

**WEEK IN REVIEW**

Friday, December 4, 2020

**Ohio Governor Mike DeWine Week in Review***For the week ending December 4, 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 [Monday](#), Governor DeWine announced that Ohio's COVID-19 hospitalizations have hit an all-time high at 5,060 people hospitalized with the coronavirus (as of November 30) across Ohio as compared to just under 1,700 COVID-19 patients on November 1. Of Ohio's currently hospitalized COVID-19 patients as of Monday, there are 1,180 individuals in intensive care units and 682 people are on ventilators.

According to Dr. Andy Thomas, Chief Clinical Officer at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, one-third of ICU patients across Ohio have COVID-19 and one-third of individuals on ventilators have COVID-19.

"COVID patients are going to start crowding out other people who need that level of care as these numbers continue to rise," said Dr. Thomas. "The reality is that hospitals are making difficult decisions about delaying care. It may be non-urgent care, but it's care that may cause someone to go to the ICU after surgery. A lot of hospitals are delaying those surgeries because they can't afford their ICUs to be overtaxed."

Dr. Thomas reported that rural areas are being hit particularly hard right now, and several hospitals are beginning to voice concerns about their ability to manage such a high number of intensive care patients. As the total number of COVID patients grows, smaller community hospitals will be unable to expand their intensive care capacity.

For individuals who traveled over Thanksgiving, Dr. Thomas urged them to quarantine upon return to Ohio to break any possible chain of transmission.

**COVID-19 INDOOR AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**



Governor DeWine announced a new program to help improve indoor air quality and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 at senior living facilities, including nursing homes, assisted living centers, and adult day centers.

The \$28 million program was created using federal CARES Act funding to address indoor air quality through HVAC inspections, portable air filtration systems, new filtration systems, maintenance on current systems, and other interventions. Eligible recipients can receive up to \$15,000.

“As we move into colder months and spend more time inside, proper ventilation and filtration are even more important to stop the spread of COVID-19,” said Governor DeWine.

The program was approved by the Bureau of Workers’ Compensation (BWC) Board of Directors at a special meeting last Wednesday. BWC will administer the program and applications are available at [bwc.ohio.gov](http://bwc.ohio.gov). Additional questions about the program should be emailed to [grants@bwc.state.oh.us](mailto:grants@bwc.state.oh.us).

## STATE OF OHIO EMPLOYEES

Due to the recent spike in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in Ohio, Governor DeWine has delayed Ohio's plan to resume in-person work at state-owned facilities. A gradual, phased approach was expected to begin in January. Governor DeWine also encouraged other employers to allow employees to work at home to the extent possible.

## ADDITIONAL GUESTS

During Monday's briefing, Governor DeWine was joined by four nurses who discussed their experiences treating patients with coronavirus.

[Stacey Morris, a COVID unit nurse manager at Cleveland Clinic Akron General](#), discussed the role nurses play when patients are admitted, as they fight for their lives, and, in the worst circumstances, when they must say goodbye to their loved ones.

[Carrie Watkins, assistant director for nursing at Genacross Lutheran Services in Holland, Ohio](#), discussed the surge in COVID cases that are experienced in nursing homes each time there is a surge in community spread.

[Dara Pence, ICU nurse manager at Ohio Health's Riverside Hospital in Columbus](#), discussed the unpredictability of the virus and the tragedies that she has witnessed due to COVID-19.



[Jamie Giere](#), a nurse and team leader for the COVID unit at Premier Health's Upper Valley Medical Center in Troy, Ohio, discussed the surge in patients over the past three weeks and her concerns that the public does not fully understand what is happening in Ohio's hospitals.

## NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

With Monday being the final day of National Adoption Month, Governor DeWine encouraged Ohioans to consider fostering or adopting a child. In Ohio, there are 3,000 children waiting for a family, including 11-year-old Alex, who is featured in the [video](#) below.

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On [Tuesday](#), Governor DeWine and First Lady Fran DeWine toured the Ohio Department of Health's Receipt, Store, and Stage (RSS) warehouse facility located in Central Ohio, to see the facility and review the process that will be used to redistribute the COVID-19 vaccine in Ohio.

The Ohio Department of Health's Vaccine Preparedness Office has been diligently preparing for the arrival of the vaccine for months, distributing adult influenza vaccine with the same process that will be used to distribute the COVID-19 as a test exercise, and running daily drills with prototype packaging to break down and repackage the vaccine in smaller units.

On Monday, the Ohio Department of Health took part in a nationwide end-to-end training exercise with the packaging that will be used to distribute the Pfizer vaccine. The Pfizer vaccine is expected to be the first manufacturer to receive the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

[B-roll](#) and [sound bites](#) from Governor DeWine's tour of the RSS facility today and the November 30<sup>th</sup> [training exercise](#) can be accessed [here](#).

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On [Thursday](#), Ohio reported 8,921 new coronavirus cases, the fifth-highest case count reported in one day since the start of the pandemic. Nearly 400 more hospitalizations were reported, and an additional 82 people have died from COVID-19 in Ohio.

COVID-19 hospitalizations remain high with 5,142 patients currently hospitalized as of Thursday. Of those, 1,204 patients are in intensive care.



Dr. Andy Thomas, Chief Clinical Officer at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, warned that Ohio is not yet seeing the impact of gatherings that took place over Thanksgiving because hospitalizations are a lagging indicator. Symptoms generally develop within 10 days of transmission, and hospitalizations typically occur a week after diagnosis.

"This is not the beginning of the end or even the end of the beginning," said Dr. Thomas. "Hospitals are in a very difficult spot here, and we're just now heading into the most challenging three months of the pandemic. ICU beds are an area of capacity where we have the biggest strain across the state, especially in rural areas."

"We are in crisis. Hospitals across Ohio are running out of beds, healthcare workers are burned out and stretched thin, and our hospitals are stressed to the extreme," said Dr. Nora Colburn, associate medical director for clinical epidemiology at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center. "Hospitals around the state are delaying non-emergency procedures which will impact routine healthcare. The bottom line is that non-COVID patients are being crowded out of the system and won't be able to get the care they need to stay healthy. We all must do our part to stop the spread of the virus."

## **OHIO PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY SYSTEM**

New health data compiled by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) showed sustained severe exposure and spread (Purple Level 4) in Lake, Lorain, Medina, Montgomery, Portage, Richland, Stark, and Summit counties. Cuyahoga, Fairfield, and Madison counties were moved to the Watch List.

Franklin County dropped from Purple Level 4 to Red Level 3, however, Dr. Thomas urged county residents to remain vigilant.

"This does not mean that Franklin County is out of the woods," said Dr. Thomas. "We still have a rate of cases that is six-times higher than the definition of high incidence. That is not good. We are not on our way down yet."

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](#).

## **OHIO POSITIVITY**

According to this week's [ODH travel advisory](#), this is the first week since April where Ohio's positivity for COVID-19 has increased above 15 percent.



The travel advisory encourages all Ohioans to help to limit the spread and impact of this virus by staying home except for necessary trips for supplies. The advisory also urges Ohioans to consistently wear masks when around others and frequently wash their hands.

ODH requests that anyone who must travel to any other state with a positivity rate of 15 percent or more self-quarantine for 14 days upon return. ODH also asks any non-Ohioans entering the state from one of these areas to do the same.

### **RETAIL COMPLIANCE UNIT DASHBOARD**

Governor DeWine announced that Ohio's Retail Compliance Unit Dashboard is now available online at [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

The new dashboard includes information on the number of retailers visited by agents, how many customers and employees were properly wearing masks, how many establishments had proper signage, and the number of warnings issued. The dashboard will be updated each Thursday.

The Retail Compliance Unit was created within the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation to help keep businesses open and safe for customers and employees.

### **MASKS AND THOSE WITH DISABILITIES**

On International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Governor DeWine reminded Ohioans that some individuals with disabilities may not be able to wear a mask.

"While it's crucial that those of us who can wear face masks do wear face masks, we should all remember that when we see someone in public without a mask it may be someone with a disability who may not be able to wear one," said Governor DeWine.

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Also on [Thursday](#), citing objections from health care professionals and business leaders as being detrimental to pandemic response and public health, Governor DeWine vetoed Substitute Senate Bill 311, stating in his veto message that "it is not in the best interest of protecting the health and safety of all Ohioans."

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Also on [Thursday](#), Lt. Governor Husted, who serves as Director of the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, announced the results of the October round of TechCred, which





will provide the opportunity for 246 Ohio companies to upskill their current and incoming workforce with tech-focused skills.

“Despite the obstacles created by COVID-19, we continue to see great results coming out of the TechCred program. It is helping employers and employees adapt and prevail during very difficult economic conditions,” said Lt. Governor Jon Husted. “This marks another milestone in upskilling opportunities that will help Ohioans earn the tech-focused skills needed to succeed in the changing workplace.”

The most recent TechCred application period closed at the end of October. Today, 246 Ohio employers were approved for funding, resulting in Ohio employees earning up to 3,164 technology-focused credentials. This round marks a milestone as funding for the program has been approved for over 15,000 credentials.

The next TechCred application period opens Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup> and closes January 29<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. Businesses with employees who have completed their TechCred training are reminded to submit proof of credential completion to receive reimbursement at [TechCred.Ohio.gov](http://TechCred.Ohio.gov).

On **Friday**, Governor DeWine announced details for Ohio's first phase of vaccine distribution that is expected to begin on or around December 15.

During Phase 1, vaccine supply will be limited, and Ohio will focus on vaccinating those who wish to be vaccinated in the critical Phase 1A groups outlined below.

**Ohio's Vaccination Program**  
- A Phased Approach

**During Phase 1 vaccine supply will be limited.**  
Vaccine administration will be focused on reaching critical groups.

**PHASE 1A**

- Health care workers and personnel, who are routinely involved in the care of COVID-19 patients
- Residents and staff at nursing homes
- Residents and staff at assisted living facilities
- Patients and staff at state psychiatric hospitals
- People with intellectual disabilities and those with mental illness, who live in group homes or centers and staff at those locations
- Residents and staff at our Ohio veterans homes
- EMS responders

All available vaccines will be administered to those who **choose** to receive it.

OHIO MIKE DEWINE GOVERNOR OF OHIO Ohio Department of Health coronavirus.ohio.gov



The federal government has advised that the Ohio Department of Health will not know the exact number of vaccines that will be shipped to Ohio until closer to each shipment date. The current shipment figures, which are subject to change, are as follows:

- On or around December 15, a shipment from Pfizer will include 9,750 vaccines for Ohio's [prepositioned hospital](#) sites. An additional 88,725 vaccines will go to Walgreens and CVS for congregate care settings.
- On or around December 22, a shipment of 201,000 vaccines is expected from Moderna. These vaccines will go to 98 hospitals for vaccination of those who are exposed to COVID patients and to 108 health departments to vaccinate other frontline workers such as those working in emergency medical services.
- On or around December 22, another shipment is also expected from Pfizer. The tentative number of vaccines in this shipment is 123,000. These vaccines will go to Walgreens and CVS for vaccination of those in congregate care settings.
- A few days later, Ohio expects another 148,000 vaccines from Pfizer and 89,000 vaccines from Moderna.

These vaccines will be the first dose for those in the identified critical groups. A second dose will be delivered and administered in the future. It has not been determined when members of the general public will have the option to receive vaccines. As information becomes available about the next phases of vaccine distribution, it will be made public.

## QUARANTINE GUIDANCE

Ohio Department of Health Chief Medical Officer Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff today discussed new quarantine guidance recently issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for those who may have been exposed to coronavirus but are not showing symptoms.

Following the study of emerging data and a growing confidence in testing, CDC's new guidance has two options depending on the situation:

- 10-day quarantine that does not require testing, provided there are no symptoms
- 7-day quarantine if test results are negative, provided there are no symptoms

The Ohio Department of Health, however, continues to recommend a 14-day quarantine for many citizens in Ohio.

"Staying home for 14 days after contact is still the safest way to limit possible spread of COVID-19," said Dr. Vanderhoff. "We continue to recommend this time period for people in congregate living facilities, such as nursing homes; in workplaces with a large number of employees; and in other settings in which COVID-19 could spread extensively. We also



recommend 14 days if you are in contact with people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19."

For others with no symptoms, the 10-day period may be sufficient, however, Dr. Vanderhoff recommends that Ohioans consider getting tested on day eight or later to increase certainty of no infection. Quarantine can then end at the conclusion of the 10-day period.

Quarantine can be reduced further to seven days, Dr. Vanderhoff said, if an individual has no symptoms and receives a negative test on day five or later.

"In every case — whether quarantining for 14 days, or 10, or seven — maintain social distance of at least 6 feet and wear a mask when around others," he said. "You should also keep an eye out for any symptoms for the full 14-day period. If you become sick or test positive for COVID-19, stay home and self-isolate in a separate room from others."

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Also on **Friday**, Governor DeWine announced the development of a new statewide minimum standard for law enforcement officers' response to mass protests and demonstrations. The Governor also announced changes to Ohio's minimum standard for use of deadly force which now largely prohibits chokeholds and similar maneuvers.

The new and modified standards were adopted during Friday's virtual meeting of the Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board. Governor DeWine called for the collaborative to address chokeholds and mass protests in response to the death of George Floyd and the nationwide protests that followed.

"We must rebuild trust between the public and law enforcement, and these changes continue to build on Ohio's work to improve community-police relations," said Governor DeWine. "Law enforcement agencies that are certified in the Ohio Collaborative's standards show commitment to following, and oftentimes exceeding, Ohio's best practices for serving and protecting our diverse communities."

Law enforcement agencies seeking certification or recertification in the Collaborative's primary standards must now [prohibit the use of chokeholds or other vascular neck restraints](#) in all circumstances except when officers are justified in using deadly force to defend themselves or others from serious physical injury or death.

To gain certification in the [new mass protest standard](#), agencies must develop a policy that protects public and officer safety while also upholding the constitutional rights of expression, assembly, and freedom of the press. The policy should restrict the fewest freedoms possible; limit the use of force, coercion, and intrusiveness; target only harmful behaviors and conditions; and deploy predictable and unbiased tactics.





The Ohio Collaborative was formed in 2015 to create [uniform minimum standards](#) for Ohio's law enforcement agencies covering use of force, including deadly force, and hiring and recruitment. 471 law enforcement agencies in Ohio have voluntarily complied with these primary minimum standards, and an additional 113 agencies are in the process of certification. These agencies employ 94 percent of all of Ohio's law enforcement officers, a 15 percent increase since June. These agencies serve 86 percent of Ohio's total population.

Additional standards address bias-free policing, body-worn cameras, community engagement, law enforcement vehicular pursuits, investigation of employee misconduct, and telecommunicator training.

A full accounting of agencies that are currently certified in the collaborative's primary standards can be found at [ocjs.ohio.gov](http://ocjs.ohio.gov). A listing of agencies certified in additional standards is available in the [2020 annual report](#).

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As of Friday, there have been 456,963 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 6,882 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 28,673 people have been hospitalized, including 4,847 admissions to intensive care units. In-depth data can be accessed by visiting [coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

Please note that today's data may be incomplete while thousands of reports are pending review.

For more information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov) or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.