Ohio | Department of Health

Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt.Governor

Lance D. Himes, Interim Director

DIRECTOR'S ORDER

Re: Director's Order that Reopens County Fairs and Animal Exhibitions, with Exceptions

I, Lance Himes, Interim Director of the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), pursuant to the authority granted to me in R.C. 3701.13 to "make special orders…for preventing the spread of contagious or infectious diseases" **Order** the following to prevent the spread of COVID-19 into the State of Ohio:

1. **Preamble:** While the corona virus has made it impossible to hold fairs in the way we have in the past, they are of such importance to communities that every effort should be made to preserve the Junior Fair competitions and exhibits, as well as the open class (open to adults) events and competitions. The sacrifices and incredible efforts that Ohioans have undertaken, make it possible to begin to lift the mandatory requirements and restrictions that were needed during the initial phase of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The adjustment of these orders is able to proceed based upon the facts and the science existing at this time in Ohio, however if the situation continues to improve, then more restrictions will be lifted, and if the situation deteriorates additional targeted restrictions will need to be made. While government can set the baseline, it should be understood that these orders set forth the minimum acts that must be taken and if people do more than the minimum to act safely, it will benefit everyone.

2. **County Fairs to reopen.** County Fairs are permitted to reopen within the State so long as all safety standards are met. Animal exhibitions on county fairgrounds, whether currently closed or open, are also permitted to be held and should comply with the guidance in this Order and any other applicable Director of Health Orders. Businesses and operations shall continue to comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Order, including by maintaining six-foot social distancing for both employees and members of the public when possible, including, but not limited to, when anyone is standing in line.

3. **Elderly people and those who are vulnerable as a result of illness should take additional precautions.** People at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19, including elderly people and those who are sick, are urged to stay in their residence to the extent possible except as necessary to seek medical care. According to CDC, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 include people who are sixty-five years or older and people of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

    a. People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma;
    b. People who have serious heart conditions;
    c. People who are immune compromised;
    d. People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher);
    e. People with diabetes;
    f. People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; and
    g. People with liver disease.

4. **Facial Coverings (Masks).** Businesses must allow all customers, patrons, visitors, contractors, vendors and similar individuals to use facial coverings, except for specifically documented legal, life, health or safety considerations and limited documented security considerations. Businesses must require all employees to wear facial coverings, except for one of the following reasons:

    a. Facial coverings in the work setting are prohibited by law or regulation;
    b. Facial coverings are in violation of documented industry standards;
    c. Facial coverings are not advisable for health reasons;
    d. Facial coverings are in violation of the business's documented safety policies;
    e. Facial coverings are not required when the employee works alone in an assigned work area; or
    f. There is a functional (practical) reason for an employee not to wear a facial covering in the workplace.

    Businesses must provide written justification, upon request, explaining why an employee is not required to wear a facial covering in the workplace. At a minimum, facial coverings (masks) should be cloth/fabric and cover an individual's nose, mouth, and chin.

5. **Social Distancing Requirements.** For purposes of this Order, Social Distancing Requirements includes maintaining at least six-foot social distancing from other individuals, washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer, covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands), regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces, and not shaking hands.

    a. **Required measures.** Businesses and Operations should take proactive measures to ensure compliance with Social Distancing Requirements, including where possible:

        i. **Designate six-foot distances.** Designating with signage, tape, or by other means six-foot spacing for employees and customers in line to maintain appropriate distance;

        ii. **Hand sanitizer and sanitizing products.** Having hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers; and

        iii. **Online and remote access.** Posting online whether a facility is open and how best to reach the facility and continue services by phone or remotely.

6. **Sector Specific COVID-19 Information and Checklist for County Fairs and Animal Exhibitions.** Businesses and employers, whether currently open or reopening, are to take the following actions:

    a. Large gatherings

        i. Fair boards and managers should conduct the fair in a manner that discourages the large gathering of people on the midway or on other parts of the fair grounds. Where possible, the fair should provide one-way traffic in buildings or other areas, where doing so will help people maintain social distancing.

b. Livestock competitions

i. Participants, spectators, and judges shall, when possible, maintain a distance of six feet between each other.
ii. Because judges need to examine the animal and thus will be close to the participants, it is recommended that judges wear masks at least during that part of the judging.
iii. Family members of the participants shall have priority in the viewing area.
iv. Each family should group together in the viewing area, and there should be six feet between families.
v. Microphones shall be sanitized after each person uses the microphone.
vi. The above guidance shall also be used during livestock auctions. The fair board should consider the use of a virtual auction, although this is not required. Priority seating at auctions shall be family members of participants and buyers.

c. Grandstand

i. The number of spectators shall be limited to one-half the seated capacity of the grandstand.
ii. Notwithstanding this, no grandstand event shall have more than 2,500 seated spectators.
iii. A distance of six feet should be maintained between seated spectators with the exception of family members who are encouraged to sit together.

d. Non-livestock exhibitions

i. Non-livestock exhibitions and judging shall, where applicable, follow the same rules as those for animal exhibitions.

e. Barns

i. The fair barns shall be open as much as possible to allow good ventilation. This shall be true for all other buildings, as well.

f. Campgrounds

i. Campgrounds should follow standards outlined in the "Ohio COVID-19 Responsible RestartOhio" plan for camping and campgrounds. Family units should stay together as much as possible away from other family units.

g. Food

i. Food concessions shall comply with the standard RestartOhio COVID-19 rules for restaurants. These include six-foot spacing marks for those in line, no self-serve areas, condiments placed on food by server or in self-contained packets, and if there is a seating area, the tables/benches must be six feet apart to assure distance between parties.

h. Sanitation

i. In addition to the regular restrooms, the fair shall provide sanitation stations at convenient places throughout the fairgrounds. These stations shall include sanitizer. These must be placed near food concessions and in barns. These must be maintained so that hand sanitizer is always available.

i. Physical Contact

i. All fair goers, participants, and judges should avoid physical contact with others and should refrain from shaking hands, "high 5's," etc.

j. Harness racing

i. The Fair must follow guidelines established in the "Protocols for a Safe Return to Racing."

k. Good hygiene

i. Fair board members, staff, volunteers, exhibitors, vendors, and participants must all follow good hygiene that is informed by the corona virus danger: wash hands frequently, use hand sanitizer, cough into sleeve. Attempt to avoid gathering in groups and attempt to maintain social distancing. -Individuals should perform a daily health assessment and stay home if you have a fever, cough, or other signs of possible corona virus.

l. Amusement rides

i. If the fair wishes to have amusement rides, it should comply with all orders of the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

7. **Duration.** This Order shall be effective immediately and remains in full force and effect until 11:59 p.m. on October 21, 2020, unless the Director of the Ohio Department of Health rescinds or modifies this Order at a sooner time and date.

COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death, is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which is a new strain of coronavirus that had not been previously identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person. The virus is spread between individuals who are in close contact with each other (within about six feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It may be possible that individuals can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes.

On January 23, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Journal Entry making COVID-19 a Class A reportable disease in Ohio.

On January 28, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health hosted the first statewide call with local health departments and healthcare providers regarding COVID-19.

On January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern.

On January 31, 2020, Health and Human Services Secretary, Alex M. Azar II, declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19.

On February 1, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a statewide Health Alert Network to provide local health departments and healthcare providers with updated guidance for COVID-19 and revised Person Under Investigation (PUI) criteria.

On February 3, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health trained over 140 personnel to staff a call center for COVID-19, in the event it was needed.

On February 5, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health began updating and notifying the media of the number of PUIs in Ohio every Tuesday and Thursday.

On February 6, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health updated all agency assistant directors and chiefs of staff on COVID-19 preparedness and status during the Governor's cabinet meeting.

On February 7, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency met to conduct advance planning for COVID-19.

On February 13, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health conducted a Pandemic Tabletop Exercise with State agencies to review responsive actions should there be a pandemic in Ohio.

On February 14, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health held a conference call with health professionals across the state. The purpose of the call was to inform and engage the healthcare community in Ohio. Presentations were provided by the Department of Health, Hamilton County Public Health, and the Ohio State University.

On February 27, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency briefed the directors of State agencies during the Governor's cabinet meeting regarding preparedness and the potential activation of the Emergency Operations Center.

On February 28, 2020, the "Governor DeWine, Health Director Update COVID-19 Prevention and Preparedness Plan" was sent to a broad range of associations representing healthcare, dental, long-term care, K-12 schools, colleges and universities, business, public transit, faith-based organizations, non-profit organizations, and local governments.

On March 2, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health activated a Joint Information Center to coordinate COVID-19 communications.

On March 5, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health hosted the Governor's Summit on COVID-19 Preparedness, a meeting with the Governor, cabinet agency directors, local health department commissioners, and their staff.

On March 6, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health opened a call center to answer questions from the public regarding COVID-19.

On March 9, 2020, testing by the Department of Health confirmed that three (3) patients were positive for COVID-19 in the State of Ohio. This confirms the presence of a potentially dangerous condition which may affect the health, safety and welfare of citizens of Ohio.

On March 9, 2020, the Ohio Emergency Management Agency activated the Emergency Operations Center.

On March 9, 2020, the Governor Declared a State of Emergency in Executive Order 2020-01D.

On March 11, 2020, the head of the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

On March 11, 2020, testing by the Ohio Department of Health confirmed that one (1) more patient was positive for COVID-19 in the State of Ohio.

On March 11, 2020, the Ohio Departments of Health and Veterans Services issued a Joint Directors' Order to limit access to Ohio nursing homes and similar facilities.

On March 15, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order to limit access to Ohio's jails and detention facilities.

On March 15, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order to limit the sale of food and beverages, liquor, beer and wine to carry-out and delivery only.

On March 15, 2020, the CDC issued Interim Guidance for mass gatherings or large community events, stating that such events that consist of 50 or more people should be cancelled or postponed.

On March 16, 2020 the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order closing polling locations for the March 17, 2020 primary election.

On March 17, 2020 the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order for the management of non-essential surgeries and procedures throughout Ohio.

On March 17, 2020 the Ohio Department of Health issued an Amended Director's Order to limit and/or prohibit mass gatherings and the closure of venues in the State of Ohio.

On March 19, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order closing hair salons, nail salons, barber shops, tattoo parlors, body piercing locations, and massage therapy locations.

On March 21, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order closing older adult day care services and senior centers.

On March 21, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order closing family entertainment centers and internet cafes.

On March 22, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order that all persons are to stay at home unless engaged in essential work or activity.

On March 24, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order that closed facilities providing child care services.

On March 30, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued an Amended Director's Order that closed all K-12 schools in the State of Ohio.

On April 2, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued an Amended Director's Order that all persons are to stay at home unless engaged in essential work or activity.

On April 30, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued the Stay Safe Ohio Order that reopened businesses, with exceptions, and continued a stay healthy and safe at home order.

Multiple areas of the United States are experiencing "community spread" of the virus that causes COVID-19. Community spread, defined as the transmission of an illness for which the source is unknown, means that isolation of known areas of infection is no longer enough to control spread.

The CDC reports that people are most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest) however some spread might be possible before people show symptoms although that is not the main way the virus spreads.

Mass gatherings (10 or more persons) increase the risk of community transmission of the virus COVID-19.

Accordingly, I hereby **ORDER** that county fairs and animal exhibitions may reopen or continue to operate as set forth in this Order. This Order shall remain in full force and effect until 11:59 p.m. on October 21, 2020, unless the Director of the Ohio Department of Health rescinds or modifies this Order at a sooner time and date. To the extent any public official enforcing this Order has questions regarding what services are prohibited under this Order, the Director of Health hereby delegates to local health departments the authority to answer questions in writing and consistent with this Order.

Lance D. Himes
Interim Director of Health

June 16, 2020