COVID-19 Update: Curfew & Vaccine Updates, Senior Housing Clinics

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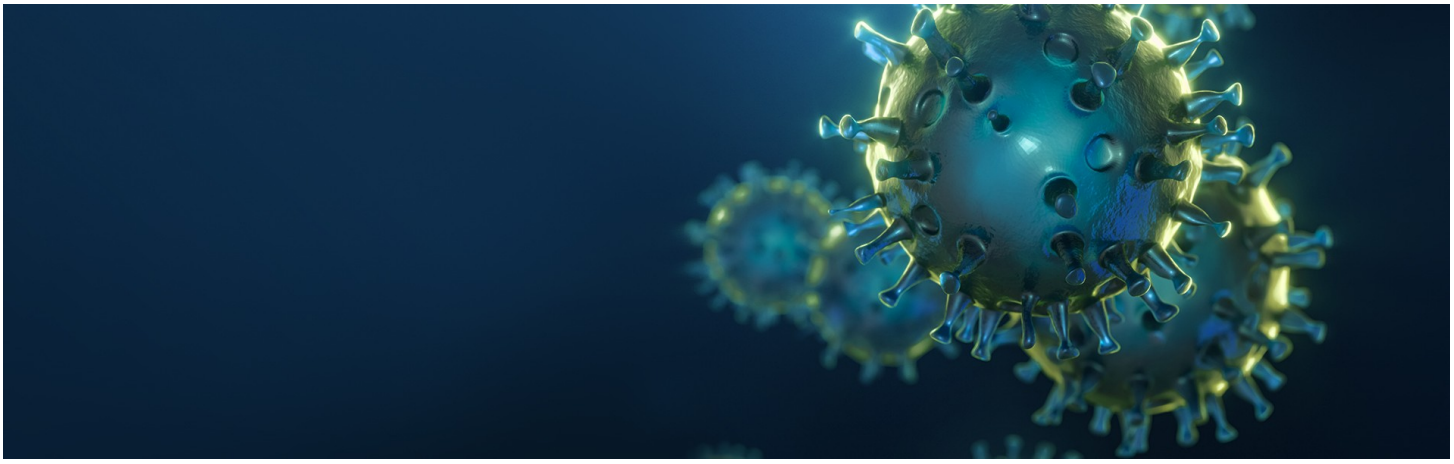

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted today provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CURFEW UPDATE

Governor DeWine today announced a new plan for Ohio's 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew that is contingent on the hospital utilization statewide.

The Ohio Department of Health has recommended that Ohio's curfew be amended to 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. when COVID-related hospital utilization drops below 3,500 for seven consecutive days. As of today, hospitalizations have been below 3,500 for the past six days. If hospitalizations remain at this level for a seventh consecutive day, Ohio's curfew will be amended on Thursday and will be in effect from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. for at least two weeks.

If hospital utilization subsequently drops below 3,000 for seven consecutive days, Ohio's curfew would be amended to 12 a.m. to 5 a.m. for at least two weeks. If hospitalizations drops below 2,500 for seven consecutive days, the Ohio Department of Health would recommend lifting the curfew.

If, at any point, the number of COVID-related hospitalizations begins to rise, health officials could reinstitute the appropriate curfew measures.

"When our COVID hospitalizations are above 2,500, which is more than three times Ohio's peak in a typical flu season, our hospitals strain in their ability to deliver other care, especially routine diagnostic and procedural care," said Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff, Chief Medical Officer for the Ohio Department of Health. "When cases are above 3,500, our hospitals are highly stressed as evidenced by local and regional diversions and the greater need for transfers."

VACCINE UPDATE

Ohio has been averaging about 146,000 first doses coming into Ohio every week. As Ohio's Phase 1A begins to wind down, more doses will be available for those in Phase 1B.

Ohio is second in the nation for the number of people vaccinated in nursing homes, however, because not all residents and staff are choosing to receive the vaccine, Ohio will begin directing approximately 77,000 vaccines set aside to use in nursing homes to others in Phase 1A and 1B.

Ohio has put focus on vaccinating members of the public living in congregate settings because these individuals are especially vulnerable to contracting COVID-19. In Ohio's state-run developmental centers, 89 percent of residents have accepted the vaccine; 73 percent of long-term patients in state-run psychiatric hospitals have accepted the vaccine; a total of 92 percent of veterans in state-run veterans homes have accepted the vaccine. Of those with developmental disabilities not living in state-run facilities, 5,500 people have been vaccinated so far.

SCHOOL STAFF VACCINES

Next week, Ohio will make vaccine available to 91,000 K-12 teachers and school personnel who are necessary to provide in-person education to students. Like other groups eligible in Phase 1B of Ohio's vaccination program, this will be a rolling process beginning with Cincinnati Public Schools which will begin offering vaccinations to their staff later this week.

Due to the scarcity of vaccine, the process will take weeks, but Ohio's goal is to have all first doses administered by the end of February. To be eligible to receive vaccine, districts had to commit to remaining or returning to in-person learning full-time or in a hybrid model by March 1.

Districts that are eligible to begin receiving vaccines next week should have already received notification, and the rest should be notified of their scheduled dates by the end of the week.

Teachers and staff with questions should contact their administrator.

Additional Resources:

- List of schools included in vaccine distribution Week 1

- COVID-19 Fact Sheet for K-12 School Staff Vaccination Program

SENIOR HOUSING CLINICS

Governor DeWine announced today that, in pursuit of fairness and equity in the distribution of the scarce vaccines, Ohio will be delivering vaccines directly into affordable senior housing locations starting the week of February 8. These senior housing facilities are home to several thousand older Ohioans throughout the state and are often residential clusters with apartment buildings ranging in units from 30 to over 200.

The Ohio Department of Health will be working with local partners to offer assistance through onsite clinics. These clinics will help ease the burden for many seniors having trouble navigating the registration process and arranging transportation.

PFIZER VACCINE DOSES

In many instances, a vial of the Pfizer vaccine can provide six vaccine doses. Some vaccine providers have been able to extract this sixth dose as much as 90 percent of the time based on technique and supplies. These supplies, however, have had limited availability nationally. The key to getting the sixth dose is having access to syringes with low or zero dead volume and, when clinically appropriate, using a one-inch vaccine needle.

The Ohio Department of Health surveyed best practices across the state and have determined that it is possible to reliably extract a sixth dose using a hybrid model of traditional syringes for four doses and the less-available low dead volume syringes for doses five and six.

This approach conserves limited special syringe supply. The Ohio Department of Health will be working with vaccine providers to share this information and provide further guidance to assist them with implementation.

OHIO-BASED COMPANY ON FRONT LINES OF VACCINE DISTRIBUTION

Lt. Governor Jon Husted highlighted a company out of Athens, Ohio that has become a critical component of the nation's vaccine distribution infrastructure. Stirling Ultracold manufactures one-of-kind, portable Ultra-Low Temperature (ULT) freezers, which are used to transfer the vaccines from the manufacturer to local hospitals, pharmacies, and other healthcare providers to safely store until being administered.

During today's press conference, the Lt. Governor presented the portable freezer, which is capable of storing both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines for extended periods of time. The freezer is currently set at -71° C (-95.8° F).

The company is headquartered in Athens, Ohio, where its technology was developed and where the products are manufactured today. Stirling Ultracold has expanded its employee base by 30 percent over the last three months and now employs 200 Ohioans.

JobsOhio and the Ohio Development Service Agency provided critical early support for Stirling Ultracold to be able to grow and accelerate its manufacturing capability to help in the vaccination effort.

TECHCRED APPLICATION CLOSING

The Lt. Governor also reminded businesses, both big and small, that the January TechCred application closes on January 29 at 3:00 p.m. TechCred helps Ohioans obtain new skills and improves Ohio's workforce by reimbursing employers up to $2,000 for each technology-focused credential earned by a current or prospective employee.

CURRENT CASE DATA

In total, there are 872,918 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 reported in Ohio and 10,856 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 45,276 people have been hospitalized throughout the pandemic, including 6,600 admissions to intensive care units. In-depth data can be accessed by visiting coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Video of today's full update, including versions with foreign language translation, can be viewed on the Ohio Channel's YouTube page.

For more information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.