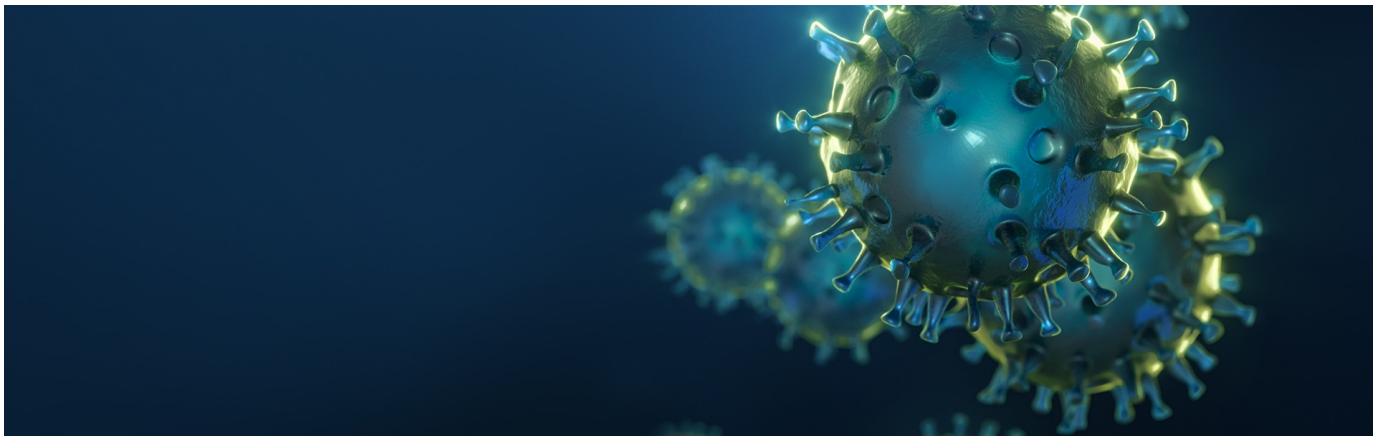
Ohioans Encouraged to Wear Cloth Masks in Public; Governor Signs TeleHealth Executive Order; New Wi-Fi Hotspot Locator

April 04, 2020



(COLUMBUS, Ohio)— Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, Lt. Governor Jon Husted, and Dr. Amy Acton, MD, MPH, today urged Ohioans to begin wearing cloth masks while in public, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Yesterday, the CDC issued the recommendation that citizens wear face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

"In many cultures around the world, wearing a mask is just part of the culture - it is a socially accepted act of kindness," said Governor DeWine. "Wearing a mask should not scare people. It is a good thing. It is a considerate thing. It is a courageous thing."

Wearing a mask will not prevent someone from contracting COVID-19, but it can help prevent them from spreading it to others -- especially if they have it, but are not yet showing symptoms.

Wearing a cloth mask in public is not mandatory, but it is strongly recommended. Cloth masks are not a substitute for social distancing, but rather, it is a complement to social distancing.

Guidance on how to make a homemade mask can be found on coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Medical supply masks, such as N95 respirators, must be reserved for healthcare workers, first responders, and those who are known to be sick. Anyone with personal protective equipment to donate to frontline workers. To donate, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

TELEHEALTH EXECUTIVE ORDER:

Governor DeWine today signed an executive order that will allow Ohioans to more easily access telehealth services from individual counselors, social workers, and marriage and family counselors.

In normal circumstances, a patient must have had a face-to-face first meeting and counselors and social workers before qualifying for a telehealth appointment; the providers would also be required to take special training in providing telehealth services. This order will enable those requirements to be removed so that patients can more easily access these needed services.

"Mental health is just as important as physical health, and in this time of social distancing and stay at home orders, we are trying to ensure that those who need services can access them without leaving their homes," said Governor DeWine.

HOTSPOT LOCATOR:

Lt. Governor Husted announced today that BroadbandOhio has been working with providers to find public wi-fi hotspot locations for Ohioans who may not otherwise have access to the internet from home.

A list of hotspot finders and locations by provider is available at Coronavirus.Ohio.Gov/BusinessHelp. You can find it by accessing the “Individuals and Families” tab. Those without internet access are urged to visit a known hotspot to access the complete list.

"Some of these hotspots offer parking lot availability so you can go there, download work emails, or school lesson plans, and then have it on your device when you return home," said Lt. Governor Husted.

Service providers offering public wi-fi hotspots that are not listed on the website are encouraged to get on the list by emailing Together@Governor.Ohio.gov with contact information.

CURRENT OHIO DATA:

There are 3,739 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 102 deaths. A total of 1,006 people have been hospitalized, including 326 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 closed captioning, 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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Executive Order 2020-09D

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