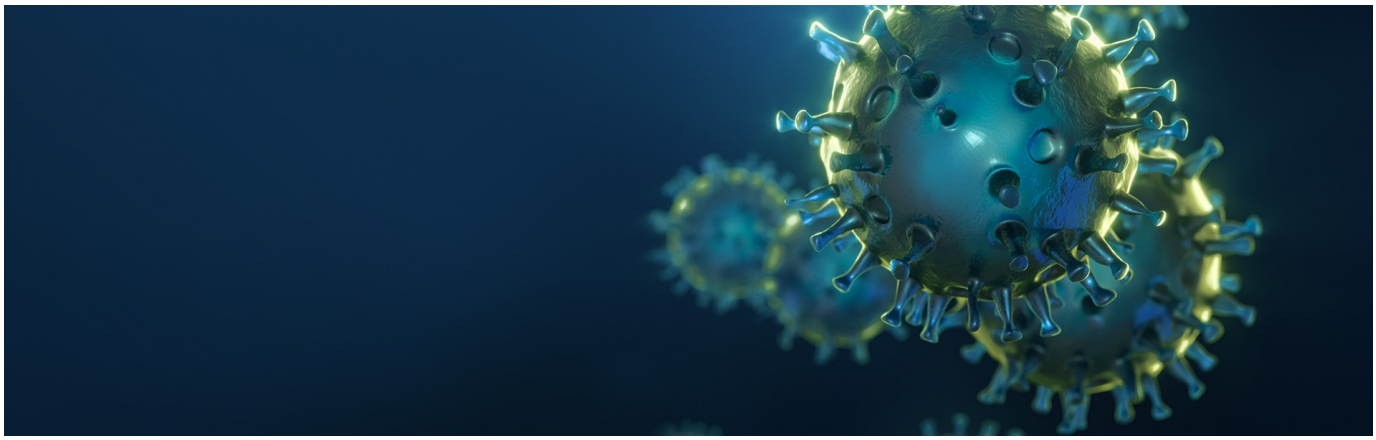
Governor DeWine Extends School Closure Order

March 30, 2020



(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine today announced that the Ohio Department of Health will extend its order to keep schools closed through the end of April.

Ohio's previous order was set to expire on April 3, 2020. The new order will extend the closure through May 1, 2020.

"There is the real possibility that our schools could stay closed longer than this, but we want to give parents and teachers as much notice and flexibility as we can," said Governor DeWine. "Schools should continue to do what they're doing now -- providing the best remote learning that they can, serving meals to students in new ways, and planning for what the rest of the year may look like."

HOMELESSNESS TEAM:

Governor DeWine announced today that he has formed a "Homelessness Team" to help people who may rely on homeless shelters, domestic shelters, group homes, and recovery housing - all of which pose challenges for social distancing.

The Coalition on Housing and Homelessness in Ohio, the Ohio Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and Ohio Recovery Housing are working as part of this team to provide localized guidelines for these shelters. They will also work to incorporate these populations into the state's ongoing planning for access to healthcare through community health centers and planning for quarantine or isolation.

In addition, the Ohio Housing Financing Agency Board has approved $5 million in unrestricted Agency General Fund Reserves to be used for Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing funds and Emergency Rental Assistance that will be distributed through the state's nine Continua of Care.

The Ohio Development Services Agency has also established a $1 million Emergency Shelter Gap Funding Program to support emergency shelter providers during the COVID-19 state of emergency. The Development Services Agency will reallocate Community Development Block Grant dollars to emergency shelter providers to meet immediate needs for homeless individuals and households.

Further, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services is directing some federal opioid response funding to help people living in recovery housing or engaged in treatment to maintain their current housing and prevent homelessness. Federal funds will be deployed to cover additional expenses that adult care facilities are taking on because of COVID-19.

The CDC guidelines and information about all of these funding opportunities are available on coronavirus.ohio.gov, and anyone with questions can email COVID19Housing@mha.ohio.gov

BUSINESS ADVISORY GROUP:

Governor DeWine also announced today that he will develop a business advisory group to convene over the phone to:

1. Ensure businesses are doing everything they can to keep their employees safe;
2. Provide recommendations (to the greatest extent possible) to mitigate the negative impact the COVID-19 crisis is having on our economy in Ohio;
3. Provide recommendations on building a platform for economic recovery.

More details on this group will be released in the near future.

PRISONS AND PPE:

Due to the shortage of PPE in Ohio, the inmates incarcerated at Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction prisons have begun making some of these necessary healthcare supplies.

So far, inmates have made 500 hospital gowns and will make 44,000 more when they get additional fabric. Inmates will also begin making cough masks – similar to surgical masks -- and will be able to make 5,000 a day up to a total of 2 million. They will also make hand sanitizer. and face shields. Each prison with its own workshop will also make masks for the people in those prisons.

CURRENT OHIO DATA:

There are 1,933 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 39 deaths. A total of 475 people have been hospitalized, including 163 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.

NATIONAL DOCTORS' DAY:

Enjoy this tributeto Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton, MD, MPH, in honor of National Doctors' Day.

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