



Governor DeWine addresses the state; Level 3 county updates; new local mask ordinances

July 17, 2020

Instead of his traditional press conference, Governor DeWine addressed Ohioans on Wednesday evening, July 15, 2020. He made an emotional appeal to all citizens, imploring them to engage in safe and smart behaviors, such as social distancing, wearing masks and washing hands. Governor DeWine remarked that Ohio is at a turning point, citing the uptick in COVID-19 cases, and asked the public to make smart decisions in the weeks ahead. Specifically, Governor DeWine mentioned the rising case numbers and hospitalizations in Florida and Arizona as examples of what Ohio faces if Ohioans cannot curb the spread of COVID-19. Ultimately, however, he issued no orders and did not change any existing orders during or after the press briefing. The entire address can be viewed [here](#).

Ohio Public Health Advisory Alert System updates

Governor DeWine held a traditional press conference on July 16, 2020. During the press conference, Dr. Andrew Thomas, Chief Clinical Officer at Ohio State University Wexner Medical center discussed the metrics used in the [Ohio Public Health Advisory Alert System](#). Dr. Thomas described that the system is designed to look forward and give local areas early warning of community spread. Dr. Thomas explained four of the indicators are leading indicators that show where COVID-19 is spreading. These indicators are:

- new cases per capita
- sustained increases in new cases

- proportion of cases not congregate cases
- sustained increase in emergency room visits
- sustained increase in outpatient visits

The other indicators are lagging indicators, such as sustained increase in COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU bed occupancy.

Counties classified as Level 3 (red) or higher are subject to a mask mandate. Governor DeWine updated the new county risk levels. He announced that Trumbull County moved back to Level 2 (orange) and is no longer subject to state mask order. Eight new counties moved into Level 3: Allen, Athens, Delaware, Licking, Lucas, Richland, Scioto and Union.

The governor noted that Athens County is on a watch list for Level 4 (purple). If a county reaches Level 4, residents are advised to only leave their homes for supplies and essential services.

The full list of Level 3 counties includes: Allen, Athens, Butler, Clermont, Cuyahoga, Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Hamilton, Licking, Lorain, Lucas, Montgomery, Pickaway, Richland, Scioto, Summit, Union and Wood. Beginning at 6:00 p.m. on July 17, 2020, those counties are subject to the [Ohio Department of Health Mask Order](#).

Governor DeWine noted that with the newly included counties, 60 percent of Ohioans will now be under the public health order mandate to wear a facial covering. In response to a question from the press, he said that he has not ruled out a future statewide mask mandate but that he was not announcing one today.

Local mask ordinances

Our team is tracking municipalities that are enacting their own mask ordinances. As expected, more and more cities are enacting local mask mandates. Since our last update on local mask ordinances, here are some newly-adopted ordinances or orders of note:

- [Akron](#)
- [Athens](#)
- [Avon](#) – the order was issued via a memo to city residents and visitors from Mayor Bryan Jensen
- [Kent](#)
- [Lakewood](#) – link to ordinance not yet available
- [Portsmouth](#)
- [Toledo](#)

Here are the municipal ordinances on which we've previously reported:

- [Columbus](#)
- [Cleveland](#)
- [Cincinnati](#)
- [Bexley](#) (Franklin County – Central Ohio)
- [Upper Arlington](#) (Franklin County – Central Ohio)
- [Whitehall](#) (Franklin County – Central Ohio)
- [Granville](#) (Licking County – Central Ohio)
- [Dayton](#)
- [Dublin](#) (Franklin County – Central Ohio)
- [Worthington](#) (Franklin County- Central Ohio)
- [Grandview Heights](#) (Franklin County- Central Ohio)
- [Westerville](#) (Franklin County- Central Ohio)
- [Hilliard](#) (Franklin County – Central Ohio)
- [Beechwood](#) (Cuyahoga County)
- [Yellow Springs](#) (Greene County)

- [Springfield \(Clark County\)](#)

We've also seen counties enact or consider enacting their own orders mandating masks. Cuyahoga County tabled its proposed mask mandate after the governor issued an order requiring a mask in Level 3 or higher counties. Cuyahoga is designated Level 3. [Franklin County Public Health](#) issued a health order requiring a mask throughout the county.

While each order is similar in terms of both the areas where masks are required and the exceptions, there could be differences. So a best practice is to review the local ordinances themselves. As a reminder, these can remain in effect even if the county is no longer designated at Level 3 or higher under the state's public health advisory system.

Liquor control hearings - Investigative unit

Governor DeWine asked the investigative unit of the Ohio Division of Liquor Control, housed in the Ohio State Highway Patrol, to focus on bars and enforce social distancing and mask guidelines. Hearings will be held during the first week of August for bars who have recently violated the requirements.

Personal protective equipment procurement

Lt. Governor Husted announced a \$20 million grant through the Ohio Development Services Agency to help manufacturers produce personal protective equipment. This funding will allow manufacturers to retool and build out their existing facilities in Ohio to produce personal protective equipment. Lt. Governor Husted also mentioned that several State of Ohio agencies procured over 65 million pieces of personal protective equipment, and most of the PPE has been sent out to local businesses that requested assistance.

Ohio Senate

The Ohio Senate announced that they will be holding session on Tuesday, July 21, 2020. No committees have scheduled meetings for that week yet.

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