



RestartOhio in full swing

May 8, 2020

RestartOhio, the state's reopening plan during the COVID-19 pandemic, is in full swing, and Governor DeWine announced reopening dates for restaurants, bars, hair salons, nail salons and barber shops. In addition, the Ohio House and the Ohio Senate held session on May 6, 2020, and continue to introduce COVID-19-related legislation. Here are some highlights of recent announcements.

Reopening of restaurants and bars

- Governor DeWine announced guidelines for restaurants and bars, which can begin reopening for outside dining on May 15 and inside dining on May 21.
- Tables of customers will need to be kept, at a minimum, six feet apart. A restaurant cannot sit more than 10 people at a table.
- Employees will be required to wear a mask, unless a safety exception applies, and perform daily symptom assessments.
- Customers are encouraged to wear a mask and not enter if symptomatic.
- Open congregate areas in bars and restaurants will remain closed. However, the businesses may use those areas to spread their tables out to accommodate the social distancing requirement.
- Businesses should contact the local health department about suspected cases or exposures.

Reopening of hair salons, day spas, nail salons, barbershops and tanning facilities

- Governor DeWine further announced guidelines for hair salons, day spas, nail salons, barbershops and tanning facilities

to resume business operations on May 15.

- Personal service businesses must ensure six feet between customers or install barriers.
- Employees will be required to wear a mask unless an exception applies and perform a daily symptom assessment.
- Customers are encouraged to wear a mask and not enter if symptomatic.
- Personal service businesses must contact the local health department about suspected cases or exposures.
- Businesses must discontinue customer use of self-service refreshments, magazines and other non-essential items in the waiting area.
- Only clients and caregivers may enter the establishment.

Budget cut details

- Governor DeWine and Office of Budget and Management Director Murnieks announced more details regarding the \$775 million in General Revenue Fund (GRF) cuts, including a breakdown by agency. (See our short [summary](#) of the budget cuts announced by Governor DeWine.)
- Non-GRF budget cuts of \$352 million were also announced.
- We are still waiting on details regarding how the cuts will be implemented at the agency level.
- April's tax revenues were \$866.5 million below estimates.

Tort liability

- Senate President Obhof and Speaker Householder both commented that their chambers would prioritize tort liability for businesses reopening during the pandemic.
- Representative Diane Grendell introduced [House Bill 606](#), which grants civil immunity to a person who provides services for essential businesses and operations for injury, death or loss that was caused by the transmission of COVID-19 during the period of emergency declared by Executive Order 2020-01D, issued on March 9, 2020, and to declare an emergency. H.B. 608 is scheduled for its first hearing in House Civil Justice Committee next week with a possible substitute bill.
- Senator Matt Huffman introduced [Senate Bill 308](#), which grants civil immunity for health care and service providers during a declared disaster. Senator Huffman offered sponsor testimony on this bill in the Senate Judiciary Committee on May 6. This bill also intends to provide civil immunity for businesses against exposure claims from employees or patrons of the business. Chair Eklund of the Senate Judiciary Committee stated the bill will receive another hearing mid-May.

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