, teacher, and role model for us all. He left a legacy for which we all have a responsibility now to carry on."

Governor DeWine also [ordered](#) that all United States and Ohio flags be flown at half-staff on



all public buildings and grounds throughout Ohio

On [Tuesday](#), Governor DeWine issued the following statement following the news conference by U.S. Attorney DeVillers announcing a criminal complaint against Speaker Larry Householder and others for an alleged \$60 million bribery scheme.

"I am deeply concerned about the allegations of wrongdoing in the criminal complaint issued today by the U.S. Attorney's Office. Every American has the presumption of innocence until proven guilty. Because of the nature of these charges, it will be impossible for Speaker Householder to effectively lead the Ohio House of Representatives; therefore, I am calling on Speaker Householder to resign immediately.

"This is a sad day for Ohio."

Additionally, Lt. Governor Husted, who served as the 99th Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives from 2005- 2009, released the following statement regarding the criminal complaint against Speaker Larry Householder.

"As a former House Speaker, it makes me incredibly sad.

"With the announcement of today's criminal complaints, the Speaker can no longer effectively perform his duties and should resign.

"Ohio is in the midst of a pandemic response and economic downturn, and the institution of the House of Representatives must remain operational, and the integrity of the office and the institution must be restored."

On [Wednesday](#), Governor DeWine announced that **beginning on Thursday, July 23, at 6:00 p.m.**, a statewide mask mandate will go into effect for citizens living in all 88 Ohio counties.

"Our preliminary data indicate that the rate of increase in new cases has slowed in the high-risk counties where masks are already mandated, so we are cautiously optimistic that things are heading in the right direction," said Governor DeWine. "We believe that requiring masks statewide will make a significant difference and will be key to making sure other counties do not progress to a higher level of increased spread."



All individuals in Ohio must wear facial coverings in public at all times when:

- At an indoor location that is not a residence
- Outdoors, but unable to maintain six-foot social distance from people who are not household members
- Waiting for, riding, driving, or operating public transportation, such as a taxi, a car service, or a private car used for ride-sharing.

The order only requires those 10 years old or older to wear a mask. Additional exclusions include:

- Those with a medical condition or a disability or those communicating with someone with a disability;
- Those who are actively exercising or playing sports;
- Those who are officiants at religious services;
- Those who are actively involved in public safety; or
- Those who are actively eating or drinking.

Schools should follow the guidance previously issued pertaining to masks.

STATEWIDE TRAVEL WARNING

Governor DeWine announced a [travel advisory](#) for all individuals coming into Ohio from states reporting positive COVID-19 testing rates of 15 percent or higher.

Those traveling from one of the following states should self-quarantine for 14 days at home or in a hotel.

- Alabama
- Arizona
- Florida
- Georgia
- Idaho
- Mississippi
- Nevada
- South Carolina
- Texas

The self-quarantine recommendation applies to those who live in Ohio and to people who are traveling into Ohio from any of these states.

"I know this will be hard and is a sacrifice, especially as summer vacations are in full force, but when we have a higher likelihood of being exposed, we should take precautions to limit the exposure of others," said Governor DeWine.



Ohio's positivity rate, which is an indicator of the percentage of people who have tested positive for COVID-19, has been around 6.2 percent.

INFORMAL GATHERINGS

Governor DeWine urged citizens to use extreme caution when considering attending or hosting an informal gathering.

"We are seeing serious exposures to the virus that are arising from everyday events like church services, small house parties, neighborhood get-togethers, children's sleepovers, weddings, and even bridal showers," said Governor DeWine. "This virus is real, and we cannot let our guards down."

COUNTY FAIRS

Following a 19-case outbreak linked to a county fair in Ohio, Governor DeWine spoke with fair managers from across Ohio to stress the importance of following safety guidance during county fair events.

"We've seen photos of packed grandstands and little social distancing," said Governor DeWine. "We want fairs to continue, but I expressed in the phone call today that fairs must follow the rules."

Guidance for fairs is available at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

CONGRESSIONAL LETTER

Lt. Governor Husted announced that Governor DeWine has signed onto [a letter to Congressional leadership](#) with 20 other fellow Governors from across the nation, calling for reasonable limited liability protections for businesses, schools, healthcare workers, and governments as they are reopened during the COVID-19 global pandemic.

The letter calls for predictable, timely, targeted liability protections to shield employers from legal risks associated with the spread of the novel coronavirus, so long as they are following the appropriate standards of care to protect their employees, customers, and students. The letter specifically requests that the protections be drawn in a narrow fashion as to not give license for gross negligence, misconduct, or recklessness.

Similar calls for liability protection have been made by Ohio's leading business organizations. In addition to Governor DeWine, the letter was co-signed by the Governors of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, and Wyoming.



DROPPING UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

In the first press conference since Ohio's latest unemployment figures were released, Lt. Governor Husted also highlighted Ohio's strengthening economy as the state responsibly restarts in the midst of the pandemic. Ohio's unemployment rate dropped three percentage points in the last month to 10.9%. The Lt. Governor also highlighted how Ohio companies continue to go to great lengths to support their employees and customers.

HOSPITAL INDICATORS

Beginning with Thursday's updated [Ohio Public Health Advisory System](#) map, Governor DeWine announced that the ICU indicator will be enhanced to address concerns in the event ICU levels increase due to reasons other than COVID-19.

The indicator will trigger if ICU capacity for a county's hospital region exceeds 80 percent of normal capacity and if 20 percent of the normal ICU capacity is being used for COVID-19 positive patients.

"The 80 percent indicator is a good early warning to measure increasing utilization of ICU services, and this enhancement improves the indicator to ensure we are capturing developments in ICU utilization related to COVID-19 and changes from unrelated things," said Governor DeWine.

The Ohio Public Health Advisory System will also be updated in the coming weeks to include more localized testing data and an indicator related to known contacts spreading the virus when such local data is widely available.

NEW PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation will sponsor two new public service announcements created in partnership with the Ohio Restaurant Association, OhioHealth, JobsOhio, and the Ohio Business Roundtable.

The [first PSA](#) features real Ohioans explaining why all Ohioans should all wear a mask.

The [second PSA](#) features Dr. Steve Markovich, a former Air National Guardsman and fighter pilot, who is CEO of OhioHealth. He encourages younger adults to wear masks to protect family, friends, and coworkers.

On [Thursday](#), Governor DeWine announced that new public health data has led the Ohio Department of Health to designate 23 counties as being in a Red Alert Level 3 Public



Emergency as defined by the [Ohio Public Health Advisory System](#).

Upgraded to Level 3:	Continuing at Level 3:	Downgraded to Level 2:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clark• Defiance• Erie• Hardin• Henry• Lawrence• Marion• Medina	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Athens• Allen*• Clermont• Cuyahoga• Delaware• Fairfield• Franklin• Hamilton• Licking• Lucas• Montgomery• Pickaway• Richland• Scioto• Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Butler• Lorain• Summit• Wood

Allen County is also on Ohio's Watch List because it is closely nearing Purple Alert Level 4.

Franklin and Licking counties, despite meeting fewer indicators, remain at Red Alert Level 3 due to meeting the CDC guidelines for high incidence of COVID-19.

Butler, Lorain, Summit, and Wood counties were downgraded to Orange Alert Level 2, however, these counties remain at the CDC definition of moderately high incidence of COVID-19. Both Wood and Butler counties nearly meet the definition of high incidence.

"Overall, the downgrade in the risk levels in these four counties tells us that the measures to mitigate COVID-19 spread in red counties - including increased diligence in social distancing, wearing masks, washing hands frequently, and reducing interactions with others outside your household - may be helping to slow the spread in these counties," said Governor DeWine. "We are cautiously optimistic about this, but these are still high levels of spread, and citizens across Ohio must continue to be vigilant."

Detailed information on each Red Alert Level 3 county can be found on the [Ohio Public Health Advisory System's website](#). The system was developed to provide local health departments, community leaders, and the public with data and information on the severity of the COVID-19 spread in the counties in which they live. The system consists of four levels with specific [risk-level guidelines](#). Each level is calculated with data gathered on [seven public](#)



[health indicators.](#)

Ohio's statewide mask order goes into effect at 6:00 p.m. Thursday evening.

IMPORTANCE OF SELF-QUARANTINES

Following an outbreak at an Ohio long-term care facility in which more than two dozen residents and staff tested positive for COVID-19, Governor DeWine continued to encourage Ohioans to self-quarantine for 14-days after traveling to [high-risk areas](#).

Contact tracing found that the long-term care facility's outbreak occurred due to a group of people who traveled to a high-risk area outside of Ohio and became sick upon return. Members of the group did not isolate and spread the virus into the nursing facility.

"When we look at the way this virus is progressing, we have to do everything we can to stop it in its tracks, and that may mean deferring a vacation so you're not putting yourself or your friends and family at risk," said Governor DeWine. "This may mean that you need to stay home from work, but these are critical sacrifices that we are calling on all Ohioans to make when necessary."

BROADBAND EXPANSION

Lt. Governor Jon Husted announced the next steps in OhioBroadband's plans to expand broadband access across the state.

In an effort to provide schools with the ability to search, review and compare prices for purchasing hotspots and equipment, a [Request for Information \(RFI\)](#) will be issued to internet providers for everything from hotspots to laptops to tablets.

Respondents to the RFI will need to provide the specific equipment they have available, number of units available, price, and amount of time it would take to implement an order. This RFI will be specific to K-12 plans and will be housed in a single location, giving every school district a chance to compare what is available and make the best decision for their district and their students.

Additionally, pending upcoming Controlling Board approval, schools can apply for a dollar to dollar matching grant program with the state for hotspots, in-home internet, and internet-enabled devices to students. This funding will be facilitated through the federal CARES Act and will total \$50 million. Schools will have the flexibility to use the funding through a connectivity plan that makes the most sense for their student population and district.

The Lt. Governor also announced the launch of a new [E-Permitting system](#) through InnovateOhio and the Ohio Department of Transportation. The new system fulfills a goal



outlined in the December 2019, [Ohio Broadband Strategy](#), and replaces a paper-only right-of-way permitting system with an online process that is more convenient for permit requesters and is expected to reallocate 24,000 hours of labor per year.

Thursday evening, Governor DeWine announced that the Ohio Department of Health Interim Director Lance Himes has signed the [Director's Order for Facial Coverings Throughout the State of Ohio](#).

CURRENT COVID-19 DATA

As of Friday afternoon, there are 81,746 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 3,297 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 10,072 people have been hospitalized, including 2,419 admissions to intensive care units. In-depth data can be accessed by visiting coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For more information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.