

**WEEK IN REVIEW**

Friday, September 18, 2020

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine Week in Review*For the week ending September 18, 2020*

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

On **Monday**, Governor DeWine signed [House Bill 606](#) into law. House Bill 606, sponsored by Representative Diane Grendell, ensures civil immunity to individuals, schools, health care providers, businesses, and other entities from lawsuits arising from exposure, transmission, or contraction of COVID-19, or any mutation of the virus, as long as they were not showing reckless, intentional, or willful misconduct.

It also shields health care providers from liability in tort actions regarding the care and services they provide during this pandemic unless they were acting recklessly or displaying intentional misconduct.

House Bill 606 was supported by several associations, including the AICUO, CCAO, Inter-University Council of Ohio, NFIB, Ohio Association of Community Colleges, Ohio Business Roundtable, Ohio Chamber of Commerce, Ohio Council of Retail Merchants, Ohio Farm Bureau, Ohio Hospital Association, Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association, the Ohio Manufacturers' Association, Ohio Metro Chambers Coalition, Ohio Municipal League, Ohio Restaurant Association, Ohio School Boards Association, Ohio State Medical Association, Ohio's Superintendent Association and Ohio Township Association among others.

On **Tuesday**, Governor DeWine and Director Ursel McElroy of the Ohio Department of Aging provided an update on testing in nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, adult day centers, and adult day cares. Director McElroy explained that frequent testing in congregate settings is important to control the spread of the virus.

She also mentioned that adult day care and senior centers will open on September 21st. The facilities will test staff every other week and participants if they present symptoms. Outdoor visitation started at Ohio nursing homes on July 20th. If visitors have questions about protocols or concerns about a facility in their area, they can contact the Ohio Department of Aging. The



Department of Aging is working on a dashboard to increase transparency about the status of visitation at facilities across the state.

OHIO VETERANS HALL OF FAME

Governor DeWine announced that 20 women and men, representing four branches of the military, will be inducted into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame at a virtual ceremony on November 5th. These Ohioans, from 16 counties, have continued to serve the United States, as well as Ohio, as business owners, community volunteers, scientists, advocates, engineers, and much more.

The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame was established by Governor George Voinovich in 1992. Governor Voinovich established the Hall of Fame to recognize Ohio veterans' military service, as well as their service to Ohio and their communities after leaving the military. A total of 895 of Ohio's Veterans have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

The virtual ceremony can be viewed on November 5th at OhioVets.gov.

OHIO TO WORK

Governor DeWine, along with JP Nauseef, president and CEO of JobsOhio, announced that JobsOhio and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation and the Ohio Development Services Agency will launch a pilot initiative called Ohio To Work.

The initiative will help connect Ohioans looking for a job to a new job opportunity. Ohio To Work brings together employers, nonprofits, educators, and training providers to help Ohioans reskill and restart their careers. Individuals participating in Ohio To Work will be provided a career coach, be invited to virtual career fairs, and be connected to employers ready to hire. The first Ohio To Work initiative will be launched in Cleveland- Cuyahoga County. Ohioans can learn more at OhioToWork.com.

On [Wednesday](#), Governor Mike DeWine signed the following bills into law. Each bill will take effect in 90 days.

[House Bill 203](#), sponsored by Representative Scott Lipps, which specifies requirements for mobile dental facility operations.



[House Bill 272](#), sponsored by Representatives Scott Oelslager and Brett Hudson Hillyer, which expands court jurisdiction to any constitutional basis.

[House Bill 341](#), sponsored by Representative Timothy Ginter, which details the administration of addiction treatment drugs.

On [Thursday](#), Governor DeWine released Ohio's updated Public Health Advisory System map. New health data compiled by the Ohio Department of Health found that five counties currently have a very high risk of exposure and spread: Butler, Mercer, Montgomery, Portage and Putnam.

A total of 69 counties stayed at the same level as last week, and one county, Preble, dropped from Level 3 to Level 2.

In addition to the five Level 3 counties listed above, five additional counties meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's definition of high incidence: Athens, Delaware, Greene, Harrison, and Pickaway. Although these counties do not meet enough indicators to trigger a Red Level 3 Public Emergency, these counties have had more than 100 cases per 100,000 residents over the last two weeks which could lead to rapid virus transmission if steps are not taken to slow the spread.

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 DATA DASHBOARDS

Governor DeWine announced the state has launched the Schools Dashboard and the Children's Dashboard to provide school districts and parents the best information to make decisions about their child's education and social interactions. The Schools Dashboard will show new and cumulative COVID cases reported to schools by parents/guardians and staff. The data can be sorted by county or school district and includes students and staff. Schools are required to report cases to their assigned Local Health Department who then report to the Ohio Department of Health.

The Children's Dashboard, developed in consultation with the Ohio Children's Hospital Association, includes information about cases and hospitalizations related to COVID-19



among children aged 0-17 in Ohio by selected demographics and county of residence. Both dashboards are available at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

FLU SHOT REMINDER

Governor DeWine announced that the state of Ohio has its first, documented case of the flu in Putnam County. He reminded Ohioans of the importance of getting a flu shot this year to reduce the spread of the flu and its impact on our hospital systems. While it doesn't protect you from COVID-19, it does provide another layer of protection to keep yourself, your family, friends and communities healthy.

Those who are elderly and need help getting to their physician's office can contact their local Area Agency on Aging at 866-243-5678 to access transportation resources and other services.

Anyone without a primary healthcare provider can visit vaccinefinder.org to find nearby pharmacies and other healthcare locations offering the flu vaccine.

RAPID RESPONSE GUIDE FOR MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARMWORKERS

Governor DeWine announced that the state is releasing the [Rapid Response Guide for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers](#). This guide will support local health districts in developing culturally appropriate plans to respond to outbreaks in the migrant and seasonal farmworker communities. A copy of the guide will be available at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

In addition, the Ohio Department of Health is awarding \$2.6 million in CARES Act funding to agricultural camp operators to improve the health and safety of migrant workers worksites and camps to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. The improvements will focus on reducing housing density, installing touchless equipment, partitions, and hand washing stations. The Department of Health and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services are distributing face masks, hand sanitizer, disinfectant cleaner, and digital forehead thermometers to workers and operators.

CORONAVIRUS WASTEWATER SURVEILLANCE NETWORK

Governor DeWine also provided an update on Ohio's Coronavirus Wastewater Surveillance Network. Since mid-July the network has been monitoring income waste at wastewater treatment plants around the state to test for gene fragments of COVID-19. Ohio is currently testing in more than 30 cities across the state and will expand testing to more than 50 locations in the next month. The state will continue to closely monitor the wastewater data and ensure communities are aware of trending increases in gene copies to assist with quick response and



prevent further spread of disease. More information about the program can be found at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

HALLOWEEN

Governor DeWine reminded parents that Halloween activities will be different this year than in years past. He encouraged parents and children to wear a mask, practice social distancing, avoid large groups, and to stay home if sick. Final decisions on whether to hold or participate in trick-or-treating or other events should be made by local communities, individuals, and parents. The state has developed guidance for Halloween and it can be found at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

LOST WAGES ASSISTANCE

Governor DeWine announced that the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) has started distributing \$300 per week in Lost Wages Assistance to eligible unemployment insurance recipients. This assistance is available to Ohioans who received traditional unemployment benefits, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), Trade Readjustment Assistance, SharedWork Ohio or extended benefits for weeks ending August 1st through September 5th. PUA claimants will receive payments first, in a staggered manner with individual payments for each week they qualified for the program. For Ohioans receiving other types of unemployment benefits, there will be one retroactive payment for all weeks they qualify.

Currently ODJFS is working to complete the programming necessary to disperse payments. Updates on this process can be found at jfs.ohio.gov/lwa.

CENSUS

Governor DeWine reminded Ohioans that the deadline to complete the 2020 Census is quickly approaching. As of this morning, Ohio's self-response rate was 69.9 percent, which is above the national rate of 65.9 percent but one percentage point behind Michigan. The census, which only takes about 10 minutes to complete, impacts the state for the next 10 years, including how federal, state, and local funding is distributed and determines congressional representation.

Ohioans can complete their census by either going to 2020Census.gov or calling 1-844-330-2020.

CURRENT COVID-19 DATA

As of Friday afternoon, there are 142,596 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 4,608 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 14,687 people have



been hospitalized, including 3,161 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.