MIKE DEWINE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF OHIO

Executive Order 2020-01D

Declaring a State of Emergency

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists over 79 countries with confirmed cases of COVID-19. The CDC reports over 98,000 diagnosed cases worldwide with 3,380 deaths reported worldwide. The CDC has announced 164 confirmed and presumptive positive cases, with eleven deaths reported from the disease in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

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

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

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

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, on March 2, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health activated a Joint Information Center to coordinate COVID-19 communications; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, on March 6, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health opened a call center to answer questions from the public regarding COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 09, 2020, testing by the Department of Health confirmed that three (3) patients were positive for COVID-19 in the State of Ohio, creating a potentially dangerous condition which may affect the health, safety and welfare of citizens of Ohio; and

WHEREAS, on March 09, 2020, the Ohio Emergency Management Agency activated the Emergency Operations Center; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code section 5502.22, this Executive Order is necessary to authorize previously-alerted state departments and agencies to prepare to respond to this public health emergency as needed;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Mike DeWine, Governor of the State of Ohio, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution, the laws of this State and in accordance with Section 5502.22 of the Ohio Revised Code do hereby order and direct that:

1. A state of emergency is declared for the entire State to protect the well-being of the citizens of the Ohio from the dangerous effects of COVID-19, to justify the authorization of personnel of State departments and agencies as are necessary, to coordinate the State response to COVID-19, and to assist in protecting the lives, safety, and health of the citizens of Ohio.

2. I hereby further request the Department of Administrative Services and other departments and agencies of the State to suspend purchasing and contracting requirements contained in Chapters 125 and 153 of the Revised Code, pursuant to Section 125.061 of the Revised Code, during the period of the emergency for the Ohio Emergency Management Agency and any other State agency participating in emergency assistance under this declaration, in order to procure any necessary resources or supplies to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Ohio.

3. After consultation with the appropriate medical experts, the Department of Health shall create and require the use of diagnostic and treatment guidelines and provide those guidelines to health care providers, institutions and providers.

4. The Department of Health issue guidelines for private businesses regarding appropriate work and travel restrictions, if necessary.

5. State agencies shall develop and implement procedures, including suspending or adopting temporary rules within an agency's authority, consistent with recommendations from the Department of Health designed to prevent or alleviate this public health threat.

6. This Proclamation does not require the implementation of the Department of Administrative Services Directive HR-D-11. Accordingly, State employees' obligations to travel to and from work is not to be limited as a result of this proclamation.

7. All citizens are urged to heed the advice of the Department of Health and other emergency officials regarding this public health emergency in order to protect their health and safety.

8. Persons who believe that they have been subjected to excessive prices for essential consumer goods during this public health emergency should contact the office of the Ohio Attorney General at 800-282-0515.

I signed this Executive Order on March 09, 2020, in Columbus, Ohio, and it shall take effect immediately and remain in full force and effect until the emergency no longer exists, such time to be determined by the Director of Health and the Executive Director of the Emergency Management Agency in consultation with the Governor, who will coordinate State response efforts and terminate the emergency upon the recommendation of appropriate officials of the other responding State departments and agencies.

Mike DeWine, Governor

ATTEST:

Frank LaRose, Secretary of State