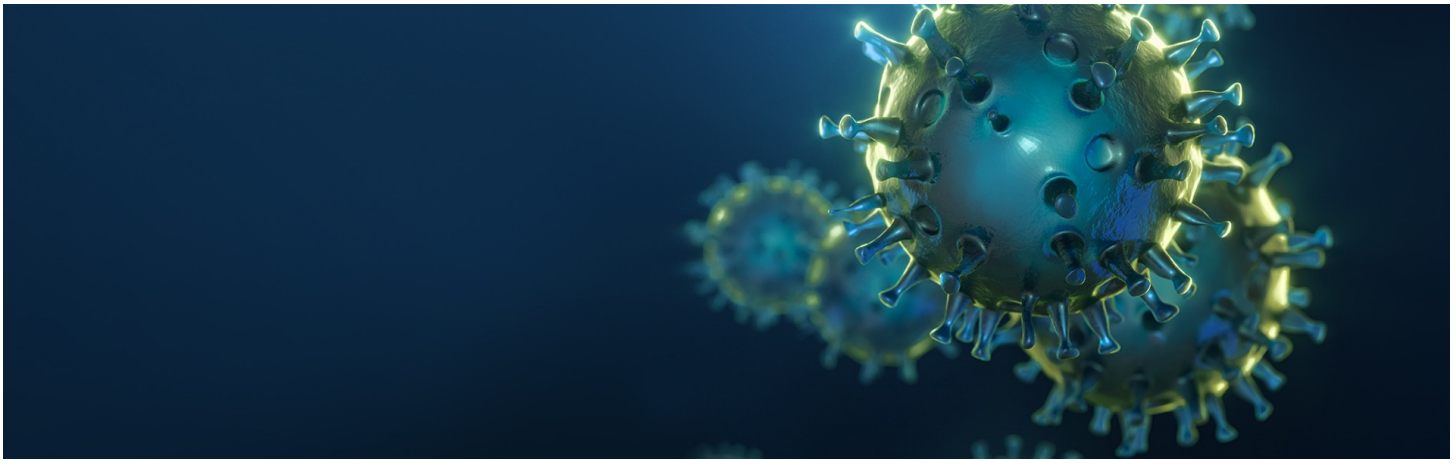
COVID-19 Update: Next Vaccination Phase, Local Health Departments and Hospitals, New Maps

December 23, 2020



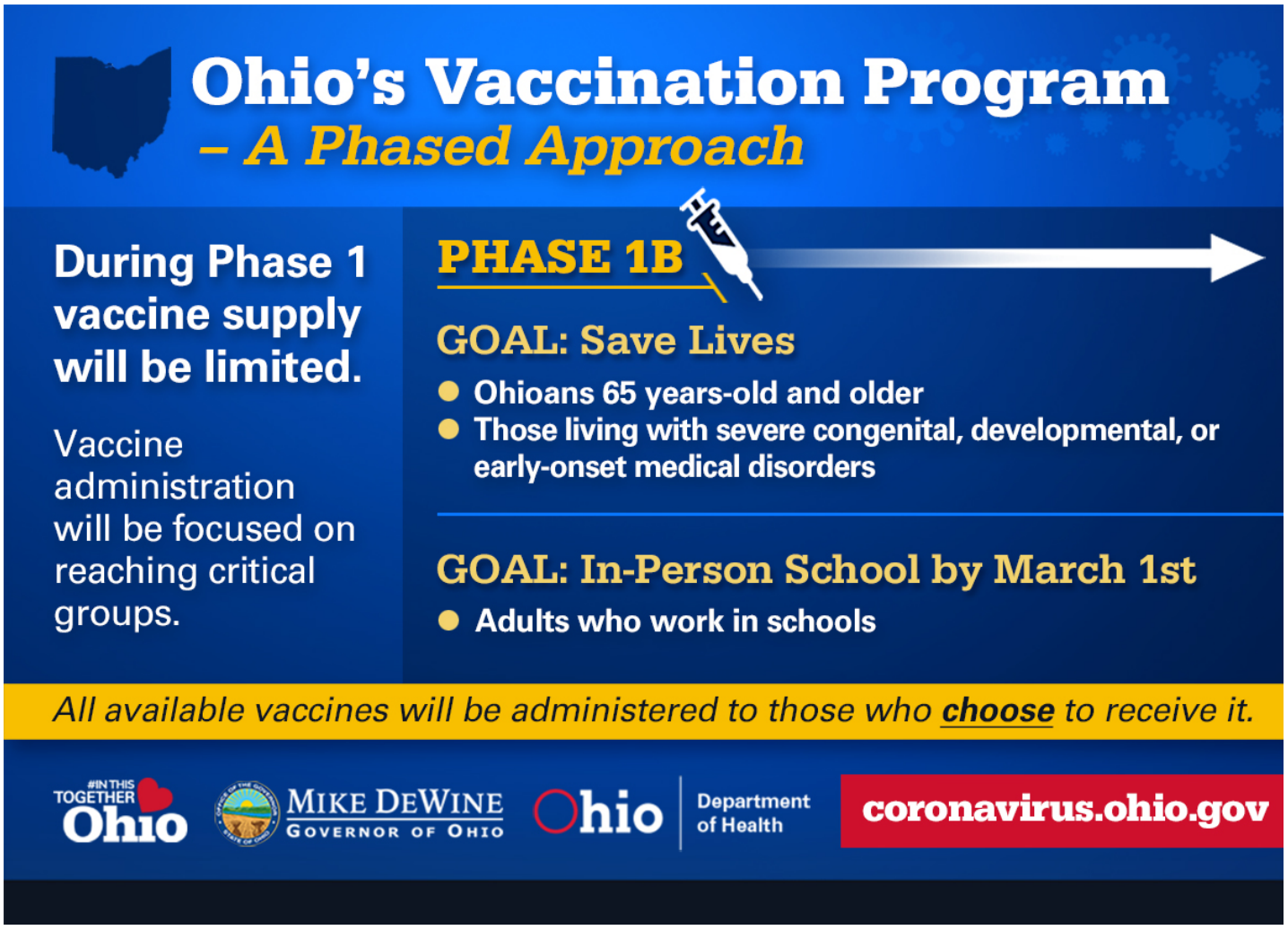
(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted today provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NEXT VACCINATION PHASE

Governor DeWine announced the goals of Phase 1B of COVID-19 vaccine distribution are to save lives and for schools to be fully open by March 1st.

“Ohioans in the 65 and older category make up just under 87% of COVID deaths. This is a stunning number, and it’s critical that we protect our older Ohioans,” said Governor DeWine.

In the next phase, vaccines will be available to those who choose to receive them who are 65 years or older or those living with severe congenital, developmental, or early-onset medical disorders. Additionally, adults working in Ohio's schools will have the option to receive the vaccine. This is intended to assist schools in returning to in-person learning.



Additional details about the next phase are forthcoming.

The following Phase 1A members are currently receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. This phase includes health care workers and personnel, nursing homes residents and staff, assisted living facilities residents and staff, psychiatric hospital patients and staff, people with developmental disabilities and those with mental illness who live in group homes or centers and staff at those locations, Ohio veterans homes residents and staff, and EMS responders.

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS AND HOSPITALS

The local health departments and hospitals will assist with managing mass vaccination clinics as more vaccines are shipped to Ohio.

"Ohio's public health departments and hospitals are experts at managing mass vaccination clinics, and I am thankful we can turn to them to begin vaccinating Ohioans against COVID-19," said Governor DeWine.

Christina Conover, director of nursing for the Clark County Combined Health District, joined today's public briefing to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and encouraged other first responders and health care workers to do the same.

Dr. Kevin Miller, emergency department physician, chief of Sugarcreek Fire Department and Tuscarawas County EMS director, and Dr. Jeffrey Cameron, Tuscarawas County coroner and emergency room doctor, both received their COVID-19 vaccine at the public briefing. Both doctors discussed their experiences in the emergency room throughout the pandemic and why they chose to receive the vaccine.

Additionally, advanced EMTs and paramedics will assist in administering the COVID-19 vaccine.

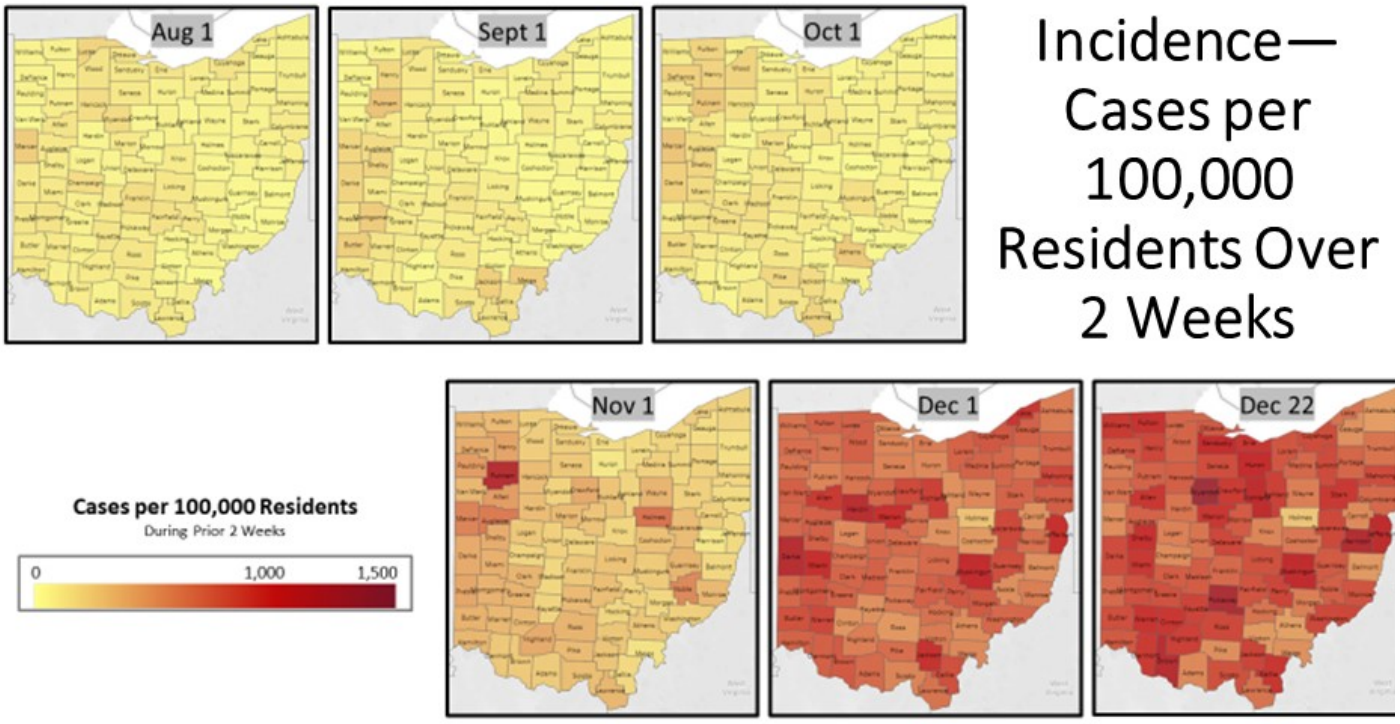
Dr. Carol Cunningham, an emergency room physician and Ohio's State Medical Director for Emergency Medical Services, received a COVID-19 vaccine administered by Dan Samf, a paramedic with the Kirtland Fire Department.

Also Charles Shepherd, a therapeutic program worker at Twin Valley Psychiatric Hospital, joined today's public briefing to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and discussed the impact the vaccine will have at state psychiatric hospitals. .

NEW COVID-19 MAPS

Governor DeWine shared two new maps from the Ohio Department of Health for tracking how severe the spread of COVID-19 is in Ohio.

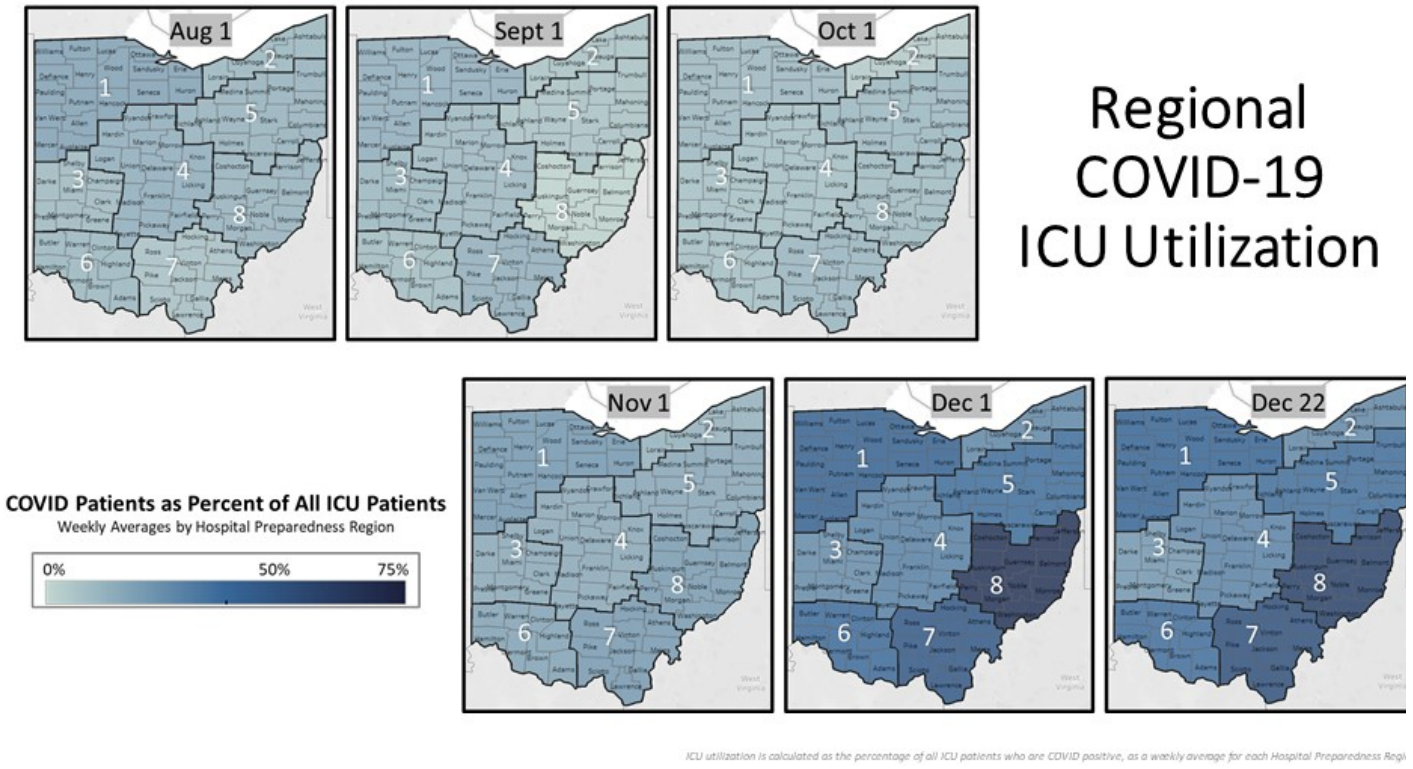
The first map measures cases per capita over time. The time-lapse map is based on the list of high incidence counties and indicates the levels of spread from week to week.



Cases per capita values are pulled from historical data as of the dates labeled, and exclude incarcerated individuals.

The second map shows each Hospital Preparedness Region and what percent of the overall ICU patient population are COVID patients.

“At the beginning of August, we were at about 12% statewide, or 1 in 8 patients in the ICU was a COVID patient,” said Governor DeWine. “Now, we’re at 31% or about 1 in 3 patients in the ICU are a COVID patient.”



Both maps will be updated weekly on Thursdays at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

BWC "WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED"

Lt. Governor Husted today announced that the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) is distributing another 23 million Ohio-made masks to help support the state's workforce. Shipments began in November and are expected to continue through June 2021. In October, the BWC contracted with Buckeye Mask Company, in Cleveland, for 10 million masks, and with Career Development and Placement Strategies, also in Cleveland, for 13 million masks.

Today's announcement marks the second round of mask distribution launched by the BWC, which sent out nearly 23 million masks over the summer and fall to assist in weakening the spread of COVID-19.

SUPPORT LOCAL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

With Christmas days away, Lt. Governor Husted reminded Ohioans to consider "shopping local" this holiday season to help Ohio retailers and small businesses. In addition, to support local restaurants, many Ohio food establishments offer delivery and take-out options.

For ideas on how to support local, visit Ohio.org.

FOODBANKS

First Lady Fran DeWine encouraged Ohioans to consider donating to The Ohio Association of Foodbanks, which serves all 88 counties.

More information about how to donate can be found at OhioFoodbanks.org/Coronavirus.

CHILD CARE STUDY

Since reopening child care at the end of May, Ohio has participated in two significant research studies on the spread of COVID in child care settings. The results of both studies found that child care did not lead to an increased risk for contracting COVID.

In October, Yale University released their findings from a survey of nearly 100,000 child care educators across the nation, including more than 5,000 in Ohio. This study found the work of child care providers to sanitize, wash hands, stay masked, and social distance greatly impacted the safety of children in their care.

The Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation also commissioned a study of Ohio child care facilities through Case Western Reserve University. The results of this study will be released soon, confirming the findings of the Yale study.

Through parent and child care worker surveys and interviews; symptom tracking of workers, children, and parents; and hundreds of COVID tests of child care workers and families from August to November, researchers from Case Western found no link between child care and an increased risk of contracting COVID-19. In fact, just 2 asymptomatic positives were found among the nearly 400 COVID tests, which is a positivity rate of just 0.5 percent.

"I want to thank all of our child care workers for their efforts over the past nine months, said Governor DeWine. "You all have truly risen to the occasion to protect the children and families you serve, and just as importantly, yourselves."

CURRENT CASE DATA

In total, there are 644,822 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 reported in Ohio and 8,361 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 36,025 people have been hospitalized throughout the pandemic, including 5,640 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.