WEEK IN REVIEW
Friday, November 6, 2020

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine Week in Review

For the week ending November 6, 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 other state initiatives.

On **Sunday**, Governor DeWine released an open letter to the people of Ohio leading up to the election calling for unity and renewed commitment to fighting the coronavirus.

"Today, and for some time to come, we also share a common enemy—one that cares not whether we voted for Donald Trump or Joe Biden; an enemy that is relentless and clearly on the march. This enemy has invaded our nation, stealing nearly 230,000 American lives and at least 5,300 Ohio lives–all on our own soil," said Governor DeWine. "Throughout our history, in the face of a shared enemy, we have come together as a people, whether we were in the midst of a war or a national disaster, such as a flood or tornado."

A video recording of Governor DeWine reading the letter is available by clicking the image below or this link.

On **Thursday**, Governor DeWine announced that Ohio is once again breaking records in regard to COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations.

- Between Wednesday and Thursday, health officials reported a total of 4,961 new positive coronavirus cases in Ohio, the highest number of new cases in a 24-hour period to date.
- There are currently 2,075 patients hospitalized with COVID-19 which is a 55 percent increase in hospitalized patients compared to two weeks ago.
- Of the hospitalized patients, 541 people are in intensive care. The previous record for intensive care admissions was 533 in April.

"This virus is flaring up, and we have to push it down - the economy depends on it," said Governor DeWine. "If the virus continues to aggressively spread, people will lose confidence in their ability to safely go to stores, restaurants, and other businesses. If we want to keep our economy moving, we must all live with this virus and we must all be more careful."

Governor DeWine stressed that the new record number of cases is not due to increased testing capacity in the state. Since September 24, the total number of tests in Ohio has increased by

approximately 44 percent, but positive cases have increased 280 percent in the same time period. If a person is tested multiple times, they are only counted once.

STATEWIDE HIGH INCIDENCE

New health data compiled by the Ohio Department of Health revealed on Thursday that all 88 counties in Ohio are now considered "high incidence" as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"There have been so many cases in the past two weeks that the risk of catching this virus in every county of this state is very real and very concerning," said Governor DeWine. "Again, I ask everyone to recognize their personal responsibility in slowing the spread of this deadly disease. It's up to every citizen in Ohio to choose to slow the spread by wearing masks, distancing, and making overall smart decisions."

According to Thursday's updated Ohio Public Health Advisory System map, 56 counties are currently rated as having a very high risk of exposure and spread (Red Level 3), up from 43 counties last week. This represents the highest number of Red Level 3 counties since the launch of the advisory system in July. As of today, 86 percent of Ohioans are living in a Red Level 3 county.

A county-by-county breakdown outlining the presence of COVID-19 in all of Ohio's 88 counties can be found on the Ohio Public Health Advisory System's website.

NEW OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH STRUCTURE

Governor DeWine announced multiple key additions to the existing administration at the Ohio Department of Health (ODH).

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff: Dr. Vanderhoff previously served for more than a decade as a Senior Vice President and as the Chief Medical Officer at OhioHealth. He has years of experience leading large teams in successfully dealing with important healthcare issues in Ohio and prepared OhioHealth to deal with the threat of Ebola and the H1N1 flu pandemic.

Director Stephanie McCloud: Director McCloud previously served as Governor DeWine's administrator of the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation, managing an agency of 1,800 colleagues and over $28 billion in assets. She has considerable experience in the area of mental health and addiction treatment which is a priority in Ohio's health improvement plan.

Senior Deputy Lance Himes: Himes had previously served as the interim director of ODH where he has played an integral role in running and managing many aspects of the pandemic response operation. He will lead the coordination of the state's vaccine distribution plan and will continue to work directly with Ohio's local health commissioners.

Chief of Staff Kathleen Madden: Madden had previously served as Assistant Director at the Ohio Office of Budget and Management and will now play a key role in keeping ODH's pandemic and non-pandemic programs and operations on track. She will work to prioritize and resolve critical issues, provide oversight and guidance to ODH staff, and ensure that ODH funds are spent responsibly and strategically.

Other key members of the ongoing COVID-19 response who will continue their roles in assisting ODH are:

Adjutant General Maj. Gen. John Harris, Ohio National Guard: Maj. Gen. Harris will continue work to ensure complex operations, such as COVID testing and contact tracing, are well-coordinated, monitored, and improved when necessary. He will also work directly with Senior Deputy Himes on the planning and logistics of the forthcoming vaccine distribution program.

Director Ursel McElroy, Ohio Department of Aging: Director McElroy will continue to direct virus prevention efforts for older adults in the community and in long-term settings, including nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Director Lori Criss, Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services: Director Criss will continue to lead efforts to address the increasing mental health needs of citizens during the pandemic.

NEW OHIO BWC ADMINISTRATOR

Governor DeWine announced that John Logue, the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation's (BWC) Chief of Strategic Direction, will become the new administrator of Ohio BWC effective on November 16.

Logue has worked for 26 years in the industry. Before returning to BWC in 2019, he most recently served as the vice president of client services for International Absence Management Company where he focused on Ohio workers' compensation.

Also on **Thursday**, Lt. Governor Husted provided an update on the Small Business Relief Grant, which provides $10,000 to eligible small businesses with at least one but no more than 25 W2 employees. As of Thursday afternoon, the program has received 24,607 applications.

The Development Services Agency is reviewing the applications, and nearly 1,500 have been approved.

More information about the program and the application can be found at BusinessHelp.Ohio.gov.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION REMINDER

Lt. Governor Husted also reminded Ohioans that if an individual is required to quarantine by their employer or by the local health department, they are eligible for unemployment compensation for the time period that they were out. If someone has exhausted their sick leave as designated by their employer, they may also be eligible for unemployment compensation.

"We want people to know that as they're doing the right thing, as they're quarantined - they are eligible for unemployment compensation."

Visit unemployment.ohio.gov for more information.

As of Friday, there are 240,178 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 5,494 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 20,246 people have been hospitalized, including 3,991 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.