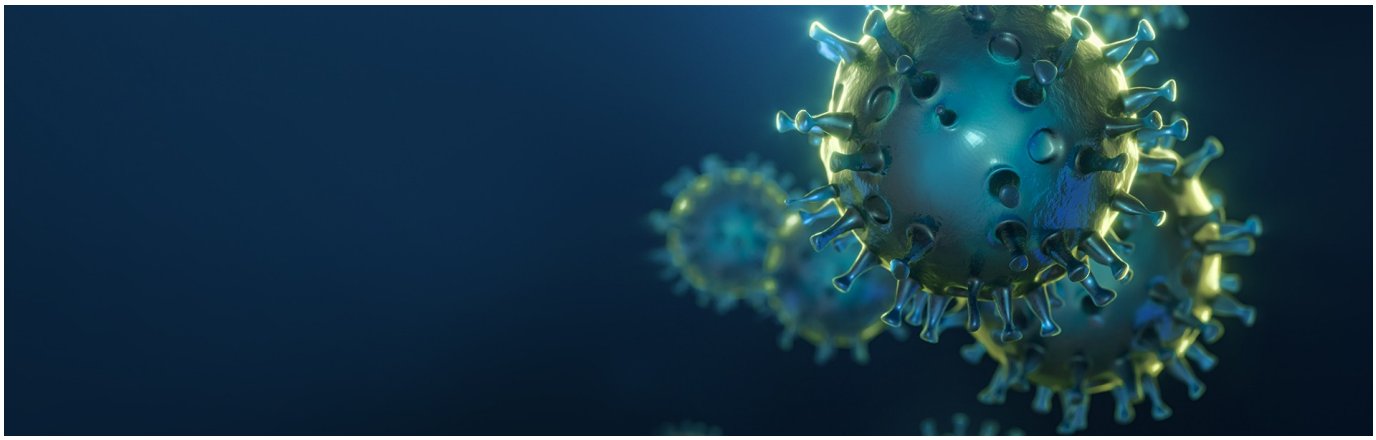
Reagent and Testing Swabs, Contact Tracing, Foster Care

April 24, 2020



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

REAGENT AND TESTING SWAB UPDATE:

Reagent:

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.

"This is an exciting, new partnership, and we look forward to working with the Thermo Fisher team and its 1,500 employees working in Ohio," said Governor DeWine.

“Governor DeWine has worked tirelessly to address the critical need to increase diagnostic testing across his state, and our teams have worked together to develop a plan to meet that goal,” said Marc N. Casper, chairman, president and CEO of Thermo Fisher Scientific. “Through his leadership and

determination, labs across the state will have access to reagents and instruments needed to accelerate testing and control the spread of the virus. We are committed to helping the Governor in this effort to protect Ohio citizens and help save lives."

Testing Swabs:

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.

ROE Dental Laboratory typically produces dental restorations, such as crowns, dentures, and dental surgical guides. The Manufacturing Alliance helped ROE Dental secure the specifications to manufacture swabs from Formlabs, a 3-D printing company in Toledo.

ROE Dental Laboratory has invested in more than 36 additional 3-D printers, which nearly doubles its fleet, and will bring nearly 100 employees back to work to produce swabs around the clock while practicing safe social distancing.

"We are very appreciative to ROE Dental for providing these much-needed supplies for Ohioans. Because of their efforts and other efforts underway, Ohio will be producing a million swabs in the coming weeks," said Governor DeWine. "Public-private partnerships like this represent how, here in Ohio, we are all in this together. We believe that these efforts will not only increase our capacity to test, but they will also provide us with a stable supply chain."

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.

CONTACT TRACING:

The increased testing capacity in Ohio will also allow for enhanced contact exposure tracing throughout the state.

"Voluntary contact exposure tracing is one of the strongest weapons we have to help keep our families, our friends, and ourselves healthy," said Governor DeWine. "For several weeks, we have been recruiting community health workers to conduct this vital voluntary tracing."

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.

FOSTER CARE:

Governor DeWine announced today 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.

"For many of these young people, their future looks uncertain because of COVID-19, whether their plan was to start a career or pursue higher education," said Governor DeWine. "This program will provide these youth with a safety net during these unprecedented times and will ensure that no child leaves foster care during this pandemic without a safe place to call home."

This option is also available for young people enrolled in the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' Bridges program, Ohio's foster care to age 21 program, to help them maintain their housing, jobs, and education.

CURRENT OHIO DATA:

There are 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.

Video of today's full update, including versions with foreign language closed captioning, 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.

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