Sites Selected for Enhanced Hospital Capacity;Ohio National Guard to Assist Federal Prison; Dispute Resolution Commission Now Active

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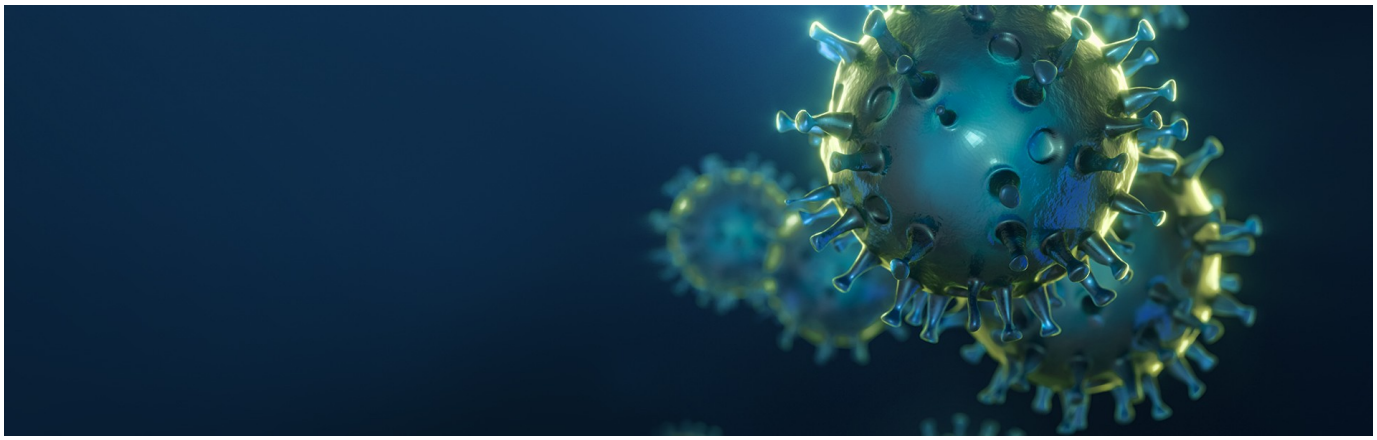

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, Lt. Governor Jon Husted, and Dr. Amy Acton, MD, MPH, provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

HOSPITAL CAPACITY:

Because Ohio must double its hospital capacity due to the oncoming COVID-19 surge, Ohio has developed a plan to expand healthcare services at alternative sites in addition to the traditional medical care facilities.

Representatives from health care systems, local governments, county emergency management agencies, state agencies, the Ohio National Guard, among others, examined buildings across the state that could support large numbers of patients.

The following sites have been selected based on considerations such as distance to an existing hospital, conditions safe for patients and health care professionals, and space to meet the region's expected needs.

1. Seagate Convention Center, Lucas County
2. Case Western University's Health Education Campus, Cuyahoga County
3. Dayton Convention Center, Montgomery County
4. Covelli Convention Center, Mahoning County
5. Duke Energy Convention Center, Hamilton County
6. Greater Columbus Convention Center, Franklin County

These facilities would be used for the mildly ill, while the sickest patients will be housed in traditional hospitals.

Assessments of other sites will continue if needed.

Health care regions in southern and southeastern Ohio have determined the existing hospital facilities in their areas will, with additional equipment, be capable to handle a surge in patients without going to an off-site location.

OHIO NATIONAL GUARD TO ASSIST FEDERAL PRISON:

Governor DeWine announced that he has authorized the Ohio National Guard to assist federal authorities in the Elkton Federal Correctional Institution in Columbiana County where seven inmates have tested positive for COVID-19, and three inmates have died from the disease.

"To be clear, this is not a state facility, it is a federal prison - but, this prison is in Ohio. Ohio citizens work there, and their families live here," said Governor DeWine. "As we've said for weeks, we're all in this together, and providing state help for this federal prison is the right thing to do."

The Ohio National Guard's mission will be focused on providing medical assistance. They will not be armed, nor will they be providing security.

The guardsmen and women will assist in the prison's infirmary with non-COVID-19 cases and with patients who are showing symptoms of the disease. These soldiers, who all work in the medical field, will have N-95 respirators for protection while they work to augment the current prison medical staff. They will treat those they can and triage others with serious symptoms for hospital care.

The guard also stands ready to help with transporting the seriously ill patients to the hospital in the event of a surge of sick inmates. In addition to staff, the guard will bring equipment and ambulances with them as well.

Governor DeWine also requested that the Federal Bureau of Prisons and U.S. Department of Justice cease accepting new inmates at the facility.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION:

Lt. Governor Husted announced that the administration's Dispute Resolution Commission, which was initially announced last week, is now prepared to receive submissions from essential businesses as well as county health departments.

The panel, which includes Ohio Department of Commerce Director Sheryl Maxfield, Development Services Agency Director Lydia Mihalik, and Public Utilities Commission of Ohio Chairman Sam Randazzo, will specifically seek to resolve disputes when two county health departments disagree on whether a type of business should or should not be deemed essential during the state of emergency. The purpose of the commission is to provide clarity and ensure that similarly-situated businesses are treated fairly, regardless of which side of a county line they operate.

For more information, visit Coronavirus.Ohio.gov/BusinessHelp and select the "Businesses & Nonprofits" tab for more information.

REMINDER - NEW STAY AT HOME ORDER:

Ohio's new stay at home order goes into effect at midnight. You can find the full order at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Retailers will be required to determine a maximum number of customers allowed in the store to account for proper physical distancing. That number must also be displayed at the businesses' entrances.

REMINDER - SNOWBIRDS MUST SELF-QUARANTINE:

Governor DeWine today reminded "snowbirds" that they must quarantine for 14 days once they arrive in Ohio.

"I know that many of our Ohio snowbirds will soon be returning from places like Florida, and we want to make sure that you remain healthy and that those around you remain healthy," said Governor DeWine.

In addition to those returning after spending winter elsewhere, anyone who has traveled outside of Ohio for any other reason must also self-quarantine for 14 days upon their return. This order excludes truckers, healthcare workers, other workers providing essential services, and those who live on the state border.

CURRENT OHIO DATA:

There are 4,450 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 142 deaths. A total of 1,214 people have been hospitalized, including 371 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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