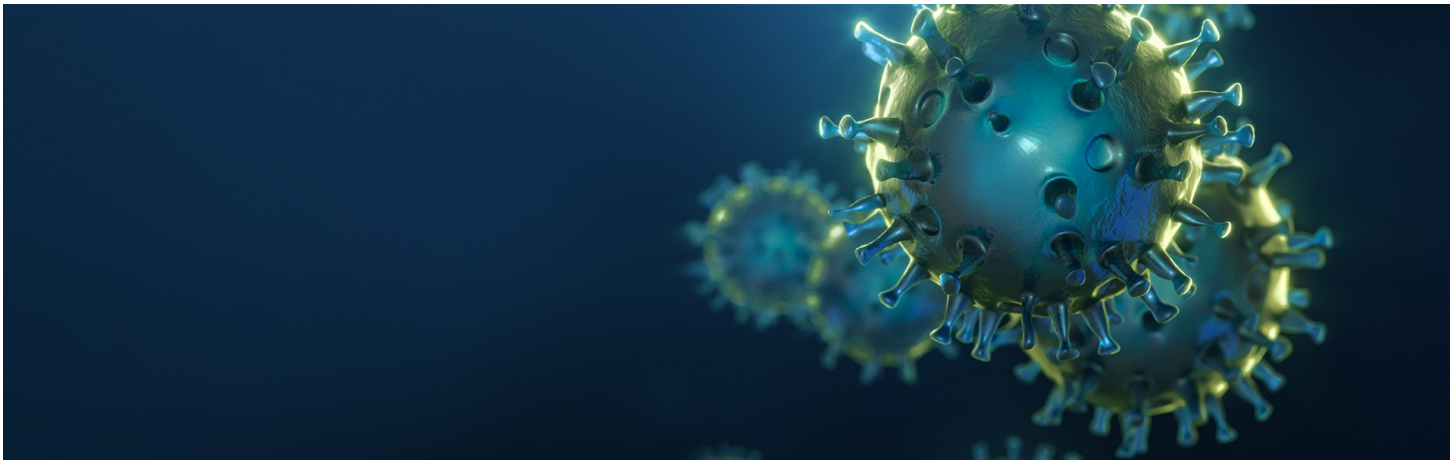
COVID-19 Update: Reopening of Adult Day Care/Senior Centers, New Testing Initiative, BWC Dividend and Mask Distribution, PPE for Boards of Election

August 20, 2020



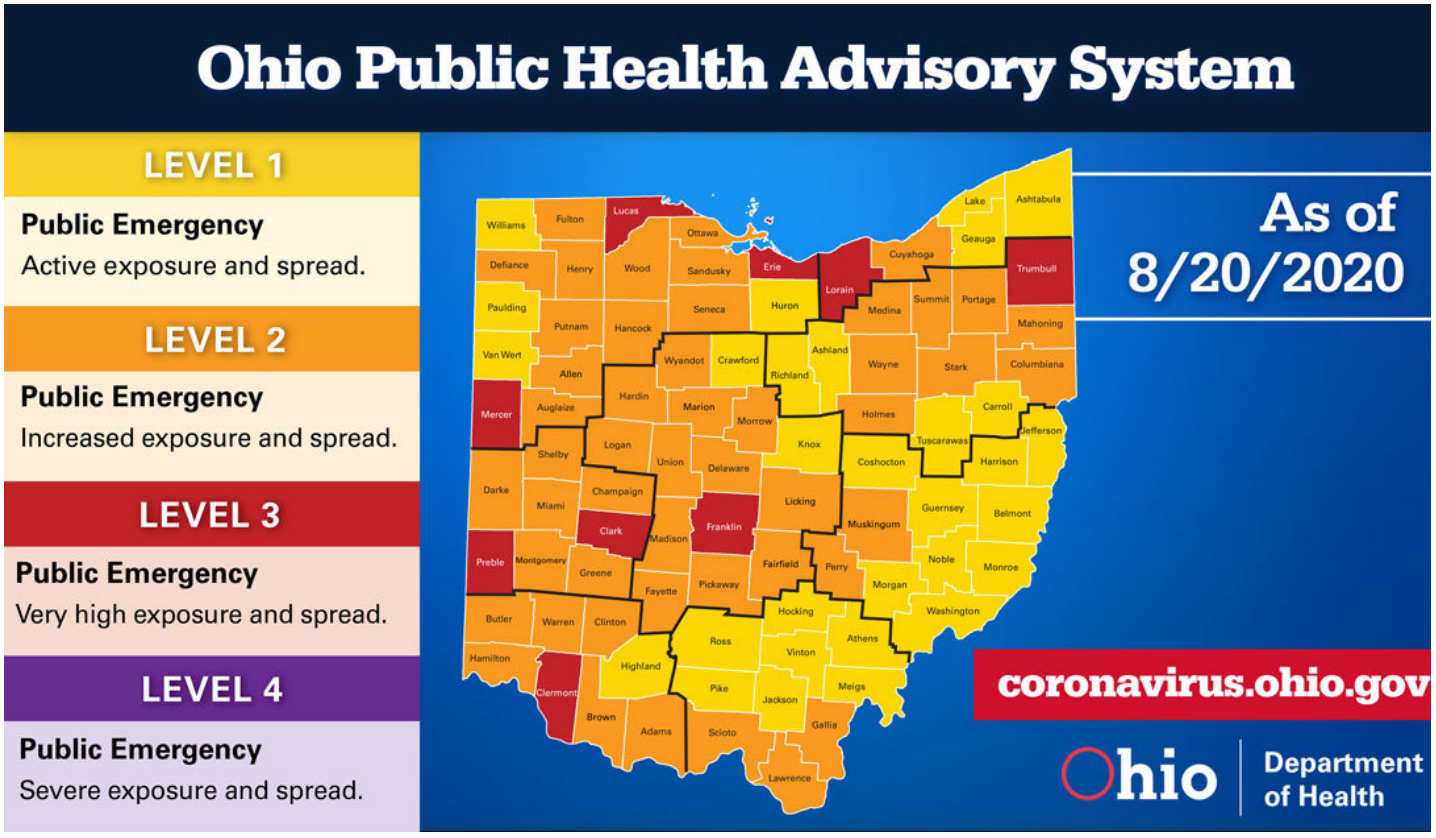
(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted today provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

UPDATED COUNTY RISK LEVELS:

Governor DeWine today released this week's Ohio Public Health Advisory System map. New health data compiled by the Ohio Department of Health indicates that nine counties currently have a very high risk of exposure and spread.

"Ohio continues to see a shift in virus spread. In urban areas, where residents have been wearing masks longer, we're seeing spread decline, but rural areas are seeing more spread," said Governor DeWine. "The best ways to stop the virus continue to be staying home when you can, wearing your mask and social

distancing when you go out, and washing your hands often."



Increase to Level 3:	Continue at Level 3:	Decrease to Level 2:	Decrease to Level 1:
• Clark • Lorain • Preble • Trumbull	• Clermont • Erie • Franklin • Lucas • Mercer	• Brown • Cuyahoga • Fairfield • Licking • Marion • Montgomery • Muskingum	• Highland • Huron • Jefferson • Morgan • Richland • Ross

Detailed information all of Ohio's 88 counties can be found on the Ohio Public Health Advisory System's website. The system was developed to provide local health departments, community leaders, and the public with data and information on the severity of the COVID-19 spread in the counties in which they live. The system consists of four levels with specific risk-level guidelines. Each level is calculated with data gathered on seven public health indicators.

ADULT DAY CARE AND SENIOR CENTERS:

Governor DeWine announced today that adult day care centers and senior centers may open at a reduced capacity beginning on September 21 if the facilities can meet certain safety standards outlined in a forthcoming health order.

"By delaying the opening until September 21, we are providing time for each center to properly prepare based on the order's guidelines," said Governor DeWine. "Each center should consider a variety of factors when determining its ability to reopen, including the case status in the surrounding community."

The Ohio Association of Senior Centers and those representing adult day centers nationally and locally assisted in developing the ResponsibleRestart Ohio plan for adult day care and senior centers. The full plan and health order will be posted soon at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

NURSING HOME AND ASSISTED LIVING TESTING:

Governor DeWine announced that a statewide testing initiative for Ohio's more than 765 assisted living facilities is now underway to offer baseline saliva testing to all staff and residents at no cost to the facilities.

The tests can be self-performed or performed with assistance, under the observance of licensed medical staff. Baseline saliva tests are minimally invasive and provide reliable results in approximately 48 hours upon the lab's receipt.

An order requiring all assisting living facilities to participate in the testing initiative will be posted soon at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

BWC DIVIDEND AND MASK DISTRIBUTION:

Governor DeWine today asked the Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Board of Directors to send up to $1.5 billion in dividend payments to Ohio employers this fall. This dividend equals approximately 100% of the premiums paid in policy year 2019. Dividends like this, as well as previous ones, are possible because of strong investment returns on employer premiums, a declining number of claims each year, prudent fiscal management, and employers who work hard to improve workplace safety and reduce injury claims.

If approved by the Board, this would be the second dividend of $1 billion or more since April and the third dividend since 2019. BWC anticipated providing a dividend next year, but with Board approval, they will issue one now to provide some immediate economic relief to employers amid the ongoing pandemic. Checks would be distributed by BWC in late October.

Additionally, Governor DeWine asked BWC's Board of Directors to approve of a second distribution of face coverings to Ohio employers and their workforce as part of BWC's Protecting Ohio's Workforce- We've Got You Covered program. This second round will consist of approximately 23 million masks to employers and

are meant to replace any masks that have exhausted their effective use. Governor DeWine has also asked that BWC work to purchase as many masks as possible made in Ohio.

In the first distribution of face coverings, BWC shipped 20.6 masks to 197,000 employers and their workforce.

PPE FOR BOARDS OF ELECTION:

Governor DeWine announced today that the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) will be working with Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose to ensure that Ohio's 88 boards of elections have the personal protective equipment (PPE) needed to execute early in-person voting and voting on election day.

DAS will provide an estimated 800,000 masks, 64,000 face shields, and 26,000 gowns, and the Secretary of State's office is expected to distribute the PPE in early September.

GUN VIOLENCE:

Following a deadly week of gun violence that resulted in at least 56 people shot, including 17 people who were killed, Governor DeWine again called on the Ohio General Assembly to consider legislation currently pending to address gun violence.

The legislation would get tougher on those who've committed a crime with a gun and are likely to re-offend; increase penalties for those found carrying a weapon if they're legally prohibited from doing so; and increase the penalties for knowingly providing a gun to a minor or to someone who is legally prohibited from owning one.

The legislation would also require that warrants on dangerous, wanted offenders are entered into law enforcement databases to ensure that officers have the information needed to arrest those who have committed violent crimes.

CURRENT COVID-19 DATA:

There are 112,003 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 3,650 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 12,615 people have been hospitalized, including 2,844 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.

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