

**WEEK IN REVIEW**

Thursday, July 2, 2020

**Ohio Governor Mike DeWine Week in Review***For the week of July 2, 2020*

Throughout the past 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.

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On **Monday**, Governor DeWine provided insight to the increasing COVID-19 hospital utilization in Ohio after over two months of decreasing utilization since late April. From June 21, 2020, to June 27, 2020, Ohio had approximately 500 to 550 total COVID-19 patients in hospitals statewide. This week, there are approximately 650 COVID-19 patients in hospitals statewide.

Although COVID-19 utilization in hospitals is increasing, there is still adequate overall capacity available across the state. No region has reached the concern threshold of 80 percent overall utilization for ICU beds, however lessons of recent history in NYC, Houston, and Arizona indicate that this can quickly change.

**POSITIVITY RATE**

Governor DeWine explained that the increase in positive COVID-19 cases is not fully due to Ohio's increase in testing.

"Ohio's positivity rate has increased slightly as our testing totals have increased," said Governor DeWine. "If the spread of this virus remained at a low level, more testing should show a lower positivity. The increase of our positivity rate, even as we are doing more testing, means that we are likely picking up signs of broader community spread."

Additionally, Governor DeWine highlighted Hamilton and Montgomery County as having a noticeable increase. As of this past week, the average new cases per day in Hamilton County increased to approximately 100 cases per 100,000 people. Due to the delayed diagnosis, these numbers may continue to grow for this reporting period.

**HAMILTON AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

In addition, more people are visiting their doctors and being diagnosed with COVID-19 in



Hamilton County more often. Between June 15 and June 22, those numbers nearly doubled from 40 to 78 visits per day.

Since mid-June, the number of COVID-positive patients being treated in standard hospital beds, ICU beds, and on ventilators has started to increase. For example, in Hamilton County, the number of COVID-positive patients doubled from a low of 65 patients on June 11 to more than 130 patients this weekend.

In Montgomery County, there is a noticeable increase in cases over the last month from an average of about 10 cases a day at the end of May to about 40 cases a day in the most recent week. The community is also experiencing early signs that more people are seeking medical care for COVID-19 symptoms. For example, outpatient visits in Montgomery County grew from an average of nearly seven visits per day to 27.

For the hospitals in the West Central region, the number of COVID-positive patients in standard hospital beds, ICUs, and ventilators has also doubled since the first week of June. COVID-specific hospital utilization is approaching levels not seen since the earlier peak of the pandemic in April.

## **NURSING HOME VISITATIONS**

Governor DeWine announced that beginning **July 20, 2020**, nursing homes are permitted to begin outdoor visitation as long as all safety standards are met.

When assessing their readiness to permit outdoor visitation, nursing homes should consider:

- Case status in the surrounding community
- Case status in the nursing home
- Staffing levels
- Access to adequate testing for residents and staff
- Personal protective equipment supplies
- Local hospital capacity

The decision to move forward with outdoor visitation considered requests from families and residents and the impact on the quality of life that a prolonged loss of connection can have on an individual. The plan was made in consultation with advocates and providers in the aging and development disabilities communities. Guidelines for visitation were jointly developed by the Academy for Senior Health Sciences, Leading Age Ohio, the Ohio Assisted Living Association, the Ohio Health Care Association, and the Ohio Medical Directors Association.

The order and related guidance will be made available at [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov). Questions may also be directed to the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, an office within the Ohio



Department of Aging, at 1-800-282-1206.

## EXTENSION OF ORDERS

Governor DeWine also announced that he is extending existing health orders through this week as his administration finalizes vital plans to help local schools safely reopen, as well as plans to keep Ohioans healthy and safe.

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On **Tuesday**, Lt. Governor Husted and Ohio Treasurer Sprague unveiled [OhioCheckbook.gov](https://ohiocheckbook.gov). The new transparency website combines OhioCheckbook.com (previously administered by the Treasurer's office) and Ohio's Interactive Budget (previously operated by the Office of Budget and Management) to create a single, one-stop resource for taxpayers hoping to learn more about spending at the state and local levels of government.

By streamlining website administration and eliminating duplication, the partnership between the DeWine-Husted Administration and Treasurer Sprague maintains the features of both sites while delivering a projected savings of around \$900,000 per year.

In November 2019, Lt. Gov. Jon Husted and Ohio Treasurer Robert Sprague announced a [new collaboration](#) to ensure the Ohio Checkbook remains a valuable and accessible resource for taxpayers in the years to come. The initiative merges and consolidates the functions and data previously hosted through OhioCheckbook.com and the Ohio Interactive Budget website, placing them under one roof.

OhioCheckbook.gov now features real-time reporting of state expenditures from Ohio's Interactive Budget along with local government spending data from OhioCheckbook.com. Local government participation on the website is voluntary and spending detail is updated as often as participating entities provide the information to the state.

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On **Wednesday**, Governor DeWine issued the following statement on Dayton's face covering proposal:

“I support Mayor Whaley's and Dayton's decision to require the use of masks in public places. It's an appropriate and welcome response to increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases in their area. Masks are recommended by the CDC and medical professionals to help protect other people. Wearing a mask will allow us to help keep businesses open and help prevent further spikes. I encourage other communities to consider following Dayton's lead.”

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On **Thursday**, Governor DeWine announced new guidance for resuming school in the fall.

The newly issued guidance report advises schools to vigilantly assess symptoms, wash and sanitize hands to prevent spread, thoroughly clean and sanitize the school environment to limit spread on shared surfaces, practice social distancing, and implement a face coverings policy.

Details on the new school guidance are available on [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

To assist schools in their efforts to implement the guidance, the Ohio Department of Education has created a document titled, "[The Reset and Restart Education Planning Guide for Ohio Schools and Districts](#)," which is designed to help teachers, principals, and administrators with solutions to safety challenges. The document provides resources and information for community decision-makers as they contemplate how to reopen safely.

The guidance was developed in consultation with school superintendents, teachers, parents, the Ohio Federation of Teachers, Ohio Education Association, Ohio Association of Public School Employees, Buckeye Association of School Administrators, Ohio School Boards Association, Ohio Association of School Business Officials, Alliance for High Quality Education, and Ohio Association of Career Tech Education.

Governor DeWine also committed to working with the Ohio General Assembly on a plan to ensure that federal CARES Act dollars are made available to Ohio's school districts for unforeseen expenses associated with creating a safe environment.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY ALERT SYSTEM**

Governor DeWine announced that going forward, Ohio will maintain vital, necessary baseline orders to control the spread of COVID-19 while also implementing a new alert system.

The Ohio Public Health Advisory System will provide local health departments and community leaders data and information to combat flare-ups as they occur in different parts of the state. The system consists of four levels that provide Ohioans with guidance as to the severity of the problem in the counties in which they live.

### **Data Indicators:**

A county's alert level is determined by seven data indicators:

1. New Cases Per Capita
2. Sustained Increase in New Cases
3. Proportion of Cases that Are Not Congregate Cases
4. Sustained Increase in Emergency Room Visits



5. Sustained Increase in Outpatient Visits
6. Sustained Increase in New COVID-19 Hospital Admissions
7. Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Bed Occupancy

Additional measurements still in development include county-level data on contact tracing, tests per capita, and percent positivity.

Detailed descriptions for each indicator can be found on [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

#### Alert Levels:

**Alert Level 1 Public Emergency (Yellow):** Baseline level. County has met zero or one indicator. Active exposure and spread. Follow all health orders.

**Alert Level 2 Public Emergency (Orange):** County has met two or three indicators. Increased exposure and spread. Exercise high degree of caution. Follow all current health orders.

**Alert Level 3 Public Emergency (Red):** County has met four or five indicators. Very high exposure and spread. Limit Activities as much as possible. Follow all current health orders.

**Alert Level 4 Public Emergency (Purple):** County has met six or seven indicators. Severe exposure and spread. Only leave home for supplies and services. Follow all current health orders.

Counties that are approaching Alert Level 4 are indicated with a star.

Each alert level includes [specific risk-level guidelines](#), including the requirement that all citizens comply with all health orders.

Profiles for the seven counties currently categorized in Alert Level 3 can be found below and are also available on the new [Ohio Public Health Advisory System website](#).

- [Butler](#)
- [Cuyahoga](#)
- [Franklin](#)
- [Hamilton](#)
- [Huron](#)
- [Montgomery](#)
- [Trumbull](#)



## **RESTAURANTS & BARS**

Governor DeWine announced that the Ohio Department of Commerce's Division of Liquor Control has granted over 300 expansion requests to bars and restaurants to allow patrons more opportunities to enjoy dinner or drinks in a safe environment.

Liquor Control has been working with local jurisdictions to extend liquor permits to outside spaces next to bars, such as parking lots and sidewalks, to expand seating capacity outside to keep patrons socially distanced.

## **PRESUMED RECOVERED DATA**

Lt. Governor Husted announced that "Presumed Recovered" is a new data point now reported in Ohio's COVID-19 data metrics shared on [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

"Many have been asking why the number of people recovered isn't reported and that's because this data isn't reported to the Ohio Department of Health, so we don't have an exact figure," said Lt. Governor Husted. "However, we can presume what that number is based on the other data we have."

Ohio's current presumed-recovered count is 38,987.

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## **CURRENT OHIO DATA**

Due to technical issues, current COVID-19 data is temporarily unavailable. Ohio's updated data will be posted at [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov) as soon as it is available.

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