WEEK IN REVIEW
Friday, March 19, 2021

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine Week in Review

For the week ending March 19, 2021

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

Throughout the week, Governor DeWine and First Lady Fran DeWine continued to tour vaccination sites across Ohio, including the Portsmouth Local Health Department, Ohio University's Chillicothe campus, the Shelby Community and Senior Center, the pop-up mass vaccination site in Xavier University's Cintas Center, and the federally-sponsored mass vaccination site at Cleveland State University's Wolstein Center.

In the photo, Mrs. DeWine is shown passing out individually-wrapped buckeye treats to vaccine recipients and volunteers.

On **Tuesday**, Governor Mike DeWine and representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, and Cleveland State University (CSU) welcomed the first members of the general public to be vaccinated at Ohio's mass vaccination clinic at CSU's Wolstein Center in Cleveland.

The eight-week mass vaccination clinic vaccinated approximately 1,500 Ohioans on Tuesday and will ultimately bring vaccine doses to 210,000 people in Ohio. Similar to mass vaccination sites in other states, the site will incrementally increase the number of vaccines administered, and up to 6,000 doses per day are expected to be available by next week.

The Wolstein Center location was recommended by Ohio and selected by FEMA based on its proximity to a large number of Ohio's high-risk citizens and medically underserved populations. To ensure equitable access to the vaccine for underserved and socially vulnerable populations, more than 300 local community groups are partnering with the state to help schedule appointments for those who face vaccination barriers. Translators will be on-site to assist those who speak other languages, and free transportation is available for those who need help getting to and from the clinic.

"This is an example of Ohio at its finest – citizens coming together to help ensure that all Ohioans, no matter where they live, have access to the vaccine," said Governor DeWine. "Today is a monumental day. With every shot, Ohio is moving closer to recovery."

While in Cleveland, Governor DeWine also announced expanded vaccine eligibility in Ohio beginning on March 19, 2021, for phases 1E and 2C. Phase 1E includes those with cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease, and obesity. Phase 2C extends eligibility to Ohioans who are 40 and older. Between these two eligible groups, 1.6 million more Ohioans will have access to the vaccine.

Beginning on March 29, eligibility will be expanded to all Ohioans ages 16 and older. FDA emergency use authorization only allows those ages 16 and 17 to receive the Pfizer vaccine.

These announcements come after Governor DeWine on **Sunday** announced that thousands of additional appointments for Ohio's mass vaccination clinic at Cleveland State University's Wolstein Center will be available for registration beginning Monday, March 15, 2021. He also announced the clinic's Community Partner Registration. Because many underserved communities rely on community partners to deliver health care information and services, Ohio has set aside a portion of available Wolstein Center appointments to be booked through the work of community partners. These partners will help ensure equitable access to the vaccine by targeting underserved communities to fill the reserved appointment times. Unbooked and canceled community partner appointments will be released to the public.

"We want to ensure that every Ohioan who wants to be vaccinated - no matter where they live - has the opportunity to get the vaccine, and our community partners are crucial in our efforts to make that happen," said Governor DeWine on Sunday. "More than 1.3 million Ohioans have been fully vaccinated so far, and every day we're getting closer to emerging from this pandemic."

To book an appointment at the Wolstein Center Mass Vaccination Clinic or to find appointment information on the more than 1,300 local providers offering the vaccine statewide, visit gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov. Ohioans can also schedule mass vaccination clinic appointments by calling 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

Also on Tuesday, Governor Mike DeWine announced the creation of the statewide Eliminating Disparities in Infant Mortality Task Force aimed at addressing Ohio's racial disparities in infant mortality.

In December 2020, Governor DeWine announced the formation of the Task Force tasked with:

- Working with local, state, and national leaders to develop a statewide shared vision and strategy for reducing infant mortality rates and eliminating racial disparities by 2030.
- Creating actionable recommendations for interventions, performance and quality improvement, data collection, and policies.
- Advising the Governor's Children's Initiative on ways to improve Ohio's investments and strategies to address racial inequalities in birth outcomes.

"Since my first full day in office, when we created the Home Visiting Advisory Committee, we have been working to reduce infant mortality and the racial disparities that exist," said Governor DeWine. "This Task Force is the next step we are taking to ensure that all babies have the opportunity to grow up and reach their full potential. This group of experts will hear personal testimonies, explore barriers Ohioans are facing, and recommend solutions that help develop new action steps for the state."

Members of the Task Force include professionals in medicine, local and state government, parents, and many more.

Also on **Tuesday**, Lt. Governor Husted announced the results of the January round of TechCred, which will provide the opportunity for Ohioans to earn nearly 5,000 technology-focused credentials.

"Technology is changing the nature of work, and employers are having an increasingly difficult time recruiting a workforce that possesses the emerging technical skills it takes to compete," said Lt. Governor Husted. "More and more employers are finding that TechCred can be part of this solution by upskilling their existing, hard-working employees with the new technical skills required in the modern economy."

The most recent TechCred application period closed at the end of January. 384 Ohio employers were approved for funding, resulting in Ohio employees earning up to 4,736 technology-focused credentials. The January round was record-setting, as almost 100 more employers were approved, in addition to more credentials being approved, than the previously most successful round.

With the approvals announced this week, a total of 1,168 Ohio employers have been approved for funding, supporting the earning of 19,841 tech-focused credentials by Ohio employees.

The next TechCred application period opens Thursday, April 1, and closes April 30 at 3 p.m. Businesses with employees who have completed their TechCred training should submit proof of credential completion to receive reimbursement at TechCred.Ohio.gov.

On **Thursday**, Governor DeWine announced that Ohio's statewide case rate stands at 143.8 cases per 100,000 people over the past two weeks. When Ohio reaches 50 cases per 100,000 people for two weeks, all health orders will be lifted.

OHIO PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY SYSTEM

New health data compiled by the Ohio Department of Health shows declining rates of COVID-19 exposure and spread in ten counties.

Dropping from Alert Level 3 to Alert Level 2: Ashtabula, Carroll, Fayette, Jackson, Morrow, and Tuscarawas.

Dropping from Alert Level 2 to Alert Level 1: Auglaize, Mercer, Shelby, and Vinton.

NURSING HOME UPDATE

This week, Ohio's long-term care facilities reported just 70 new COVID-19 cases, compared to 157 new cases reported the previous week and 2,832 new cases reported at the peak of the pandemic in December.

"In addition to wearing masks, social distancing, and cleaning, there is no doubt of the significant impact vaccination is having on protecting nursing home residents and preventing severe illness and death among those most targeted by the virus," said Governor DeWine.

A total of 93 percent of Ohio's nursing homes and 77 percent of assisted living facilities have signed up to get additional vaccine for new staff and new residents through Ohio's COVID-19 Vaccine Maintenance Program as of Thursday. Governor DeWine urged the 243 facilities in Ohio that have not requested additional vaccine for new staff and residents to alert the state to its process to offer the vaccine by filling out the survey at aging.ohio.gov/COVIDvaccine.

INDOOR AIR QUALITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation has expanded the eligibility of the COVID-19 Indoor Air Quality Assistance Program, which provides reimbursements to eligible applicants to help cover the costs of inspections, assessments, maintenance, and improvements to indoor heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems to control the spread of COVID-19. The program also provides reimbursement for secondary devices designed to destroy bacteria, mold, and viruses.

Launched in December, this $28 million federally-funded program targeted nursing homes, assisted living centers, and adult day centers that invested in HVAC improvements that weaken COVID-19's spread. The expanded eligibility extends to:

- Intermediate care facilities;
- Hospices;
- Senior centers;
- Adult care facilities;
- Waiver settings (group homes); and
- Substance use treatment centers.

More information, including the application, can be found at BWC.ohio.gov.

SPECIAL ELECTION

Governor DeWine announced special election dates for the 11th Congressional District to fill the vacancy left by former Rep. Marcia Fudge.

The vacancy opened after the United States Senate confirmed now-Secretary Marcia Fudge on March 10 to serve as the head of the Department of Housing & Urban Development, and her subsequent resignation of her congressional seat. A Writ of Election may only be issued upon the resignation of a member of Congress.

The amount of time between the governor's Writ of Election announcement and the Special Congressional Primary and General Elections are very similar compared to the previous two special elections.

	Governor Issues Writ of Election	Special Election Primary Date	Total Number of Days	Special Election General Date	Total Number of Days
Speaker Boehner Special Election	Nov. 1, 2015	March 15, 2016	135	June 7, 2016	219
Rep. Tiberi Special Election	Jan. 5, 2018	May 8, 2018	123	August 8, 2018	214
Rep. Fudge Special Election	March 18, 2021	August 3, 2021	138	November 2, 2021	229

Ohioans interested in registering to vote or signing up to be a poll worker should visit VoteOhio.gov for more information.

Full Election Calendar

Frequently Asked Questions

NEW PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

On Thursday, Governor DeWine unveiled two new public services announcements aimed at encouraging Ohioans to get the COVID-19 vaccine. Click on the following two photos to watch the respective PSA.

The first PSA features older Ohioans who discuss how they feel now that they've been vaccinated.

The second PSA features Anthony Munoz, retired Cincinnati Bengal and Pro Football Hall of Famer, who was recently vaccinated.

Also on **Thursday**, Lt. Governor Husted issued a statement in support of Attorney General Dave Yost's efforts to file a motion for preliminary injunction against a part of the American Rescue Plan Act:

> "The precedent Congress is attempting to set here is that anytime the federal government sends money to state or local governments, they could add strings to control the tax policies of all 50 states. This is both arrogant and unconstitutional.

> "At a practical level, this could affect economic competitiveness of a state attempting to attract jobs with job creation tax credits or other tax-based economic incentives.

> "The governor and the legislature are best prepared, and were elected, to establish the tax and spending decisions for the State of Ohio; Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer are not.

> "I appreciate Attorney General Yost's efforts to challenge this federal overreach of authority, making it clear that state governments, and not Congress, make the decisions on state tax policy."

On **Friday**, Governor DeWine announced that he has named Jenifer French, of Westerville, to serve on the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO). Governor DeWine intends to name French Chairwoman of the PUCO when her term commences.

French will serve the unexpired term ending on April 10, 2024, left open by Samuel Randazzo. This appointment is subject to confirmation by the Ohio Senate.

"As a judge, Jenifer French was known for studying all of the complex facts, and sorting through them to come to a just conclusion," said Governor DeWine. "Her experience will be valuable as she leads the PUCO."

This week, Governor DeWine announced the signing of two health orders by Ohio Department of Health Director Stephanie McCloud:

- [Second Amended Director's Order on Adult Day Support Services and Vocational Habilitation Services](#).

  A modification to the original order adapts to the latest medical guidance from local health departments. This updated language will allow providers to continue to deliver services in a safe environment while following the best medical practices.

- [Addendum to Director's Second Amended Order that Provides Mandatory Requirements for Youth, Collegiate, Amateur, Club and Professional Sports and Extracurricular Activities](#)

  For spring sports and extracurricular activities, students will not be required to quarantine because they have an incidental exposure to COVID-19 in a classroom under the school-based exposure guidance unless symptoms develop. Students will now be permitted to participate in organized sporting and extracurricular activities as long as they remain symptom-free and follow applicable safety precautions.

Also **this week**, Governor DeWine announced that he has signed Senate Bill 13 into law.

- [Senate Bill 13](#), sponsored by Senator George Lang, shortens the period of limitations for actions upon a contract; makes changes to the borrowing statute pertaining to applicable periods of limitations; and establishes a statute of repose for a legal malpractice action.

As of Friday, there have been 997,336 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio. Additionally, 18,347 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths have occurred in the state; 18,340 were Ohio residents. A total of 52,049 people have been hospitalized, including 7,319 admissions to intensive care units.

COMBATING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

MIKE DeWINE
GOVERNOR OF OHIO

CASE DATA/VACCINE INFORMATION

In-depth COVID-19 data for Ohio: coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Ohio's central scheduling system: gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov

All vaccine providers: vaccine.coronavirus.ohio.gov

More vaccine information: coronavirus.ohio.gov/vaccine