



WEEK IN REVIEW

Friday, January 8, 2021

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine Week in Review

For the week ending January 8, 2021

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 **Tuesday**, Governor DeWine recapped Phases 1A and 1B of Ohio's vaccine distribution plan. Because the availability of the vaccine remains limited in Ohio and across the country, Ohio is taking a phased approach that prioritizes the most vulnerable citizens, those in the healthcare field, and school staff members.

Phase 1A, which is currently underway, includes approximately 1 million Ohioans.

It is anticipated that vaccine distribution in Phase 1B will begin as Phase 1A begins to wind down.

Phase 1B focuses largely on those who are 65 and older. Those in this age group are most vulnerable to COVID-19 and make up more than 87 percent of Ohioans who have died from the virus. Phase 1B also includes school teachers and other school staff who will be offered the vaccine in an effort to get Ohio's children back to school as soon as possible. In total, Phase 1B includes an estimated 2.2 million people.

Details of future phases of the vaccination plan will be announced as Phases 1A and 1B progress and as Ohio receives vaccines for the future phases. Ohio is currently receiving roughly 100,000 vaccines each week, although that number could increase if more vaccines are approved for administration.

NURSING HOME VACCINATIONS



As of Sunday, approximately 61 percent of nursing homes in Ohio have been visited by a pharmacy vaccine provider. Of those locations, only approximately 40 percent of staff members have chosen to receive the vaccination. Of nursing home residents, approximately 75 to 80 percent of residents have decided to receive the vaccine.

Nursing home staff and residents who have received their first dose of vaccine will begin receiving second doses on Friday. Governor DeWine encouraged those in nursing homes who initially declined to receive the vaccine to get their first dose as part of this second round. Following this opportunity, it may be some time before a first dose is available again.

VACCINE DISCUSSIONS FOR LONG-TERM CARE PROVIDERS

The Ohio Department of Aging will be hosting live discussions to help educate long-term care providers about the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine. State and community vaccine experts will be available to answer questions about the vaccine, and participants will have the opportunity to offer input to help state leaders make decisions to guide Ohio out of the pandemic.

VIRUS VARIANT

Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff, Chief Medical Officer for the Ohio Department of Health, provided information related to the coronavirus variation that was first seen in the United Kingdom.

"Although virus variations are normal, and most do not impact the behavior of a virus, this variation is notable because it appears to be more contagious than other variants of the coronavirus," said Dr. Vanderhoff. "Fortunately, this variant doesn't appear to be more severe or to impact those who are already immune, but it worries us because a more contagious variant could lead to more people getting sick, more people being hospitalized, and more people dying."

As of Tuesday, Ohio had three times the number of COVID-19 hospitalizations that it had on November 1 and nearly seven times the number of COVID-19 hospitalizations that it had on October 1.

Dr. Vanderhoff stressed the importance of continuing Ohio's coronavirus protocols of social distancing, avoiding crowds, washing hands, wearing masks, and accepting the vaccine when available to prevent the spread of all variants of the coronavirus and to prevent further increases in hospitalizations.

VACCINE REDISTRIBUTION PLANS

The Ohio Department of Health will be issuing a directive requiring vaccine providers to develop a surplus vaccine redistribution plan. The directive follows a recent incident in which a



long-term care facility in Ohio overestimated the number of vaccine doses needed for residents and staff. Seven vials of vaccine (35 doses) were not administered and expired.

"Every vaccine dose that Ohio receives must be administered," said Governor DeWine. "Each vaccine represents a potential life saved, and it is our obligation to ensure that not a single dose is wasted."

Vaccine redistribution plans will prioritize recipients based on Phase 1A and 1B vaccine distribution criteria. If a significant number of doses remain, vaccine providers must contact the Ohio Department of Health for immediate redistribution assistance.

NEXT ROUND OF TECHCRED NOW OPEN

Lt. Governor Jon Husted announced that the seventh round of TechCred – a program that helps businesses upskill their current and incoming workforce with tech-focused credentials – is now open until January 29.

Ohio businesses can receive up to \$2,000 for each tech-focused credential earned, up to \$30,000 per employer each application period. Since the program's start, a total of 966 Ohio employers have been approved for funding, supporting the earning of 15,105 tech-focused credentials by Ohio employees.

To learn more and apply, businesses can visit TechCred.Ohio.Gov.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION RATE CUT

Lt. Governor Husted also announced that Ohio's public employers will pay \$14.8 million less in premiums this year thanks to a rate reduction from the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation that went into effect January 1.

The rate cut means approximately 3,700 counties, cities, public schools, and other public taxing districts will pay an average of 10 percent less on their annual premiums than in calendar year 2020. The reduction, made possible by declining injury trends and relatively low medical inflation costs, is the twelfth cut for public employers since 2009 and follows a 10 percent cut in 2020.

On **Wednesday**, Governor DeWine issued the following statement on the situation at the United States Capitol:

"This is an embarrassment to our country. This must stop immediately. The President should call for the demonstrators to leave our Capitol Building. The final step in the constitutional



process of electing our president has been disrupted. The stopping of the count of the Electoral College votes has occurred because the security of the U.S. Capitol has been breached by a violent mob. As a nation of laws, this is simply not acceptable. Lawlessness is not acceptable. This is an affront to our Constitution and everything we hold dear. Those who breached the Capitol breached the Constitution. Peaceful demonstrations outside the Capitol are an exercise of the demonstrators' First Amendment rights. Stopping the constitutional process by which we elect the president is not."

On [Wednesday](#), Governor DeWine and Lt. Governor Husted shared additional comments regarding Wednesday's events at the United States Capitol.

"Yesterday was a sad day. It was a dark day for this great republic. This was a direct attack on the U.S. Constitution, and everything we hold dear," said Governor DeWine. "Yesterday's actions were shameful, and all Americans need to denounce these acts. It is time we all accept the election results, and the will of the People. We need to come together as a People, and we need to work together."

OHIO COUNTY COVID DATA

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](#).

All 88 counties have a level of spread that is at least three times more than what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers high incidence. Governor DeWine encouraged Ohioans to look more closely at the chart below, which shows the number of positive cases per 1,000 residents.

PHASE 1B VACCINATIONS

Governor DeWine announced those in Phase 1B will be able to receive vaccinations beginning on Tuesday, January 19. Those 80 years of age and older will be prioritized first in this next phase, roughly totaling 420,000 Ohioans. Ohio is expected to receive 100,000 doses during the first week of distribution to Phase 1B.

"With up to 420,000 people 80 years and above, and only 100,000 doses available the first week, it will take several weeks to vaccinate those 80 years of age and older," said Governor DeWine. "Phase 1B will take a few weeks, and a lot of coordination in distribution."



Vaccines for Ohioans 80 years of age and older will be administered by physicians, local health departments, hospitals, federally qualified health centers, in-home health service providers, and some retail pharmacies. As of Thursday, the Ohio Department of Health has approximately 1,700 providers registered to distribute vaccines.

Additionally, the Ohio Department of Health will be hosting a webinar for registered providers to discuss expectations, and instructions for distribution. Additional details will be shared with registered providers in the coming days.

Governor DeWine anticipates vaccinations will be available to Ohioans 75 years of age and older beginning Monday, January 25. The following week, vaccinations will be available to those 70 years of age and older. Beginning the week of Monday, February 8, vaccinations will be available to those 65 years of age and older.

“As we include other age ranges, please know that does not mean vaccinations will be complete for the previous age range,” said Governor DeWine.

The week of January 25 will also include vaccinations for Ohioans with severe congenital, developmental, or early onset medical disorders. Additional details about distribution for this group will be forthcoming.

During the week of February 1, Governor DeWine announced that vaccinations will be available for personnel in Ohio schools. The Ohio Department of Health will send forms to Ohio superintendents to indicate their school plans to go back to in full in-person and hybrid learning by March 1, as well as indicate the number of staff they believe will choose to take the vaccination. Superintendents will also be asked if a community partner has been identified to help with the administering of the COVID-19 vaccines to school personnel.

Additional information about vaccinations can be found at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

This revised order clarifies that in-person compassionate care visits are permitted in nursing homes and similar facilities. The new order does not change required precautions all visitors must take, including but not limited to, wearing of a facial covering and social distancing.

BROADBAND OHIO CONNECTIVITY GRANT

Lt. Governor Husted announced that the deadline for the BroadbandOhio Connectivity Grant, which provided \$50 million to schools to help them purchase equipment for students to access the internet, has been extended. This program helps schools to fund everything from hotspots, to Wi-Fi, to access points on school busses. The grant was funded using Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) from the CARES Act.



The deadline to spend these funds was originally December 30, 2020, however, a second federal stimulus bill was signed at the of December, which extended the CRF expenditure **deadline an additional year, until December 31, 2021**. As a result, this administration extended the deadline for the BroadbandOhio Connectivity Grant to the same date, December 31, 2021.

School districts now have more time to spend these funds for services they provide to students to keep them online.

More information about the grant program can be found at ohio-k12.help.

AMENDED HEALTH ORDER

Governor DeWine announced that Ohio Department of Health Director Stephanie McCloud signed the [Sixth Amended Director's Order to Limit Access to Ohio's Nursing Homes and Similar Facilities, with Exceptions](#).

On **Monday**, Governor DeWine signed [Senate Bill 175](#), sponsored by Senator Tim Schaffer, and issued a statement partially outlined below.

"I have always believed that it is vital that law-abiding citizens have the right to legally protect themselves when confronted with a life-threatening situation. While campaigning for Governor, I expressed my support for removing the ambiguity in Ohio's self-defense law, and Senate Bill 175 accomplishes this goal. That is why I have signed this bill today.

"I am very disappointed, however, that the legislature did not include in this bill the essential provisions that I proposed to make it harder for dangerous criminals to illegally possess and use guns."

The full statement is available [here](#).

Governor DeWine also signed the following bills throughout the week.

[House Bill 1](#), [House Bill 210](#), [House Bill 388](#), [House Bill 409](#), [House Bill 442](#), [House Bill 450](#), [House Bill 674](#), [Senate Bill 9](#), [Senate Bill 10](#), [Senate Bill 68](#), [Senate Bill 276](#), [Senate Bill 331](#), [House Bill 7](#), [House Bill 33](#), [House Bill 32](#), [House Bill 231](#), and [Senate Bill 263](#).

As of Friday, there have been 678,441 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 8,589 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 40,787 people have been



hospitalized, including 6,126 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.