COVID-19 Update: Nursing Home Order, Liquor Sales, TANF Funding, Rapid Testing, Prison Update

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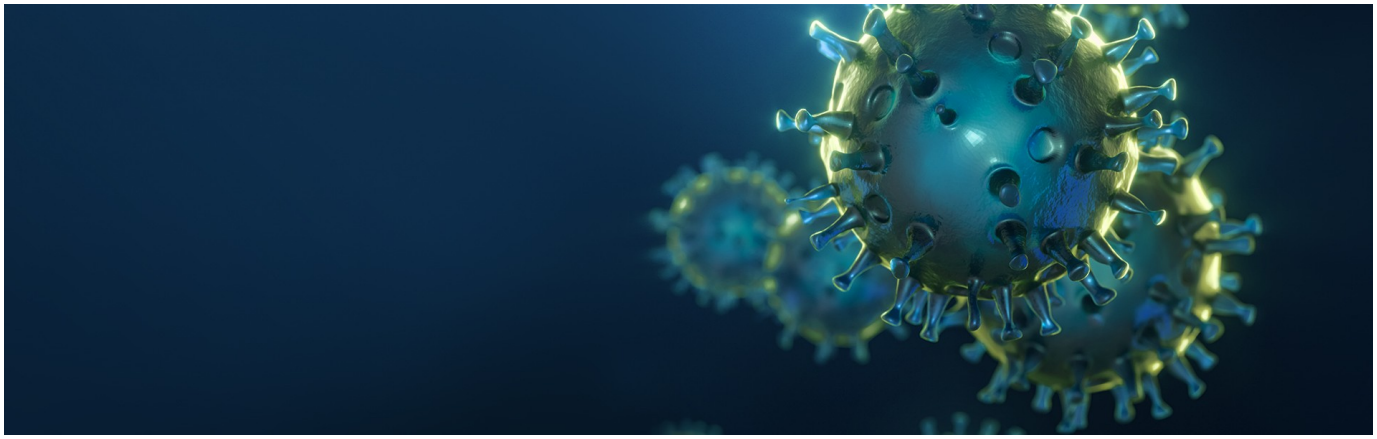

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, Lt. Governor Jon Husted, and Dr. Amy Acton, MD, MPH, provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NURSING HOME ORDER:

Governor DeWine announced today that the Ohio Department of Health issued an order requiring long-term care facilities to notify residents and families within 24 hours of a resident or staff member testing positive for COVID-19.

"The Ohio Department of Health had been strongly encouraging facilities to notify families all along, but this order makes this notification mandatory," said Governor DeWine. "Families of long-term care residents have a right to know if individuals at these facilities are sick."

Governor DeWine also announced that a list of long-term care facilities with positive COVID-19 cases will be listed on coronavirus.ohio.gov as the information becomes available.

LIQUOR SALES:

On March 16, 2020, the State of Pennsylvania closed its state-owned liquor stores in an attempt to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. In addition, multiple border counties in West Virginia have relatively recently prohibited sales of liquor to persons who do not have West Virginia identification. This has pushed people into Ohio's border counties to purchase liquor and creates an unacceptable public health issue.

In compliance with Ohio Department of Health orders designed to prevent the further spread of COVID-19, the in-person sale of liquor in the following counties is now restricted only to Ohio residents:

- Ashtabula
- Trumbull
- Mahoning
- Columbiana
- Jefferson
- Belmont

For an individual to purchase liquor in the aforementioned counties, that person must present a valid Ohio photo identification or a valid military photo ID for a person on active duty status.

Sale of liquor to a person with a valid non-Ohio photo ID may only occur with additional information showing that the person resides in Ohio, including mail with the person's name and Ohio address on it, a bill with the person's name and Ohio address on it, or a letter from an employer placing the person in Ohio as an essential employee.

TANF FUNDING TO OHIO FOODBANKS:

Today, Lt. Governor Husted highlighted an executive order, signed by Governor DeWine on Friday, that provides nearly $5 million in emergency funding from the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant to support Ohio's 12 Feeding America foodbanks and the statewide hunger relief network.

According to the Ohio Association of Foodbanks, the funding will be used to purchase available items such as canned fruits and vegetables; canned meats; cereals, pastas and rice; boxed dinners; locally grown produce; locally produced milk, butter, cheese and dairy products through partnerships with

the Ohio Dairy Producers Association, Dairy Farmers of America – Mideast Area and the National Farmers Organization; fresh meat and eggs; and essential household cleaning and personal hygiene items.

Of this funding, $1 million is earmarked for the Agricultural Clearance Program, where the Ohio Association of Food banks will purchase Ohio-made commodities, such as milk, to distribute to foodbanks across the state.

An additional $1 million has been granted to the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio to help Ohio's homeless shelters purchase needed cleaning supplies and provide homelessness prevention and housing services.

RAPID TESTING:

Governor DeWine cautioned companies in Ohio that are purchasing rapid antibody tests to ensure that they are purchasing tests that are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

"Antibody testing is one piece to the puzzle on determining when employees can return to work, but it is not the sole answer," said Governor DeWine. "I caution all companies looking at this option to ensure they are only buying FDA Emergency Use Authorization (EUA)- approved anti-body tests. Without this FDA Emergency Use Authorization approval, there is no way to know if the tests are valid."

A list of FDA-approved rapid testing kits is available at fda.gov.

PICKAWAY CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION:

Governor DeWine has authorized members of the Ohio National Guard to support Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) medical staff at the Pickaway Correctional Institution.

The prison currently has more than a dozen members of its medical team out sick due to COVID-19. Among other tasks, members of the guard will provide triage support, take temperatures, and help with non-COVID-19 cases. They will also help provide care at the on-site long-term care center which houses older inmates and those with chronic illnesses.

Additionally, ODRC announced that an inmate who died over the weekend at the Pickaway Correctional Institution tested positive for COVID-19. The inmate had been suffering from a long-term, chronic illness and was tested for the virus prior to his death. The positive test results were returned today. This is the first death of a COVID-19-positive inmate at a state prison institution.

CURRENT OHIO DATA:

There are 6,975 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 274 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 2,033 people have been hospitalized, including 613 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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