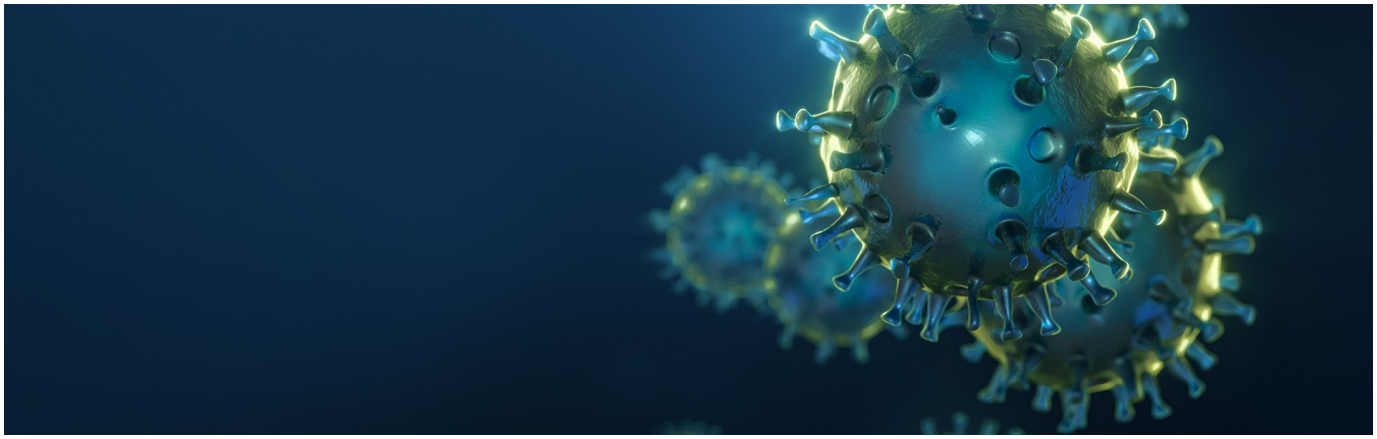
Ohio Records First COVID-19 Death; Senior Centers, Adult Day Cares to Close

March 20, 2020



(COLUMBUS, Ohio)— Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, today announced that a Lucas County man has died from COVID-19.

The death of the 76-year-old man is the first death due to COVID-19 in Ohio.

There are currently 169 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in 28 Ohio counties including: Ashland (1), Ashtabula (1), Belmont (2), Butler (12), Clark (1), Coshocton (2), Cuyahoga (69), Darke (1), Delaware (2), Franklin (14), Geauga (1), Hamilton (7), Huron (1), Lake (3), Lorain (10), Lucas (2), Mahoning (7), Marion (1), Medina (6), Miami (1), Montgomery (1), Richland (1), Stark (6), Summit (10), Trumbull (3), Tuscarawas (1), Union (1), Warren (2).

Of these cases, 39 individuals are hospitalized.

SENIOR CENTERS/ADULT DAY CARE

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine also announced today that he is ordering all of Ohio's senior centers and adult day care services to stop providing care in congregate care settings.

The closure will be effective at the end of business on Monday, March 23, 2020.

"It is a significant risk for anyone to be in a group setting, and that certainly includes our senior citizens," said Governor DeWine. "We have been telling providers that this day was coming, so they have already been working to ensure every senior will have continued care in a different setting."

INSURANCE GRACE PERIOD

The Ohio Department of Insurance is issuing an order for insurers in Ohio to allow employers to offer employees a grace period for insurance premiums.

The grace period is for all health insurers, and it must provide the option of deferring premium payments interest free for up to 60 calendar days from the original premium due date, which means employers can defer their premium payments for health insurance for up to two months.

Health insurers must allow employers to continue covering employees even if the employee would otherwise become ineligible for insurance because of a decrease in the hours worked a week.

LETTER TO PRESIDENT TRUMP

Governor DeWine also signed onto a letter that will soon be sent by multiple state Governors requesting President Trump unlock existing federal funding in the disaster unemployment account, which would make funds available to contract workers (those who file a 1099) who are ineligible for unemployment benefits under current rules.

WARNING TO NON-COMPLIANT BUSINESSES

Governor DeWine also issued a warning today to business owners who are not complying with orders to take steps to protect employees from the spread of COVID-19.

Although many businesses are heeding the advice of the Ohio Department of Health, others continue to ignore directives to keep distance between employees and keep a clean environment.

"I continue be notified of businesses that are recklessly risking lives of employees, their families, and everyone else they come in contact with. This must stop," said Governor DeWine. "As I continue to balance my responsibility to protect the people of Ohio with our attempt to keep this economy moving,

let me make it clear that I will err on the side of protecting people. The bad, reckless behavior must stop."

Video of today's full update can be viewed on the Ohio Channel's website.

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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