



MIKE DEWINE
GOVERNOR OF OHIO

WEEK IN REVIEW

Friday, April 24, 2020

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine Week in Review

For the week ending April 24, 2020

Throughout the week, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine was joined by Lt. Governor Jon Husted and Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton M.D., MPH, to announce decisions made regarding the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) throughout Ohio.

On **Monday**, Governor DeWine announced that K-12 schools in Ohio will remain closed for the rest of the 2019-2020 academic year. At this time, no decisions have been made regarding whether or not schools will reopen in the fall.

Governor DeWine announced a new Minority Health Strike Force because COVID-19 is disproportionately impacting minority groups in Ohio and across the country. A list of individuals serving on the Minority Health Strike Force can be found [here](#).

Governor DeWine directed the Ohio Department of Health to collect more specific information regarding cases of COVID-19 in Ohio nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and hospitals. This is in addition to comprehensive data already published on coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Governor DeWine also directed the Department of Health to modify the Ohio Disease Reporting System to accurately collect case information for direct care providers at hospitals who have tested positive for COVID-19. The data, which will be available soon on coronavirus.ohio.gov, will be listed by each hospital.

Governor DeWine announced that LabCorp and Quest currently have no backlog of testing samples and have added more testing capacity. In response to the private laboratories' improved turnaround times, the Ohio Department of Health will again allow hospitals to utilize commercial laboratories in addition to hospital laboratories performing COVID-19 testing.

On **Tuesday**, Governor DeWine announced that a new testing reagent, which is a compound used to determine if COVID-19 is present in a sample, has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

A new strike force team, led by former Ohio governors Richard Celeste and Bob Taft, will work to find more reliable sources of reagent and testing supplies for COVID-19 testing in Ohio. The new Testing Strike Team will also include leaders from business, academia, and public health to help Ohio source these testing reagents and supplies.

The Ohio Department of Agriculture has waived the required \$50,000 local match for the Agricultural Society Facilities Grant Program. Fair managers have until May 30th to apply via the [Ohio Department of Agriculture's website](#).

JobsOhio, Peoples Bank (headquartered in Marietta) and the recently-merged First Federal Bank and Home Savings Bank (headquartered in Defiance and Youngstown) announced a new partnership to support those banks' existing small business clients in Ohio.

The partnership will help small businesses maintain operations and payroll during the COVID-19 pandemic. JobsOhio has committed up to \$50 million to assist Peoples Bank and First Federal-Home Savings Bank.

Additionally, a total of more than 170,000 checks will be mailed to Ohio employers over the next five days. Less than two weeks ago, the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation board of directors approved to send up to \$1.6 billion in dividends to Ohio employers. This dividend is intended to ease the impact of COVID-19 on Ohio's business community and the economy.

On **Wednesday**, Dr. Acton announced an order that directs healthcare providers in hospitals and outpatient surgery centers to reassess procedures and surgeries that were postponed.

On March 17, Dr. Acton issued an order postponing elective surgeries to conserve critical personal protective equipment (PPE) and to open bed space needed to care for COVID-19 patients. The new order directs healthcare professionals to review any postponed procedures or surgeries with their patients.

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS) announced the launch of a new mental health COVID CareLine for Ohioans.

Trained staff will be available to provide emotional assistance to anyone struggling with mental health concerns due to the ongoing stress of the pandemic.

The number to call is **1-800-720-9616**. All calls will be confidential.

On **Thursday**, Governor DeWine and Lt. Governor Husted invited Mark Weir, Ph.D., an assistant professor of Environmental Health at The Ohio State University, to discuss how health risks change as changes are made to the environment.

Dr. Weir explained that cough or sneeze droplets containing the virus spread through contact with others or contact with contaminated surfaces. He explained that minimizing the spread of the disease as Ohio begins the long process of reopening depends on personal and environmental controls. Personal precautions include interrupting the infection process by practicing good hand hygiene and wearing masks.

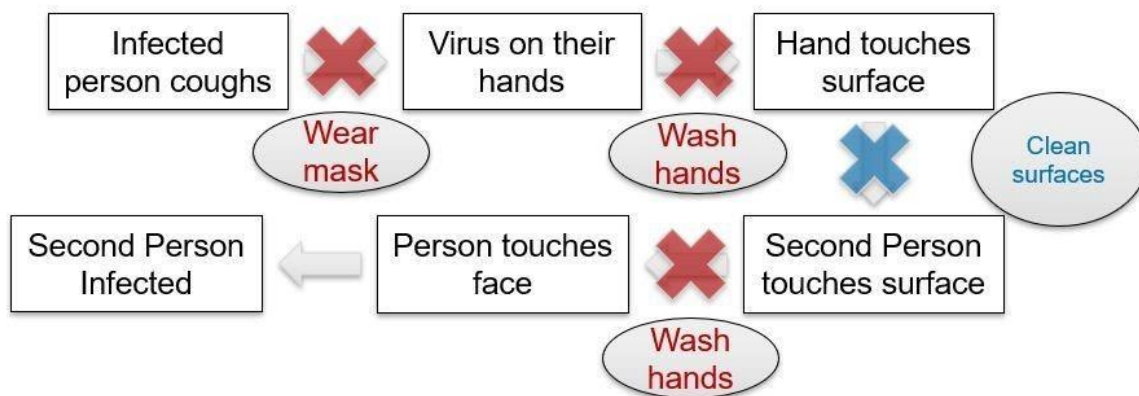
Employers must take precautions by disinfecting surfaces often and maintaining distance between individuals. Finally, facility and building management can help interrupt the infection process by managing airflow and air filters.

“Since COVID-19 can live up to 72 hours on plastics and stainless steel, it will take a combination of efforts from all of us to interrupt the disease process,” said Dr. Weir.



Understand the Environment – Envision the Options

Interrupted Infection Process



On **Friday**, Governor DeWine announced that members of the newly formed Testing Strike Team, led by former Governors Celeste and Taft, have reached an agreement with Thermo Fisher, a company that makes reagent, that will substantially expand COVID-19 testing capacity in Ohio.

As a result of collaborative efforts through the Ohio Manufacturing Alliance to Fight COVID-19, Governor DeWine announced that ROE Dental Laboratory in Cleveland will manufacture up to 1 million testing swabs to support Ohio's testing efforts.

This testing will dramatically increase Ohio's ability to test in our priority areas, including nursing homes, hot spots, congregate living settings, food and grocery stores, and essential manufacturing facilities.

As part of Ohio's offense strategy, Governor DeWine announced that Ohio has started working with Massachusetts-based Partners in Health. Partners in Health will bring needed resources to Ohio to help increase the ability to trace contact exposure to the virus.

Additionally, Governor DeWine announced that the state will cover the costs to keep more than 200 youth who are aging out of foster care in the foster care system until the COVID-19 pandemic ends.

As of Friday afternoon, there were 15,169 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 690 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 3,053 people have been hospitalized, including 920 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.

Check out another one of Governor DeWine's [#InThisTogetherOhio video](#).