COVID-19 Call Center Script

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# General Call Center Guidelines

When **answering** a call for the ODH COVID-19 call center, please use the following greeting:

* “Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 information line, this is (YOUR NAME) how may I assist you?”

When **concluding** a call for the ODH COVID-19 call center, please use the following closing:

* “Is there any additional information that you need?” (answer the question or if none continue)
* “This is an evolving disease and information may change. If you have question after this call, please visit the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) coronavirus website (**coronavirus.ohio.gov**) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website (**cdc.gov**) for the most up-to-date information.”
* “Thank you for calling the Ohio Department of Health.”

**At the end of each shift**, provide a written summary of the most common questions and report them to the call center supervisor.

# Calls Requiring Immediate Referral

1. **A local school/business has a group that traveled to “China, South Korea, Italy, Iran, Japan or current list of affected countries”. They have symptoms of vomiting and diarrhea (or other non-respiratory symptoms). What do I do?**

During business hours, transfer to BID, 614-995-5599. Otherwise, transfer to call center supervisor.

1. **Caller may have been exposed to COVID-19 because caller has traveled to “China, South Korea, Italy, Iran, Japan or current list of affected countries” and has symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath.**

Transfer to call center supervisor. If this is a traveler, he or she should be referred to their local health department.

If this person is a healthcare provider calling on behalf of a patient, he or she should call their local health department.

If this person is a local health department needing to evaluate a person for COVID-19, they should be transferred to the 24/7 infectious diseases line.

1. **Caller was part of a group that travelled to** **“China, South Korea, Italy, Iran, Japan or current list of affected countries.” Multiple people in the group have respiratory symptoms. What should the travelers do?**

Transfer to call center supervisor.

1. **Caller speaks a language besides English and needs translation services.**

We do offer translation services. Transfer call to the call center supervisor to get the service set up.

1. **Complaints regarding long-term care or non-long-term care facilities (for example: healthcare personnel not wearing PPE, people not washing their hands, abuse or general facility complaints, etc.):**

Please refer these callers to either the complaint line or the ODH website where the complaint form can be filled out electronically. The toll-free number for registering complaints is 1-800-342-0553. The complainant may choose to be anonymous. To file a complaint online please visit the complaints page at the following: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/complaints-nursing-home-and-healthcare-facilities/complaints-hcf-nh>

# Disease Basics

1. **What is novel coronavirus or COVID-19?**

A novel coronavirus means it is new. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness, like the common cold.

(Add only if the caller asks about other coronaviruses:) 229E, NL63, OC43, or HKU1 are common. Follow your care plan. Patients with COVID-19 will be evaluated and cared for differently than patients with common coronaviruses.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?**

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness. It can spread from person-to-person. It mainly spreads, by droplets from coughing and sneezing. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel (new). It was first identified during an outbreak in Wuhan, China in December 2019. The World Health Organization (WHO) named it. ‘CO’ stands for ‘corona,’ ‘VI’ for ‘virus,’ and ‘D’ for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as “2019 novel coronavirus” or “2019-nCoV.”

SOURCES: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf> and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **What are the symptoms?**

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe illness with symptoms of

* fever
* cough
* shortness of breath

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>

1. **How severe is COVID-19?**

Experts are still learning about illnesses caused by COVID-19. Symptoms have ranged from those like a common cold to severe pneumonia. Some people have been hospitalized. Deaths have been reported mainly in older adults or those who have other health problems.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html>

1. **What are the severe complications?**

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>

1. **How soon do signs and symptoms develop after exposure?**

The time between exposure and symptoms is 2-14 days. To be safe, exposed people are asked to stay away from others for 14 days.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-guidance-management-patients.html>

1. **What is the name of the virus that causes COVID-19?**

The virus is called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, shortened to SARS-CoV-2.

(Add only if the caller asks for more detailed information) The International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV) names new viruses. On February 11, 2020, the ITCV, named the novel coronavirus, first identified in Wuhan, China, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, shortened to SARS-CoV-2. The virus is related to the SARS-associated coronavirus (SARS-CoV) that caused an outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in 2002-2003; however, it is not the same virus.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **What is the source of the virus that causes COVID-19?**

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause sickness in people, and others, such as canine and feline coronaviruses, only in animals. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can infect people. Once that happens the coronavirus can spread between people. This is suspected to have occurred for the virus that causes COVID-19.

(Add only if the caller asks for more detailed information) Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) are two other examples of coronaviruses that originated in animals and then spread to people.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **Is the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 the same as MERS-CoV or SARS-CoV?**

COVID is one of a large family of viruses. COVID-19 is different than MERS-CoV or SARS-CoV.

The coronavirus most like the virus causing COVID-19 is SARS-CoV. There are ongoing investigations to learn more. The situation is changing, and information will be updated as it becomes available.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **My child, sister, brother, spouse, parent, significant other, etc. tested positive for Coronavirus (OC43, 229E, HKU1 or NL63), should I be worried?**

No. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Coronavirus OC43, 229E, HKU1 or NL63 are common. They are not the new coronavirus that was first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/types.html>

# COVID-19 Transmission and Prevention

1. **How does COVID-19 spread?**

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably started in animals and spread to people. Now it is spreading from person-to-person. It’s important to note that the chance of person-to-person varies depending on the person and disease. Some diseases are easily spread (like measles), while other diseases are less so.

Health experts are still learning the details about how COVID-19 spreads. Other coronaviruses spread from an infected person to others through:

• The air by coughing and sneezing.

• Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands.

• Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

• In rare cases, contact with feces.

The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community (“community spread”) in some affected geographic areas.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>

1. **Who is at risk for COVID-19?**

There are confirmed cases in several states in the US, including Ohio. To slow the spread of the disease, health officials are working with healthcare providers to promptly identify and evaluate any suspected cases. In addition, most mass gatherings of people have been cancelled, postponed, or moved online. This limits any potential exposures to the virus. You can limit your risk by washing your hands frequently, avoid touching your face, and staying away from crowded areas.

Older adults and those with underlying health conditions are considered more at-risk and should take additional precautions to prevent infection. Source for high-risk individuals: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html>

SOURCE for risk: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/assess-manage-risk.html>

1. **What should those over age 65 do to prevent getting COVID-19?**

Individuals who are age 65 and older should not leave their home unless absolutely necessary. They are considered to be at high-risk for COVID-19. If possible, seek help from family members, friends, or neighbors to get everyday items such as food, medications, and personal care items.

1. **What should those with high-risk medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, young children with Cystic Fibrosis, those who are immunocompromised, and hemophilia do to prevent getting COVID-19?**

Individuals who are in these high-risk categories should not leave their home unless absolutely necessary. If possible, seek help from family members, friends, or neighbors to get everyday items such as food, medications, and personal care items.

1. **What should pregnant women do?**

Pregnant women are encouraged to not leave their home unless absolutely necessary. They should consult with their doctor.

There is not currently information from published scientific reports about susceptibility of pregnant women to COVID-19. Pregnant women experience changes to their immune system which might make them more susceptible to viral respiratory infections, like COVID-19.

1. **I think I have COVID-19 and I want to be tested. Can my LHD or healthcare provider do this?**

Testing is limited and needs to be focused on those at highest risk of spreading the disease and those most severely ill. When you are feeling sick, you need to stay home and act like you have it, to not spread your illness to others. If your symptoms are severe enough to concern you, you should **call** your regular healthcare provider to see if you need to be evaluated in-person. The healthcare provider will make a determination over the phone as to whether an in-person assessment or testing is needed.  People who are not exhibiting symptoms or are only mildly ill are not being tested for COVID-19.

If your healthcare provider decides testing is necessary, you may be referred to a community site that is doing evaluations for COVID-19. If such a site is not available in your area, you might be referred to an emergency department, or the healthcare professional might do the testing him or herself.  If you are tested, you will need to self-isolate until you are informed of the testing results. You should NOT go to the emergency room to request testing unless directed to do so by your doctor.  In addition, local health departments cannot provide testing. Please do not contact them to ask for testing.

1. **I have no symptoms, but still would like to be tested for COVID-19. How can I get tested?**

At this time, ODH is not testing asymptomatic people. You need an order from a healthcare provider to be tested.

Several private laboratories and hospital systems in Ohio are now offering testing. These tests are to be performed only using respiratory specimens collected from individuals who meet CDC clinical and/or epidemiological criteria for COVID-19 testing. In general, Patient Service Centers and other phlebotomy sites cannot collect specimens for this test. Your healthcare provider will direct you to the appropriate testing location if testing is deemed necessary.

**SOURCES:** [www.questdiagnostics.com/home/Coronavirus/](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fc212.net%2Fc%2Flink%2F%3Ft%3D0%26l%3Den%26o%3D2738835-1%26h%3D4138966586%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fwww.questdiagnostics.com%252Fhome%252FCoronavirus%252F%26a%3Dwww.questdiagnostics.com%252Fhome%252FCoronavirus%252F&data=02%7C01%7CLisa.Griffin%40odh.ohio.gov%7C09372bb1dcad4751a76e08d7c11c3b7c%7C50f8fcc494d84f0784eb36ed57c7c8a2%7C0%7C1%7C637190199309777920&sdata=zKUmCZ4BNW5O%2BVKhxr3LfvxlD306COnMvg1LjkPDJU4%3D&reserved=0)

[www.labcorp.com/information-labcorp-about-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19](http://www.labcorp.com/information-labcorp-about-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19)

1. **How can I protect myself?**

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

To lower your risk of catching any respiratory illness, remember to:

* Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
* Avoid contact with people who are sick.
* Stay home while you are sick (except to visit a healthcare professional) and avoid close contact with others.
* Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
* Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>

1. **Am I at risk for COVID-19 from a package or products shipping from China?**

It is unlikely. Coronaviruses are mostly spread by droplets. In general, coronaviruses do not live a long time on surfaces. There is likely very low risk of spread from products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at room temperatures. Currently, there are no known cases linked to imported goods. There have not been any cases of COVID-19 in the United States associated with imported goods.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **I live in an apartment complex. The person above me was self-quarantining herself for 14 days due to return from Hong Kong. What precautions do I take in shared common spaces and is the HVAC system safe?**

A person who is self-quarantining is a person who may have been exposed to a contagious disease but has not developed illness (symptoms) and who separates themselves from others who have not been exposed, in order to prevent the possible spread of that disease.

You cannot catch a disease from someone who does not have it. If they were sick, the chances of pathogens traveling through the HVAC would be very rare. You should follow the below precautions to limit the spread of infectious diseases in common areas:

* Perform hand hygiene frequently. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60 to 95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
* Clean all “high-touch” surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
* Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

1. **Does ODH recommend wearing facemasks?**

ODH follows CDC guidelines. The CDC does not recommend that healthy people wear a mask to protect themselves from illnesses, including COVID-19. You should only wear a mask if a healthcare professional recommends it. A facemask should be used by people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms. This is to protect others from the risk of getting infected. The use of facemasks also is crucial for health workers and other people who are taking care of someone infected with COVID-19 in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **I heard men need to shave their beards to prevent COVID-19. Is this true?**

No. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) poster applies only to personal protective equipment worn in healthcare settings. The CDC does not recommend the routine use of respirators in the community.

(Add only if the caller asks for more information) The CDC guidelines and the graphic were originally posted as part of the “No-Shave November 2017” as advice to those wanting to grow beards during that month. It describes the beards that could cause problems with tight-fitting respirators e.g. those used in healthcare and not looser-fitting surgical masks.

**SOURCE:** [**https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/pdfs/FacialHairWmask11282017-508.pdf**](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/pdfs/FacialHairWmask11282017-508.pdf)

1. **Will warmer weather stop COVID-19?**

We don’t know if weather or temperature change the spread of COVID-19. Some viruses, like the cold and flu, spread more during winter months. However, it is not hard to become sick with these viruses during other months.  There is much more to learn about this new disease.

SOURCE:<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **I heard the virus can pass from person-to-person, am I at risk?**

To reduce the spread, health officials are working with healthcare providers to identify and evaluate suspected cases. Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

To lower your risk of catching any respiratory illness, remember to:

* Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
* Avoid contact with people who are sick.
* Stay home while you are sick (except to visit a healthcare professional) and avoid close contact with others.
* Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
* Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/assess-manage-risk.html>

1. **Can someone with COVID-19 spread the virus to other people?**

Someone who is sick with COVID-19 can spread the virus to others. CDC recommends that people who have COVID-19 be isolated either in the hospital or at home. The location depends on how sick they are. They are isolated until they are not at risk of infecting others.

The length of the illness is different for each person. When to release someone from isolation is made on a case-by-case basis. Healthcare providers, infection prevention and control experts, and public health officials consider disease severity, signs and symptoms, and laboratory test results for each patient.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/assess-manage-risk.html>

1. **Can someone who has been quarantined for COVID-19 spread the illness to others?**

No. Most individuals who are quarantined never develop illness. These are the individuals who are being monitored. If they do become sick, they are not considered under quarantine but they will be isolated to prevent the spread of the illness. For COVID-19, quarantine is 14 days from the last date of exposure, because 14 days is the longest incubation period seen for similar coronaviruses. Someone who has been released from COVID-19 quarantine is not a risk for spreading the virus to others because they were not ill.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

# COVID-19 in Ohio, US and Other Countries

1. **What is the situation in Ohio?**

As of March 9, 2020, Ohio does have confirmed cases of COVID-19. Check ODH’s coronavirus website for up-to-date case counts. On March 20, 2020, ODH Director Dr. Amy Acton and Governor Mike DeWine announced the state’s first death from COVID-19.

For the most up to date numbers in Ohio, visit [www.coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov)

(Updated at 2 p.m. every weekday.)

1. **What is difference between confirmed case and presumptive positive?**

A presumptive positive has been identified by our lab as a positive case. All of our results are still sent to the lab for a “second check” and final confirmation by the CDC, which then becomes a confirmed case.

1. **I heard there were confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ohio. Where are they? Are we in danger?**

On March 9, 2020 Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH announced that three Ohioans tested positive for COVID-19. These were the first cases in Ohio. There have now been additional positive cases announced.

For an updated list of counties, view the footnotes under up-to-date case counts at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/>

For the latest information on COVID-19 and up-to-date case counts, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Continue to follow standard precautions to help prevent the spread of infection:

* + Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer with at least 60-95% alcohol.
  + Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
  + Avoid contact with people who are sick.
  + Stay home if you are sick (except to visit a healthcare professional) and avoid close contact with others.
  + Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
  + Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

1. **Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the United States?**

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC’s webpage.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>

1. **Why is ODH not releasing information on the location of the PUIs in Ohio?**

We do not want to give away any personal, identifiable information about citizens who may be under investigation. Anyone exposed to a PUI will be contacted and may be quarantined. Local health districts and ODH are committed to monitoring and promoting the public health and welfare. As local health districts monitor situations of infectious disease in the community, information will be shared as is necessary to protect the public while also considering the rights of any ill individual to privacy.

1. **How are local health departments and healthcare facilities preparing for the virus?**

Refer them to their local health department.

1. **Am I at risk for COVID-19 infection in the United States?**

There is community spread of COVID-19 in many parts of the world and United States. To reduce the spread, health officials are working with healthcare providers to identify and evaluate suspected cases. Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

To lower your risk of catching any respiratory illness, remember to:

* Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
* Avoid contact with people who are sick.
* Stay home while you are sick (except to visit a healthcare professional) and avoid close contact with others.
* Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
* Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

1. **Where in the United States have there been confirmed cases?**

The CDC website has a map of “Confirmed and Presumptive Positive Cases of COVID-19” available on their website, which they update regularly.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>

1. **Where in the world have there been confirmed cases?**

There are confirmed cases of COVID-19 in many countries. As of March 10, 2020, 115 countries have reported cases. For the latest information, visit: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html> or <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/locations-confirmed-cases.html>

SOURCE:<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/locations-confirmed-cases.html>

# Voting

1. **Will voting still take place?**

No, voting will not take place on March 17. ODH Director Dr. Amy Acton filed a Public Health order March 16, 2020 to postpone voting.

Voting locations would have increased the risk of spreading COVID-19 amongst the general public. This order will remain in effect until stated otherwise. There will be announcements made at a later time about the new time and date for voting.

# Travel

1. **I am planning to travel to country “X”. Should I postpone my travel?**

Check the CDC website if you are planning to travel. CDC has three levels; warning, alert and watch.

Warning Level 3 means: travelers should avoid all nonessential travel to the area.

Alert Level 2 means: these destinations are experiencing sustained community transmission of respiratory illness caused by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The virus can spread from person to person. Older adults and those with chronic medical conditions should consider postponing nonessential travel.

Watch Level 1 means: CDC does not recommend canceling or postponing travel. Travelers should practice usual precautions. (Check website for most up-to-date recommendations and relay to caller.)

Right now, elderly adults and those with underlying medical conditions are advised to postpone or cancel all cruise travel and any travel with long plane rides to prevent their risk of infection. Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

1. **We have a cruise coming up. Should we consider cancelling our trip due to COVID-19?**

The CDC is recommending that all travelers, especially those with chronic or underlying medical conditions, defer all cruise ship travel worldwide. Cruise ship passengers are at increased risk of person-to-person spread of infectious diseases, including COVID-19, due to passengers being in such close proximity to each other.

The U.S. Department of State also recommends against cruise ship travel. Those traveling by ship may be impacted by travel restrictions affecting their ability to disembark or may be subject to quarantine procedures implemented by the local authorities.

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

If you do decide to travel by cruise ship, follow the following precautions to protect yourself and others:

* Standard precautions like:
  + Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer with at least 60-95% alcohol.
  + Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
  + Avoid contact with people who are sick.
  + Stay home if you are sick (except to visit a healthcare professional) and avoid close contact with others.
  + Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
  + Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.
* If you get sick with fever or new or worsening cough or difficulty breathing during your cruise, stay in your cabin and notify the onboard medical center immediately.

SOURCES: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/covid-19-cruise-ship>

1. **Should I cancel my trip if we are going somewhere in the U.S., and not a country with a travel advisory?**

Older Ohioans and those with underlying health conditions, like heart disease or diabetes, have been found to be more at-risk for complications associated with COVID-19. These individuals should avoid situations that put them at increased risk of catching an infectious disease, including cruises or long plane trips.

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

Cases of COVID-19 have been reported across the nation, and multiple states are reporting deaths associated with the virus. Person-to-person spread of COVID-19 is occurring and countries are reporting both travel-related cases and community spread of the disease. As the outbreak of COVID-19 continues, there remains a risk of infected travelers and crew. So Ohioans should weigh the risks for travel.

SOURCE: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/covid-19-cruise-ship>

1. **I have a trip scheduled for China. Should I go?**

The CDC has issued a Warning Level 3 travel notice. This means all people should avoid nonessential travel to China. The situation is evolving. Stay up to date with [CDC’s travel health notices related to this outbreak](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/china#travel-notices). These notices will be updated as more information becomes available.

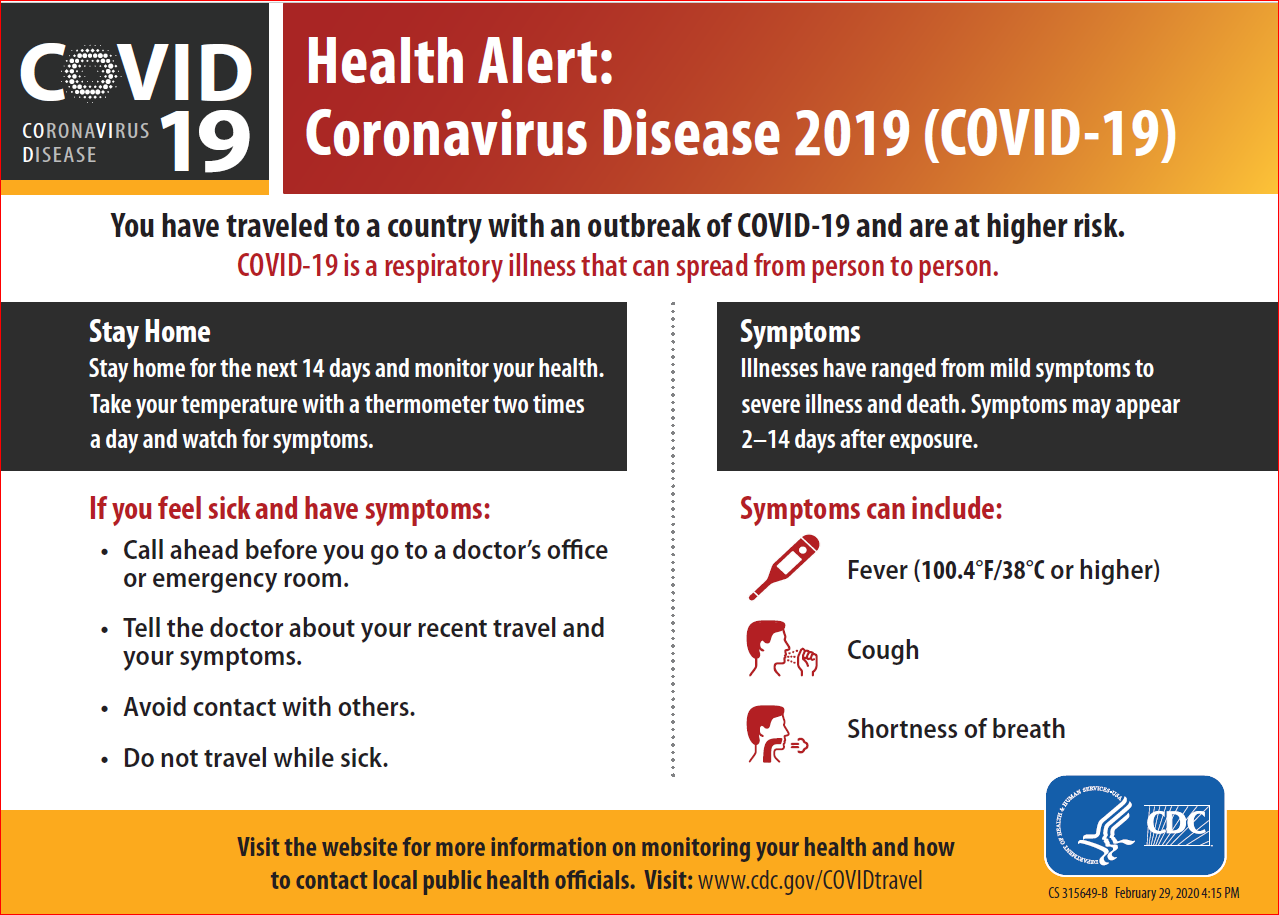
Source:<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/china#travel-notices>

1. **I travelled to China, but I did not get/lost my Travel Health Alert Notice at the airport. What should I do?**



SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/care-booklet.html>

1. **I travelled to S. Korea, Italy, Iran, Japan or Hong Kong. I was not screened at the airport upon my return. I did not receive a card with instructions.**



1. **I am not sick. If you travelled to a country with a level 3 advisory or widespread incidence of the virus you should:**

* Stay home for 14 days after returning to the United States and practice social distancing.
* Check your temperature twice a day, morning and evening
* Monitor yourself for symptoms

1. **What do I do if I get sick?**

If you spent time in an affected area in the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing:

* Assume you have COVID-19 and stay home for at least 14 days (as long as you don’t develop symptoms).
* If you develop symptoms and become worried, seek medical advice. Call ahead before going to a doctor’s office or emergency room. Tell them about your recent travel an area with community spread of coronavirus, and your symptoms.
* Avoid contact with others.
* Do not travel while sick.
* Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
* Clean your hands by washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60%–95% alcohol immediately after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.

**Clinician Information**

* Healthcare providers should obtain a detailed travel history for patients with fever or acute respiratory symptoms. For patients with these symptoms who were in an affected area and had onset of illness within 2 weeks of leaving, consider novel coronavirus infection and notify infection control personnel and your local health department immediately.

SOURCE: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/coronavirus-italy>

1. **Which airports in Ohio are screening?**

No airports in Ohio are screening travelers. Travelers are screened at point-of-entry airports. A list of the US airports that are screening are available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html#cdc-response>.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html#cdc-response>

# I Am Worried

1. **I have an infant at home, but the stores were empty and we couldn’t find formula and I’m not expressing milk anymore. Can I use a homemade formula recipe to make our own?**

No. These recipes can be dangerous and harm your baby. Homemade recipes are never recommended by the CDC, FDA, or ODH. If you need help getting formula, you can reach out to your local WIC clinic. Call 1-844-601-0365 to connect with your closest WIC clinic.

1. **I have respiratory symptoms, but I have not traveled to any country with a warning or alert. I now heard it travels from person-to-person. Do I have novel coronavirus?**

If you feel sick, we are now advising you to stay home and assume you have COVID-19. This will help prevent the spread of the infection. Monitor your symptoms and contact your healthcare provider if they begin to worsen. To lower your risk of catching any illness, remember to:

* Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
* Avoid contact with people who are sick.
* Stay home while you are sick (except to visit a healthcare professional) and avoid close contact with others.
* Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
* Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

Remember, currently you are more likely to catch the flu or a common cold, which show the some of the same symptoms. If you continue to feel sick, call your healthcare provider.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>

1. **A school calls. One of the student’s father worked in a country with widespread community transmission. The father’s coworker is a confirmed case of COVID-19. Does the school need to exclude the student?**

No, the student should not be excluded from school. COVID-19 cannot be caught from someone who does not have it. As of end of day March 16, 2020 all schools in Ohio are on an “extended Spring Break” to prevent the further spread of the virus in Ohio. The schools will be closed for three weeks. The Governor and ODH Director Dr. Amy Acton will reevaluate the situation and decide if the schools need to be closed for longer as the situation evolves.

SOURCE: ORIGINAL FAQ

1. **I am worried I can’t get my medications for medication assisted treatment (MAT). How can I get suboxone from Lifesprings?**

Medications for MAT are available at many facilities across Ohio. If Lifesprings closes or is closed, then please call our helpline for a referral to another opiate use disorder treatment provider. If someone is looking for a treatment provider, they can call the OhioMHAS bridge line Monday – Friday from 8:30AM to 5:00PM, or they can search on-line at FindTreatment.gov.

1. **Am I at risk for novel coronavirus if I received imported goods from China or another country with widespread community transmission and now have a stiff neck and congestion?**

Currently, there are no known cases linked to imported goods. If you have symptoms that are worrying you, contact your healthcare provider.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **I work for a coroner’s office. Who do I contact regarding how to test the deceased for COVID-19 and what precautions do I need to take?**

You will want to reach out to your local health department. The local health department will consult with us, and possibly the CDC, to see if testing is necessary.

More information about postmortem specimens and protocols are here from CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-postmortem-specimens.html>

1. **I am a funeral director. What precautions should I take to transport a decedent suspected of having COVID-19?**

Most often, spread from a living person happens with close contact (i.e., within about 6 feet) via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread. This route of transmission is not a concern when handling human remains or performing postmortem procedures.

Postmortem activities should be conducted with a focus on avoiding aerosol generating procedures and ensuring that if aerosol generation is likely (e.g., when using an oscillating saw) that appropriate engineering controls and personal protective equipment (PPE) are used. These precautions and the use of Standard Precautions should ensure that appropriate work practices are used to prevent direct contact with infectious material, percutaneous injury, and hazards related to moving heavy remains and handling embalming chemicals.

More information about postmortem specimens and protocols are here from CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-postmortem-specimens.html>

1. **My license expired soon and now I can’t get it renewed with my BMV closed. What if I get a ticket?**

Governor DeWine asked the Ohio State Highway Patrol and other law enforcement officers to not issue tickets for expired licenses during this period.

1. **An event will be held in my area where they are expecting 5,000 attendees from all over the world. What guidance does ODH have for them?**

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

Also, ODH and Ohio Governor Mike DeWine have ordered that all gatherings with more than 50 attendees are prohibited throughout the state.

This order takes effect immediately on March 12, 2020 and will remain in full force until the State of Emergency declared by Governor DeWine no longer exists, or Director Acton rescinds or modifies it.

Mass gatherings are considered as any event involving more than 50 people in a single room or space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, theater, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space.

People attending any gathering, even one with fewer than 50 people, should still maintain social distancing (approximately six feet away from others) whenever possible, and continue to follow other precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

This would also include parades, fairs, and festivals.

This does not apply to normal operations at airports, bus and train stations, medical facilities, libraries, shopping malls and centers, or other spaces where 50 or more persons may be in transit. It also does not apply to office environments, school, restaurants, factories, or retail or grocery stores- where large numbers of people may be present, but not within an arm’s reach of each other.

Athletic and other events do not need to be cancelled or postponed if spectators and other attendees are excluded. Immediate family members of participants in the event, or necessary members for the event, are still permitted.

This order does not apply to media.

This order does not apply to religious gatherings, gatherings for the expression of First Amendment protected speech, weddings or funerals.

SOURCE: Press Conference on OhioChannel.org on March 12, 2020

1. **I am planning an event with international attendees. How should I address concerns about COVID-19?**

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

Also, ODH and Ohio Governor Mike DeWine have ordered that all gatherings with more than 50 attendees are prohibited throughout the state.

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SOURCE: Press Conference on OhioChannel.org on March 12, 2020

1. **I am breastfeeding my nine-month-old, and I am pregnant. Am I and my child more likely to get COVID-19?**

There is not currently information from published scientific reports about susceptibility of pregnant women to COVID-19. Pregnant women experience changes to their immune system which might make them more susceptible to viral respiratory infections, like COVID-19.

In limited studies on women with COVID-19 and another coronavirus infection, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV), the virus has not been detected in breast milk; however we do not know whether mothers with COVID-19 can transmit the virus via breast milk. The World Health Organization says women can breastfeed if diagnosed with COVID-19 or under quarantine as a PUI, but should wash her hands before feeding and wear a facemask to limit the spread of respiratory droplets during the feeding.

If expressing breast milk with a manual or electric breast pump, the mother should wash her hands before touching any pump or bottle parts and follow recommendations for proper pump cleaning after each use. If possible, consider having someone who is well care for and feed the expressed breast milk to the infant.

There is no evidence that children are more likely to catch COVID-19. Most confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported from China have occurred in adults; however, infections in children have been reported. There is an ongoing investigation to determine more about this outbreak.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/pregnant-women.html>

Breastfeeding information: <https://www.bfmed.org/abm-statement-coronavirus>

1. **What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?**

Both isolation and quarantine mean to separate an individual. Isolation is for ill people. Quarantine is for well people. Isolation is if someone is sick. Your local health department will review your risk and symptoms to determine if either of these apply to you.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html>

1. **My facility is unable to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers because our residents/patients would drink it. Is Purell, a non-alcohol foam-based hand sanitizer, appropriate?**

ODH is not aware of any studies addressing hand sanitizers and the 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Alcohol-based hand rub and soap and water are the only two hand hygiene products mentioned on CDC’s website.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/guidance-prevent-spread.html> .

1. **What are the approved disinfectants for objects and surfaces?**

You can find a list of selected disinfectants and antimicrobial products registered with the Environmental Protection Agency here: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.

1. **What can I do to get mental health help?**

You can find mental health help from various sources including the following:

**Disaster Distress Helpline**

*Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, year-round*

[1-800-985-5990](tel:18009855990)  
1-800-846-8517 TTY  
Text "TalkWithUs" to 66746  
Spanish-speakers: Text "Hablanos" to 66746

**Ohio Crisis Text Line**  
Text keyword "4HOPE" to 741 741

to quickly start a dialogue about your mental health needs

**OhioMHAS Help Line**  
[1-877-275-6364](tel:18772756364)  
available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to talk with a person, get questions answered, and pointed to local treatment options

**Find Addiction and Mental Health Treatment in your local community**  
[https://findtreatment.gov](https://findtreatment.gov/)

searchable database on mental health and addiction services in local communities

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

1-800-273-8255

1. **How can I get suboxone from facilities?**

Medications for MAT are available at many facilities across Ohio. If a facility closes or is closed, then please call the OhioMHAS helpline for a referral to another opiate use disorder treatment provider. If someone is looking for a treatment provider, they can call the OhioMHAS bridge line Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., or they can search online at [www.findtreatment.gov](http://www.findtreatment.gov).

1. **Should staff at residential addiction facilities go to work?**

All organizations should develop responsible policies and procedures for persons diagnosed with COVID-19 or who are suspected to have COVID-19. Limiting entry of visitors and guests is key in these cases as well as following other ODH advice about facility, staff, and resident cleanliness. COVID-19 guidance for behavioral health providers can be found on the COVID-19 website of mha.ohio.gov.

1. **Can family members visit their loved ones at group homes?**

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities. The order can be found at [www.coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov) . Those who take care of elderly residents can still do so, without coming in contact with them.

Also during this time, some group homes may be enforcing extraordinary measures in an effort to reduce risk of residents being exposed to COVID-19. However, all clients have basic rights. If you are concerned that a client’s rights have been violated please contact your local ADAMH Board. Also, talk with the group home operator to see if you an establish alternatives to face-to-face visitation (virtual visitation).

A list by county of board client rights officers and provider crisis contacts is available at <https://mha.ohio.gov/Families-Children-and-Adults/Get-Help/Client-Rights/Community-Advocates>.

The OhioMHAS Consumer and Family Toll-Free Bridge (TFB) line provides referral and resource information for callers regarding addiction and mental health services, supports and organizations statewide. TFB staff members are peers who often work to help callers find the resources they need, learn about the referral process to access those resources, and understand consumer rights and responsibilities. The goal of this free telephone service is to promote advocacy, independence and recovery for Ohioans with behavioral health issues.

Other resources:

* [877-275-6364](tel:18772756364)
* [888-636-4889 TTY](tel:18886364889)
* [614-466-7228 (local)](tel:16144667228)

1. **What should a mental health agency do if a person comes in with a suspected case of COVID-19?**

If a behavioral health treatment provider believes that a patient could have COVID19, they should contact their local health department.

1. **How should someone be handled if turned away from a mental health facility?**

If someone is looking for a treatment provider, they can call the OhioMHAS bridge line Monday – Friday from 8:30AM to 5:00PM, or they can search online at FindTreatment.gov.

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) provides a variety of advocacy services for consumers and families, including but not limited to sharing mental illness and addiction resources, and providing assistance to resolve complaints and grievances. OhioMHAS collaborates with regional psychiatric hospitals, community boards, treatment providers and stakeholders to address advocacy issues, client rights, allegations of abuse or neglect, and respond to larger systems issues.

A list by county of board client rights officers and provider crisis contacts is available at <https://mha.ohio.gov/Families-Children-and-Adults/Get-Help/Client-Rights/Community-Advocates>.

The OhioMHAS Consumer and Family Toll-Free Bridge (TFB) line provides referral and resource information for callers regarding addiction and mental health services, supports and organizations statewide. TFB staff members are peers who often work to help callers find the resources they need, learn about the referral process to access those resources, and understand consumer rights and responsibilities. The goal of this free telephone service is to promote advocacy, independence and recovery for Ohioans with behavioral health issues.

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* [888-636-4889 TTY](tel:18886364889)
* [614-466-7228 (local)](tel:16144667228)
* Email: ask@ODMH@mh.ohio.gov

1. **If a state mental health hospital employee is concerned about another employee being exposed to COVID-19 what should they do?**

Please have them contact their hospital CEO to discuss any concern. OhioMHAS’ state run psychiatric hospitals are implementing specialized guidance and screening protocols to mitigate risk and limit exposure to Coronavirus.

# Stigma and COVID-19

Some people who have been exposed to COVID-19, such as returning travelers or emergency responders, are facing stigma in their communities. Some people of Chinese and Asian decent are facing stigma in their communities, regardless of whether they been exposed to COVID-19.

1. **What is stigma?**

Stigma is stereotyping and discriminating against a group of people, a place, or a nation.

Stigma can occur when people associate an infectious disease, such as COVID-19, with a population, even though not everyone in that population or from that region is at risk for the disease (for example, Chinese Americans living in the United States).

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/stigma-faq.html>

1. **Why might COVID-19 stigma happen in the United States?**

* A lack of knowledge about how COVID-19 is spread.
* A need to blame someone for COVID-19.
* Gossip that spreads rumors, myths, and fears about COVID-19.
* Fear about disease and death.
* History has seen many instances of societies excluding, blaming, or devaluing those feared to have a disease.
  + Examples include the Ebola, HIV, and influenza pandemics of the past where fear led to stigma and discrimination.
  + In many instances, discrimination caused the health problem to get worse because those who felt stigmatized avoided the health care and information they need.
* Examples of stigma include:
  + Making negative comments in-person or online about a group of people and COVID-19.
  + Treating people of Chinese or Asian descent differently, or assuming they must have or can spread COVID-19.
  + Avoiding businesses, such as restaurants or shops, owned by people of Chinese or Asian descent because of fear of COVID-19 infection.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/stigma-faq.html>

1. **How can I prevent stigma?**

Know the FACTS

FACT #1:

People who have returned from China more than 14 days ago and do not have symptoms of coronavirus do not put others at risk.

* Based on current evidence, symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or as many as 14 days after exposure.
* To stay updated, visit CDC’s COVID-2019 Situation Summary page.

FACT #2:

The risk of getting coronavirus in the US is low.

* Some people who have traveled to places where many people have gotten sick with COVID-19 may be monitored by health officials to protect their health and the health of other people in the community.

FACT #3:

Viruses can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity. Your risk of getting COVID-19 is the same as Chinese Americans and people of Asian descent living in the US

* People of Asian descent, including Chinese Americans, are not more likely to get coronavirus than any other Americans.
* Help fight fear by letting people know that being of Asian descent does not increase the chance of getting or spreading COVID-19.

FACT #4:

You can help make sure COVID-19 is stopped by knowing the signs and symptoms:

* Fever
* Cough
* Shortness of breath

Seek medical advice if you have traveled to China in the past 14 days and feel sick. Call ahead before you go to a doctor’s office or emergency room. Tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.

FACT #5:

* There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.
* Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
* Stay home when you are sick.
* Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
* For more information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/stigma-faq.html>

1. **Is it safe to eat at a Chinese Restaurant?**

All restaurants are prohibited from in-person dining. However, carryout food from Chinese restaurants is safe to eat. No cases of COVID-19 have been reported from eating food.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/stigma-faq.html>

1. **Is there any guidance on preventing discrimination against Chinese students/restaurants?**

COVID-19 can only be transmitted by a person who has the virus. No individual who is free from infection with COVID-19 poses a risk to the public. ODH encourages compassion during these difficult situations and to allow science to inform our messaging.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/stigma-faq.html>

# Influenza

1. **What is Influenza?**

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness. Serious outcomes of flu infection can result in hospitalization or death. Some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk of serious flu complications.

There are two main types of influenza (flu) virus: Types A and B. The influenza A and B viruses that routinely spread in people (human influenza viruses) are responsible for seasonal flu epidemics each year.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/index.html>

1. **How can I protect myself from getting the flu?**

You can protect yourself from getting the flu by getting vaccinated. The flu shot is the safest and most effective way to prevent influenza. Other important things you can do to protect yourself from getting influenza are:

* + Avoiding close contact with those who are sick. Likewise, when you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick as well. This includes staying home from work, school, or running errands when you are sick.
  + Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze as these spreads infectious droplets into the air. It is best to cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or doing so into your elbow instead of your bare hands.
  + Wash your hands frequently, especially after touching contaminated surfaces or after coughing or sneezing.
  + Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
  + Practice other good habits. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/actions-prevent-flu.htm>

1. **What are the symptoms of the flu?**

Flu is different from a cold. Flu usually comes on suddenly. People who have flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

* + Fever\* or feeling feverish/chills
  + Cough
  + Sore throat
  + Runny or stuffy nose
  + Muscle or body aches
  + Headaches
  + Fatigue (tiredness)
  + Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

\*It’s important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/symptoms.htm>

1. **When should I see a physician?**

If you get sick with flu symptoms and are at high risk of flu complications or you are concerned about your illness, call your healthcare provider for advice.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/treatment/takingcare.htm>

# Prevention

1. **How can I help protect myself?**

To lower your risk of catching any respiratory illness, remember to:

* Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
* Avoid contact with people who are sick.
* Stay home while you are sick (except to visit a healthcare professional) and avoid close contact with others.
* Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
* Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

Remember, currently you are more likely to catch the flu or a common cold, which show the some of the same symptoms. If you continue to feel sick, reach out to your healthcare provider.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **What should I do if I had close contact with someone who has COVID-19?**

If you have had close contact with a person confirmed, or under evaluation COVID-19 infection,

* If you develop symptoms, assume you have it and stay home to monitor your symptoms. Call a healthcare provider if your symptoms worsen.
* Contact your local health department
* Watch for symptoms
* Fever
* Cough
* Problems breathing
* Take your temperature (normal is under 100.4)
* Call ahead if you need to go to a healthcare provider

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html>

1. **What can private businesses do to help?**

* Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies
* Separate sick employees. For respiratory illness, provide them with a mask and send them home.
* We are asking all businesses to have employees take their temperature every day before coming to work. If possible, monitor employees before they enter the building. If they have an elevated temperature, have them stay home. This is not perfect, but it will help limit exposure to sick employees. (source: March 18 press conference)
* Actively encourage sick employees to stay home
* Promote respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by all employees:
  + Provide tissues and no-touch trash cans
  + Ask employees to clean their hands often with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
  + Provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs in the workplace. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained. Place hand rub in multiple locations or in conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.
* Perform routine environmental cleaning, including all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs.
  + Be aggressive in your cleaning measures.
* Advise employees to follow CDC’s travel guidance
* If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should refer to CDC guidance for how to conduct a risk assessment of their potential exposure.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

# Colleges, Schools with Traveling Students and Boarding Schools

1. **How can college campuses protect students?**

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

On March 10th, Governor DeWine asked all universities and colleges in Ohio to screen students returning to school from international travel or cruises, including, but not limited to, students returning from spring break travel. Governor DeWine also asked that any university-sponsored international travel, non-essential travel, and large gatherings be canceled or postponed. Higher education institutions should also consider offering online/remote learning.

Administrators of colleges and universities should take the following actions to plan and prepare for what to do if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in your community or school:

* Review and update your emergency operations plan. Focus on components that address infectious disease outbreaks.
* Encourage students and staff to take everyday preventive actions to prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses.
  + Stay home when sick
  + Cover coughs and sneezes
  + Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
  + Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
* Monitor and plan for absenteeism.
  + Review the usual absenteeism patterns at your school among both students and staff, so you can identify if the rate of absenteeism increases.
  + Make accommodations (e.g., extended due dates, electronic submission of assignments) for students if they become sick.
* Plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff and faculty.
* Alert local health officials about increases in absences, particularly those that appear due to respiratory illnesses.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/index.html>

1. **What if my students traveled to a country with COVID-19 community spread and got sick?**

If students traveled to an area with community spread, advise them to seek medical care if they feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing. Before going to a healthcare provider, be sure to call and tell them about recent travel and your symptoms. Screen all students returning from international travel and cruise ships in your health center.

Review updated CDC information for travelers, including FAQ for travelers, and consult with state and local health officials.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#basics>

SOURCE: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/Novel-Coronavirus/Resources-Colleges-Universities/>

1. **I ate civet cat in Hong Kong; or I ate fugu in Shanghai, or I ate pangolin in Vietnam, am I at risk?**

No. No cases have been reported from consuming food.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/stigma-faq.html>

1. **We have an international school here. My students from China are all wearing surgical masks. I am afraid the media is going to show up at my door and ask, “What is going on?”**

Culturally, some individuals wear masks in their home countries, and they continue this practice when they are in Ohio. You cannot get COVID-19 from someone who does not have it. ODH follows CDC guidelines.

(Add only if the caller asks for more information) CDC does not recommend that healthy people wear a mask to protect themselves from illnesses, including COVID-19. You should only wear a mask if a healthcare professional recommends it. A facemask should be used by people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms. This is to protect others from the risk of getting infected. The use of facemasks also is crucial for health workers and other people who are taking care of someone infected with COVID-19 in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **How can students, faculty and staff protect themselves?**

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

Advise anyone traveling to a country with community spread of COVID-19 to follow the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Traveler’s Health guidance. As of March 10, 2020, the CDC has issued a [Warning Level 3 Travel Notice](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/novel-coronavirus-china) for China, Iran, South Korea, and Italy. This means do not travel to these countries. The situation is evolving, so please check the CDC [Traveler's Health](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/) page for the most up-to-date information.

To help prevent infection with COVID-19, students, faculty, and staff should take the same steps they already take to prevent exposure to flu and the common cold. To prevent infection:

• Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer.

• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

• Avoid contact with people who are sick.

• Stay home while you are sick (except to visit a healthcare professional) and avoid close contact with others.

• Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.

• Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure healthy immune system.

Currently, there are no vaccines available to prevent COVID-19 infections.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html> and <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>

# Animals

1. **What about animals or animal products imported from China?**

CDC does not have any evidence to suggest that animals or animal products imported from China pose a risk for spreading COVID-19 in the United States. This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available. The [United States Department of Agriculture](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/ct_animal_imports_home)  regulates the importation of animals and animal products, and [CDC regulates](https://www.cdc.gov/importation/index.html) the importation of animals and animal products capable of spreading human disease.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html\>

1. **Should I be concerned about pets or other animals and COVID-19?**

While this virus seems to have emerged from an animal source, it is now spreading from person-to-person in China. There is no reason to think that any animals including pets in the United States might be a source of infection with this new coronavirus. To date, CDC has not received any reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19. At this time, there is no evidence that companion animals including pets can spread COVID-19. However, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it’s always a good idea to wash your hands after being around animals.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#2019-nCoV-and-animals>

1. **Should I avoid contact with pets or other animals if I am sick?**

# At this time, there is no evidence that companion animals including pets can be infected with or spread COVID-19. Although there have been no reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick. If you must care for your pet while you are sick [with COVID-19], wear a facemask and wash your hands before and after interacting with your pet and avoid petting, snuggling, being licked, and sharing food.

# SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#2019-nCoV-and-animals>

# Medical Information

1. **What are symptoms and complications that COVID-19 can cause?**

Current symptoms reported for patients with COVID-19 have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html>

1. **How is COVID-19 treated?**

There are no medications specifically approved for COVID-19. Most people with mild coronavirus illness will recover on their own by drinking plenty of fluids, resting, and taking pain and fever medications. However, some people develop pneumonia and require medical care or hospitalization.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html\>

1. **Should I be tested for COVID-19?**

We are advising people to stay home if they feel sick. We are dealing with a shortage of tests, and suggest that you assume you have COVID-19 and stay home if you feel ill. You can monitor your symptoms and call a healthcare provider if they worsen. If you start to have problems breathing, call the emergency room before going in.

If you are concerned about symptoms (i.e. cough, fever, shortness of breath), first isolate, then call the doctor you normally see. (For medical emergencies, call 9-1-1) Remember that the primary reason for testing to determine if a person needs to be hospitalized or if they have been in contact with high risk individuals. Some people will never be tested because their doctor will determine that testing is not necessary.

When you are sick, you need to stay home and not spread your illness to others. If your symptoms worsen after you’ve talked with your doctor initially, particularly if you have difficulty breathing, or excessive fatigue or fever, you should call the doctor again.

If your doctor writes an order for you to be tested, you will need to receive instructions from the doctor about the location to go to for testing. You should NOT go to the emergency room to request testing unless directed to do so by your doctor.

The reason tests are being collected this way to is have patients work with testing sites who are trained to collect a useable sample. Tests are generally used for higher risk patients, or those at greatest risk for spreading disease. Even without test a doctor can give you the best advice about how to manage your health at home.

Your healthcare professional will work with your local health department and CDC to determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19. You need an order from a healthcare provider to be tested.

1. **I don’t have symptoms and I’m not sick, but I want to be tested for COVID-19. Where can I find out about how to be tested?**

At this time, ODH is not testing asymptomatic people. You need an order from a healthcare provider to be tested.

Several private laboratories and hospital systems in Ohio are now offering testing. These tests are to be performed only using respiratory specimens collected from individuals who meet CDC clinical and/or epidemiological criteria for COVID-19 testing. In general, Patient Service Centers and other phlebotomy sites cannot collect specimens for this test. Your healthcare provider will direct you to the appropriate testing location if testing is deemed necessary.

**SOURCES:** [www.questdiagnostics.com/home/Coronavirus/](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fc212.net%2Fc%2Flink%2F%3Ft%3D0%26l%3Den%26o%3D2738835-1%26h%3D4138966586%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fwww.questdiagnostics.com%252Fhome%252FCoronavirus%252F%26a%3Dwww.questdiagnostics.com%252Fhome%252FCoronavirus%252F&data=02%7C01%7CLisa.Griffin%40odh.ohio.gov%7C09372bb1dcad4751a76e08d7c11c3b7c%7C50f8fcc494d84f0784eb36ed57c7c8a2%7C0%7C1%7C637190199309777920&sdata=zKUmCZ4BNW5O%2BVKhxr3LfvxlD306COnMvg1LjkPDJU4%3D&reserved=0)

[www.labcorp.com/information-labcorp-about-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19](http://www.labcorp.com/information-labcorp-about-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19)

1. **How can you tell the difference between COVID-19 and flu/other pneumonia?**

You cannot tell the difference. If you are worried see your healthcare provider who may order testing to determine the cause of the illness.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/clinical-criteria.html>

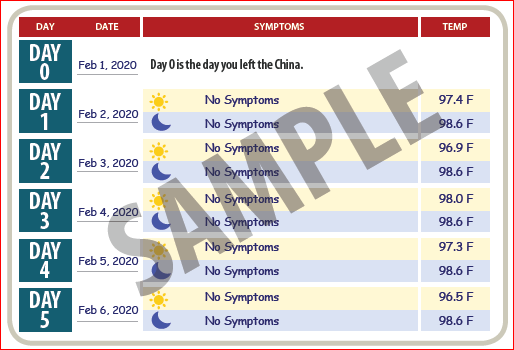
1. **Should I postpone my surgery or procedure?**

Please consult with your health care provider. A public health order prohibiting elective surgeries was signed by the Director of Health, Amy Acton is effective at 5:00 pm on 3/18/2020. Governor DeWine has also requested that dentists and veterinarians postpone elective surgeries. Governor DeWine also developed guidelines for doctors for postponing elective surgeries that will not put patients at risk. You will need to talk to your healthcare provider, and they will contact you directly if your surgery or procedure is postponed.

# Local Health Departments, LTC Facilities, and Healthcare Providers

1. **I am a health department and I am monitoring travelers. I know I must monitor them for 14 days. How do you count the days?**

The day the person left the country is day 0 (zero.



**SOURCE:** [**https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID-19\_CAREKit\_ENG.pdf**](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID-19_CAREKit_ENG.pdf)

1. **(ONLY FOR HEALTHCARE GROUPS/PROVIDERS) I work in a healthcare facility and need personal protective equipment (PPE). Can you give us some?**

Advise them to look within their systems to see if other providers/facilities in their networks may have any.

If not, they should call their Regional Healthcare Coordinator. The number can be found by looking under Find My Healthcare Coalition at the following web address: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/about-us/offices-bureaus-and-departments/bhp/resources/hospital-preparedness-program>

If the Regional Healthcare Coordinator is unable to provide the requested PPE, they will advise on next steps forward.

1. **My patient has had pneumonia since October and has a travel history to a country without community transmission of COVID-19, I want him tested. How do I go about testing?**

Contact your local health department to determine if the patient meets the criteria for a patient under investigation (PUI) for 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Travelers who have returned from countries with community spread in the last 14 days and who have fever, cough or difficulty breathing meet the PUI definition. Only specimens from PUIs can be collected for COVID-19 testing.

1. **I/My patient traveled on a plane with someone under investigation for COVID-19. What should I advise him/her?**

Just as with influenza and other illnesses, you can help protect yourself and others from infection by doing the following:

* Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
* Avoid contact with people who are sick.
* Stay home while you are sick (except to visit a healthcare professional) and avoid close contact with others.
* Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
* Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

If you suspect your patient may have been exposed to COVID-19, contact your local health department and let them know you or your patient may have been exposed to COVID-19.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>

1. **I/My patient traveled on a plane with someone under investigation for COVID-19; the person under investigation subsequently tested negative (no COVID-19 found). Should my patient monitor their temperature?**

No. You cannot contract COVID-19 from someone who does not have it. Someone who has been released from COVID-19 quarantine is not considered a risk for spreading the virus to others because they have not developed illness during the incubation period.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **What should healthcare professionals tell patients who call with symptoms of COVID-19 and related risk factors?**

Ask the patient to let you know when they arrive so you can arrange for them to wear a facemask and wait in a room separate from other patients. If such a room is not available, another option would be to ask the patient to wait in the car.

If patients are having mild symptoms, ask them to simply stay home to self-quarantine and to assume they have it if the symptoms are consistent. Treat them with the normal flu and cold remedies to alleviate their symptoms and discomfort.

1. **How should healthcare professionals respond to patients with possible or confirmed COVID-19?**

Patients should receive any interventions they would normally receive as standard of care. Patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should be asked to wear a surgical mask as soon as they are identified and be evaluated in a private room (ideally an airborne infection isolation room, if available) with the door closed. They also could be asked to wait in the car.

Healthcare personnel entering the room should use standard precautions, contact precautions, airborne precautions, and eye protection (e.g., goggles or a face shield).

Clinicians should also notify infection control personnel at their healthcare facility and their local health department if you suspect the patient could have COVID-19.

1. **I am a healthcare provider; how do I order a test? (General Information – no actual case)**

Contact your local health department to determine if the patient meets the criteria for a patient under investigation (PUI) for 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Only specimens from PUIs can be sent for COVID-19 testing.

1. **When should I test for COVID-19?**

Clinicians should use their judgment to determine if a patient has signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and whether the patient should be tested. Decisions should be based on the local epidemiology of COVID-19, as well as the clinical course of illness. Most patients with confirmed COVID-19 have developed fever and/or symptoms of acute respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing). Clinicians are strongly encouraged to test for other causes of respiratory illness, including infections such as influenza.

Epidemiologic factors that may help guide decisions on whether to test include: any persons, including healthcare workers, who have had close contact with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient within 14 days of symptom onset, or a history of travel from affected geographic areas within 14 days of symptom onset.

Currently, affected geographic areas are China, Iran, Italy, Japan, and South Korea Updates can be found under the “healthcare professionals” section at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus> .

If COVID-19 is suspected immediately notify your local health department.

1. **How do I test?**

The ODH lab and some commercial laboratories are able to perform tests. If COVID-19 is suspected, immediately notify your local health department.

Collect upper respiratory tract specimens (nasopharyngeal AND oropharyngeal swabs). Testing lower respiratory tract specimens, if available. For patients who develop a productive cough, sputum should be collected and tested. The induction of sputum is not recommended. For patients for whom it is clinically indicated (e.g., those receiving invasive mechanical ventilation), a lower respiratory tract aspirate or bronchoalveolar lavage sample should be collected and tested as a lower respiratory tract specimen. Specimens should be collected as soon as possible once a person with possible COVID-19 is identified, regardless of the time of symptom onset.

1. **I work in a lab. How/Where can I send my COVID-19 test specimen?**

You should first consult with your local health department. They will help determine if the specimen needs to be sent to be tested.

1. **(For healthcare providers ONLY (General Information – no actual case) When can patients with confirmed COVID-19 be released from isolation.**

Current CDC guidance to release someone from isolation is made on a case-by-case basis and includes meeting all the following requirements:

* The patient is free from fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
* The patient is no longer showing symptoms, including cough.
* The patient has tested negative on at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected at least 24 hours apart.

Someone who has been released from isolation is not considered to pose a risk of infection to others.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **I work in a laboratory; I do not have any travel information. Can I send a specimen? (General Information – no actual case)**

No. Local and state public health staff will determine if the patient meets the criteria for a patient under investigation (PUI) for 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Only specimens from PUI investigations can be sent.

SOURCE: Original FAQ

1. **How do you test a person for COVID-19? (General Information – no actual case)**

(General Public Answer) A healthcare provider will rub a swab inside the patient’s nose and throat and send the swab for testing. Or, a healthcare provider will ask the person to cough and spit into a clean cup.

(Physician or Laboratory Answer) Clinical specimens should be collected from PUIs for routine testing for other respiratory pathogens. Guidance on collecting and transporting clinical specimens is available on CDC’s website:

For more information on specimen collection see [CDC Information for Laboratories](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/index.html).

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html\>

1. **What should healthcare professionals and health departments do?**

For recommendations and guidance on patients under investigation; infection control, including personal protective equipment guidance; home care and isolation; and case investigation, see [Information for Healthcare Professionals](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html). For information on specimen collection and shipment, see [Information for Laboratories.](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/index.html)

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html\>

1. **I am at a healthcare facility; I do not have anyone trained to ship Category B substances. How can I get training/ship specimens to ODH Lab?**

Pack and ship all specimens in accordance with the US Department of Transportation’s Hazardous Materials Regulations (DOT 49 CFR Parts 171-180) and with the International Air Transport Association’s Dangerous Goods Regulations (IATA). Additional packaging information is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/smallpox/lab-personnel/specimen-collection/pack-transport.html> (Please note: Diagnostic specimens are shipped as Category B Biological Specimens. This webpage has instructions for both Category A and Category B – Depending on your browser, you may need to scroll down to see the category B shipping picture.)

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/smallpox/lab-personnel/specimen-collection/pack-transport.html>

1. **What samples should be collected from PUIs?**

**CDC recommends collecting and testing upper respiratory (nasopharyngeal AND oropharyngeal swabs), and lower respiratory (sputum, if possible) for those patients with productive coughs.** Induction of sputum is not recommended. Specimens should be collected as soon as possible once a PUI is identified, regardless of the time of symptom onset. Maintain proper infection control when collecting specimens.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidelines-clinical-specimens.html>

1. **I hear a lot about standard, contact, droplet and airborne precautions. What are they?**

Standard Precautions are used for all patient care. They are based on the way diseases are spread. They use common-sense practices and personal protective equipment. They protect healthcare providers from infection and prevent the spread of infection from patient to patient. Standard precautions include things like handwashing, glove and gown use when exposure to body fluids are expected.

Transmission-based precautions include contact, droplet and airborne precautions. They are also used in healthcare. They apply, not only when exposure to body fluids are expected, but also, whenever healthcare workers enter the patient’s room.

Contact precautions say the healthcare worker will wear gloves and gown.

Droplet precautions say the healthcare worker will wear a mask and eye protection.

Airborne precautions say the healthcare worker will wear a special mask and the patient will be in a room with special air circulation.

Additional information can be found by going to: <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/standard-precautions.html> and <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/transmission-based-precautions.html>

1. **My facility has a shortage of PPE. What should we do?**

For healthcare providers, they should:

1. Look within their systems to see if other providers/facilities in their networks may have any.
2. If not, they should call their Regional Healthcare Coordinator.  The number can be found by looking under Find My Healthcare Coalition at the following web address: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/about-us/offices-bureaus-and-departments/bhp/resources/hospital-preparedness-program>.
3. If the Regional Healthcare Coordinator is unable to provide the requested PPE, they should contact their local EMA.

* Review CDC guidance for managing the supply of PPE. See: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/healthcare-supply-ppe-index.html>
* Review the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) guidance for extended use and limited reuse of PPE in healthcare settings. See: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>

**If the caller wants to know where they can request PPE, reference the regional PHEP map in sharepoint.**

1. **My health department has a shortage of PPE. What should we do?**

* Reach out to other local health departments to see if they may have any to spare.
* If not, they should call their Regional Healthcare Coordinator. The number can be found by looking under Find My Healthcare Coalition at the following web address: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/about-us/offices-bureaus-and-departments/bhp/resources/hospital-preparedness-program> .
* If the Regional Healthcare Coordinator is unable to provide the requested PPE, they should contact their local EMA.
* Consider conservation measures:
  + Review CDC guidance for managing the supply of PPE. See: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/healthcare-supply-ppe-index.html>
  + Review the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) guidance for extended use and limited reuse of PPE in healthcare settings. See: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>
  + Review CDC guidance for managing the supply of PPE. See: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/healthcare-supply-ppe-index.html>
  + Consider PPE conservation strategies: <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/letters-health-care-providers/surgical-mask-and-gown-conservation-strategies-letter-healthcare-providers>
* If no gowns or masks are available, see CDC’s “considerations for selecting protective clothing used in healthcare for protection against microorganisms in blood and body fluids” : <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/protectiveclothing/>

1. **I work in a long-term care facility. How can I help prevent the spread of COVID-19?**

Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention of Coronavirus in Nursing Homes can be found on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) website, under memo QSO-20-14-NH, in the Quality and Safety Oversite section:

<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Policy-and-Memos-to-States-and-Regions>

1. **Should I go into work if I work at a residential addiction facility?**

All organizations should develop responsible policies and procedures for persons diagnosed with COVID-19 or who are suspected to have COVID-19. Limiting entry of visitors and guests is key in these cases as well as following other ODH advice about facility, staff, and resident cleanliness. Coronavirus related guidance for Behavioral Health Providers can be found on the Coronavirus page of mha.ohio.gov.

1. **I want to visit my son/daughter/friend at a group home and I’m being denied access. Why?**

During this time, some group homes may be enforcing extraordinary measures in an effort to reduce risk of residents being exposed to Coronavirus. However, all clients have basic rights. If you are concerned that a client’s rights have been violated please contact your local ADAMH Board. Also, talk with the group home operator to see if you an establish alternatives to face-to-face visitation (virtual visitation).

[List by County of Board Client Rights Officers and Provider Crisis Contacts.](https://mha.ohio.gov/Families-Children-and-Adults/Get-Help/Client-Rights/Community-Advocates)

The OhioMHAS Consumer and Family Toll-Free Bridge (TFB) line provides referral and resource information for callers regarding addiction and mental health services, supports and organizations statewide. TFB staff members are peers who often work to help callers find the resources they need, learn about the referral process to access those resources, and understand consumer rights and responsibilities. The goal of this free telephone service is to promote advocacy, independence and recovery for Ohioans with behavioral health issues.

877-275-6364

888-636-4889 TTY

614-466-7228 (local)

1. **What do we do at our mental health agency if we think a client has COVID-19?**

If a behavioral health treatment provider believes that a patient could have COVID19, they should contact their local health department.

1. **How do we handle someone turned away from a mental health facility?**

If someone is looking for a treatment provider, they can call the OhioMHAS bridge line Monday – Friday from 8:30AM to 5:00PM, or they can search on-line at FindTreatment.gov

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) provides a variety of advocacy services for consumers and families, including but not limited to sharing mental illness and addiction resources, and providing assistance to resolve complaints and grievances. OhioMHAS collaborates with regional psychiatric hospitals, community boards, treatment providers and stakeholders to address advocacy issues, client rights, allegations of abuse or neglect, and respond to larger systems issues.

[List by County of Board Client Rights Officers and Provider Crisis Contacts](https://mha.ohio.gov/Families-Children-and-Adults/Get-Help/Client-Rights/Community-Advocates)

The OhioMHAS Consumer and Family Toll-Free Bridge (TFB) line provides referral and resource information for callers regarding addiction and mental health services, supports and organizations statewide. TFB staff members are peers who often work to help callers find the resources they need, learn about the referral process to access those resources, and understand consumer rights and responsibilities. The goal of this free telephone service is to promote advocacy, independence and recovery for Ohioans with behavioral health issues.

[877-275-6364](tel:18772756364)  
[888-636-4889 TTY](tel:18886364889)  
[614-466-7228 (local)](tel:16144667228)  
[Or click to email](mailto:askODMH@mh.ohio.gov)

1. **Our state mental health hospital employee is picking up their kid from a school that was closed due to a suspected case. Should they come back to work?**

If this is a state employee, please have them contact their hospital CEO to discuss any concern. OhioMHAS’ state run psychiatric hospitals are implementing specialized guidance and screening protocols to mitigate risk and limit exposure to Coronavirus.

1. **Is there a vaccine for COVID-19?**

Currently, no vaccine is available for COVID-19 infection. Information is available at

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/clinical-criteria.html>

# Order that All Persons Stay at Home Unless Engaged in Essential Work or Activity

1. **Where can I get more details on this order?**

Please visit coronavirus.ohio.gov for more information on this order.

1. **Who does this apply to?**

It is our understanding that this order applies to all Ohioans in the state of Ohio. All individuals must stay at home or in their place of residence, unless performing an essential activity, essential government functions, or to operate essential businesses and operations.

Homes and places of residence include hotels, motels, shared rental units, shelters, and similar facilities.

Exceptions are made for:

· Homeless individuals. They are encouraged to find shelter, and governmental and other entities should strongly consider helping to provide those shelters.

· Incarcerated individuals. They are to follow the policies of the facility they are in.

· Victims of domestic violence, or who live in unsafe circumstances, are urged to find an alternative place to stay. You can go to <http://www.odvn.org/> or call 1-800-934-9840 for help if you are in an unsafe space.

1. **Can I still go to the grocery store?**

It is our understanding that you will still be able to go get groceries.

Stores that sell groceries and medicine will remain open, including:

· Grocery stores

· Pharmacies

· Certified farmers' markets

· Farm and produce stands

· Supermarkets

· Convenience stores

· Other establishments engaged in the retail sale of groceries, canned food, dry goods, frozen foods, fresh fruits and vegetables, pet supplies, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, prepared food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, and any other household consumer products (such as cleaning and personal care products)

This specifically includes their supply chain and administrative support operations.

This includes stores that sell groceries, medicine, including medication not requiring a medical prescription, and also that sell other non-grocery products, and products necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences and Essential Businesses and Operations.

1. **Does this apply to employment and businesses? Should I still work?**

It is our understanding that all businesses and operations in the State, except Essential Businesses and Operations, are required to cease all activities within the State except Minimum Basic Operations. It is our understanding that covered businesses include any for-profit, non-profit, or educational entities, regardless of the nature of the service, the function it performs, or its corporate or entity structure. For clarity, businesses, including home-based businesses, may also continue operations consisting exclusively of employees or contractors performing activities at their own residences (i.e., working from home).

It is our understanding that all places of public amusement, whether indoors or outdoors, including, but not limited to, locations with amusement rides, carnivals, amusement parks, water parks, aquariums, zoos, museums, arcades, fairs, children's play centers, playgrounds, funplexes, theme parks, bowling alleys, movie and other theaters, concert and music halls, and country clubs or social clubs shall be closed to the public.

It is our understanding that minimum basic operations include:

· The minimum necessary activities to maintain the value of the business's inventory, preserve the condition of the business's physical plant and equipment, ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or for related functions.

· The minimum necessary activities to facilitate employees of the business being able to continue to work remotely from their residences

1. **Can I still go outside (walk the dog, walk to park with kids, etc.)?**

It is our understanding that you can still go outside, but you must follow proper social distancing methods to stay at least 6 feet away from all others, except for those in your direct household. You may still go to public parks and open recreation areas.

It is our understanding that public playgrounds will be closed to reduce the spread of infection. But, kids are welcome to walk, hike, ride their bikes, or play in their own yard play areas.

1. **What are essential businesses?**

It is our understanding that you are able to leave your house to work at or obtain services from the following operations:

**Healthcare and Public Health Operations.**

If you are experiencing symptoms and want to seek medical care, please call your doctor first or utilize telehealth if possible. These healthcare and public health operations include, but are not limited to:

· Hospitals

· Clinics

· Dental offices

· Pharmacies

· Public health entities, including those that compile, model, analyze and communicate public health information

· Pharmaceutical, pharmacy, medical device and equipment, and biotechnology companies (including operations, research and development, manufacture, and supply chain)

· Organizations collecting blood, platelets, plasma, and other necessary materials

· Licensed medical marijuana dispensaries and licensed medical marijuana cultivation centers

· Obstetricians and gynecologists

· Eye care centers, including those that sell glasses and contact lenses

· Home healthcare services providers

· Mental health and substance use providers

· Other healthcare facilities and suppliers and providers of any related and/or ancillary healthcare services

· Entities that transport and dispose of medical materials and remains.

This also includes manufacturers, technicians, logistics, and warehouse operators and distributors of medical equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE), medical gases, pharmaceuticals, blood and blood products, vaccines, testing materials, laboratory supplies, cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting or sterilization supplies, and tissue and paper towel products.

This also includes veterinary care and all other healthcare services provided to animals.

Healthcare and Public Health Operations does not include fitness and exercise gyms, spas, salons, barber shops, tattoo parlors, and similar facilities.

**Human Services Operations.**

It is our understanding that any provider funded by the Ohio Department of Aging, Department of Developmental Disabilities, Department of Health, Department of Job and Family Services, Department of Medicaid, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, Department of Veterans Services, and Department of Youth Services that is providing services to the public and including state-operated, institutional, or community-based settings providing human services to the public are essential.

These human services operations include, but are not limited to:

· Long-term care facilities

· Day care centers

· Day care homes and group day care homes

· Residential settings and shelters for adults, seniors, children, and/or people with developmental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, substance use disorders, and/or mental illness

· Transitional facilities

· Home-based settings to provide services to individuals with physical, intellectual, and/or developmental disabilities, seniors, adults, and children

· Field offices that provide and help to determine eligibility for basic needs including food, cash assistance, medical coverage, child care, vocational services, and rehabilitation services

· Developmental centers

· Adoption agencies

· Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged individuals, individuals with physical, intellectual, and/or developmental disabilities, or otherwise needy individuals.

**Essential Governmental Functions.**

It is our understanding that these essential governmental functions include, but are not limited to, are categorically exempt from this Order:

· First responders

· Emergency management personnel

· Emergency dispatchers

· Court personnel

· Jurors and grand jurors

· Law enforcement and corrections personnel

· Hazardous materials responders

· Child protection and child welfare personnel

· Housing and shelter personnel

· Military

· Other governmental employees working for or to support Essential Businesses and Operations.

Essential Government Functions means all services provided by the State or any municipality, township, county, political subdivision, board, commission or agency of government and needed to ensure the continuing operation of the government agencies or to provide for or support the health, safety and welfare of the public, and including contractors performing Essential Government Functions. Each government body shall determine its Essential Governmental Functions and identify employees and/or contractors necessary to the performance of those functions.

**Essential Infrastructure.**

It is our understanding that these essential infrastructure includes, but is not limited to:

· Food production

· Distribution

· Fulfillment centers

· Storage facilities

· Marinas

· Sale

· Construction (including, but not limited to, construction required in response to this public health emergency, hospital construction, construction of long-term care facilities, public works construction, and housing construction)

· Building management and maintenance

· Airport operations

· Operation and maintenance of utilities, including water, sewer, and gas

· Electrical (including power generation, distribution, and production of raw materials)

· Distribution centers

· Oil and biofuel refining

· Roads, highways, railroads, and public transportation

· Ports

· Cybersecurity operations

· Flood control

· Solid waste and recycling collection and removal

· Internet, video, and telecommunications systems (including the provision of essential global, national, and local infrastructure for computing services, business infrastructure, communications, and web-based services).

**Other Essential Businesses.**

Please visit coronavirus.ohio.gov for more information on these groups of other essential businesses.

It is our understanding that other essential businesses include:

· Stores that sell groceries and medicine

· Food, beverage, and licenses marijuana production and agriculture

· Organizations that provide charitable and social services

· Religious entities

· Media

· First amendment protected speech

· Gas stations and businesses needed for transportation

· Financial and insurance institutions

· Hardware and supply stores

· Critical trades

· Mail, post, shipping, logistics, delivery, and pick-up services

· Educational institutions

· Laundry services

· Restaurants for consumption off-premises

· Supplies to work from home

· Supplies for essential businesses and operations

· Transportation

· Home-based care and services

· Residential facilities and shelters

· Professional services

· Manufacture, distribution, and supply chain for critical products and industries

· Critical labor union functions

· Hotels and motels

· Funeral services.

**Please visit coronavirus.ohio.gov for more information on these groups of other essential businesses.**

1. **Is my business essential?**

The Governor and Director of Health want to promote and protect the health of Ohioans. While, the Governor’s and Director’s Orders establish the spirit and parameters of Ohio’s response, it is impossible to anticipate all situations or provide individual responses to all questions. Businesses need to use their best judgment and make a good-faith decision. If you have questions whether your business is essential, please consult the Order for the list of essential businesses.  If you have further questions about your specific business, please consult your trade association or lawyer.  Many trade associations and lawyers are issuing guidance. These are complex times and it is important that we all take measures to flatten the curve.  If you have any doubts about the status of your business, please consider temporarily closing your business to stay home and stop the spread of COVID-19.

1. **Who are essential workers?**

It is our understanding that essential workers are those who need to work to perform work providing essential products and services at Essential Businesses or Operations (which, as defined below, includes Healthcare and Public Health Operations, Human Services Operations, Essential Governmental Functions, and Essential Infrastructure) or to otherwise carry out activities specifically permitted in this Order, including Minimum Basic Operations.

1. **My employer is requiring me to work. What can I do?**

Employees who work for essential employers need to discuss their concerns with their employer. The Order requires those employers to put in place necessary safety measures. The decision to work when employed by an essential employer is a personal one.

*(Please do not send callers to the Department of Commerce Wage and Hour Division. Wage and Hour does not handle that type of complaint. ODH should not advise a caller on the course of action.)*

1. **Will I need to prove to police or officials that I work for an essential business when I leave for work? How do I do that?**

Businesses can register through the Ohio Homeland Security Website. Then Homeland Security will issue worker IDs and cards. Employers can also provide documentation on company letterhead showing the employee works there and they work for an essential business.

Employers should make sure they have rationale explaining why they are an essential business and can stay open.

1. **Will carry out and delivery still be allowed for restaurants?**

Yes. It is our understanding that restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food, but only for consumption off-premises, through such means as in-house delivery, third-party delivery, drive-through, curbside pick-up, and carry-out. Schools and other entities that typically provide food services to students or members of the public may continue to do so under this Order on the condition that the food is provided to students or members of the public on a pick-up and takeaway basis only. Schools and other entities that provide food services under this exemption shall not permit the food to be eaten at the site where it is provided, or at any other gathering site due to the virus's propensity to physically impact surfaces and personal property. This Order is consistent with and does not amend or supersede prior Orders regarding the closure of restaurants.

1. **How will this be enforced?**

It is our understanding that the Director of Health’s Order may be enforced by State and local law enforcement to the extent set forth in Ohio law.

If any public official enforcing the order has questions regarding what services are prohibited under the Order, they should reach out to local health departments to answer questions in writing and consistent with the Order.

1. **What are essential activities and essential travel?**

It is our understanding that Individuals may leave their residence only to perform any of the following essential activities:

**For health and safety.**

To engage in activities or perform tasks essential to their health and safety, or to the health and safety of their family or household members or persons who are unable or should not leave their home (including, but not limited to, pets), such as, by way of example only and without limitation:

· Seeking emergency services

· Obtaining medical supplies or medication

· Visiting a health care professional.

**For necessary supplies and services.**

To obtain necessary services or supplies for themselves and their family or household members or persons who are unable or should not leave their home, or to deliver those services or supplies to others, such as, by way of example only and without limitation:

· Groceries and food

· Household consumer products

· Supplies they need to work from home

· Automobile supplies (including dealers, parts, supplies, repair and maintenance)

· Products necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences.

**For outdoor activity.**

To engage in outdoor activity, provided the individuals comply with Social Distancing Requirements, as defined below, such as, by way of example and without limitation:

· Walking, hiking, running, boating, fishing or biking.

· Individuals may go to public parks and open outdoor recreation areas. However, public access playgrounds may increase spread of COVID-19, and therefore shall be closed.

**For certain types of work.**

To perform work providing essential products and services at Essential Businesses or Operations (which, as defined below, includes Healthcare and Public Health Operations, Human Services Operations, Essential Governmental Functions, and Essential Infrastructure) or to otherwise carry out activities specifically permitted in this Order, including Minimum Basic Operations.

**To take care of others.**

To care for a family member, friend, or pet in another household, and to transport family members, friends, or pets as allowed by this Order. This includes attending weddings and funerals.

1. **When does this take effect?**

It is our understanding that this will take effect on March 23, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

1. **How long does it last?**

It is our understanding that this shall remain in full force and effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 6, 2020, unless the Director of the Ohio Department of Health rescinds or modifies the Order at a sooner time and date.

1. **Can I still go visit elderly relatives? May I deliver food or other items to relatives?**

It is our understanding that individuals may still go deliver services or supplies such as food or other items to the elderly. Please arrange to leave these on a porch or other exterior place. Individuals should not be entering a residence and visiting with the elderly. You may still travel to care for the elderly, minors, dependents, those with developmental disabilities, and other vulnerable people.

# National and State Recommendations/Orders

1. **What is the travel ban people are talking about?**

The Canadian border is now closed to non-essential travel.

President Donald Trump announced additional travel restrictions on March 11, 2020.

The U.S. has now suspended all travel from Europe to the United States for the next 30 days, starting midnight the night of March 13, 2020. These will be adjusted as the situation evolves. These restrictions are currently not applied to the United Kingdom.

The travel restriction applies to foreign nationals who have been in 26 European countries, which make up the Schengen Area, with open borders agreements, in the last 14 days.

The areas impacted include: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

Those exempt from these restrictions, such as U.S. citizens, will be directed to limited airports where screening can take place.

1. **Is this a national emergency?**

On March 13, 2020 President Donald Trump declared a national emergency in the country’s response against COVID-19.

1. **What does the state of emergency on Ohio mean?**

The state of emergency allows state departments and agencies to better, and more quickly, coordinate and respond in their response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Governor DeWine also partially activated the state Emergency Operations Center March 9, 2020 to better allow state and local partners to coordinate their response efforts.

The state of emergency currently does not change day-to-day activities of the general public. Governor DeWine has announced additional recommended precautions to prevent the spread of infection in the state.

1. **What did Lt. Governor Husted announce for department of transportation changes? Can we have larger haul sizes for our trucks now?**

Department of Transportation is granting waivers for haulers carrying essential goods to have more flexibility with weight and size requirements if they are carrying essential goods, like medical supplies, during this time. You can print the permit and carry it with you, and the fee for oversized loads of essential goods will be waived.

Find more information at [www.Transportation.ohio.gov](http://www.Transportation.ohio.gov)

1. **What is changing with the bureau of worker’s compensation? Do I still have to pay?**

The Bureau of Worker’s Compensation will make sure businesses can forgo payments for March, April and May this year, and defer them until June 1, 2020. Then further consideration will re-evaluate depending on the

For additional questions, go to: [www.Bwc.ohio.gov](http://www.Bwc.ohio.gov)

1. **Where can we find all the orders from the Governor and Dr. Acton?**

All orders, once completed and finalized, are available on our website coronavirus.ohio.gov under public health orders. They provide more detail.

Listed:<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/Public-Health-Orders>

1. **What is the Governor suggesting for the general public?**

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

If you must leave for a necessary activity, make sure to follow proper prevention measures- wash your hands, practice social distancing, stay home if you are sick or avoid others who are, etc.

1. **What has the State of Ohio recommended for mass gatherings?**

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

According to an order announced by the Governor and ODH Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, mass gatherings in the State of Ohio are now prohibited. This order takes effect immediately and will remain in full force until the State of Emergency declared by Governor DeWine no longer exists, or Director Acton rescinds or modifies it. On March 16, Governor DeWine reduced the number of people that constitutes a mass gathering to 50. Later in the day, President Donald Trump recommended that across the country that number be reduced to 10 people.

Mass gatherings are considered as any event involving more than 50 people in a single room or space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, theater, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space.

People attending any gathering, even one with fewer than 50 people, should still maintain social distancing (approximately six feet away from others) whenever possible, and continue to follow other precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

This would also include parades, fairs, and festivals.

This does not apply to normal operations at airports, bus and train stations, medical facilities, libraries, shopping malls and centers, or other spaces where 50 or more persons may be in transit. It also does not apply to office environments, school, factories, or retail or grocery stores- where large numbers of people may be present, but not within an arm’s reach of each other.

Athletic and other events do not need to be cancelled or postponed if spectators and other attendees are excluded. Immediate family members of participants in the event, or necessary members for the event, are still permitted.

This order does not apply to media.

This order does not apply to religious gatherings, gatherings for the expression of First Amendment protected speech, weddings or funerals.

Church gatherings are exempt from the mass gathering order. However, at this time many religious organizations are choosing to follow Governor DeWine’s order of limiting groups to 50 people and President Trump’s guidance of no groups larger than 10.

On March 17, the Governor made additional recommendations for weddings and funerals. For weddings, we ask you to figure out a way to celebrate your wedding but postpone the large gathering. For funerals, we suggest holding a small, private memorial, but do the large service later. These are requests, but not orders.

1. **What has the Governor recommended for athletic events?**

Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have announced a stay at home order which goes into effect March 23, 2020 at 11:59 pm. This order means everyone has to stay at their home or place of residence, unless for necessary activities.

1. **What has the Governor recommended for religious institutions?**

The Governor recommends that religious institutions consider limiting practices that could cause the spread of germs. If you are considered high-risk, please think about staying home.

1. **What has the Governor recommended for nursing homes?**

The Governor has asked nursing homes to eliminate visitors in an effort to protect the at-risk populations residing there. Each essential individual, employee or vendor will be screened for signs of illness and must submit to a temperature reading to gain entrance. All facilities will be required to keep a log of all who are admitted access, and all visitors must provide their name, ID, phone numbers, and addresses.

The Director of ODH and Governor released an executive order preventing all visitors at long-term care facilities to help limit their exposure to illnesses. Exceptions can be made for end-of-life cases.

The order also recommends limiting points of entry to only one entrance for each facility. This does not apply to emergencies.

Residents will be able to discharge from homes at any time, but will be subject to the ordered assessments and directives.

Nursing homes are still able to take in patients who have tested positive for COVID-19, but they are encouraged to follow isolation protocols and guidance from the CDC to prevent the spread of infection in the process.

Order for additional questions: <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/public-health-orders/order-to-limit-access-to-ohios-nursing-homes-and-similar-facilities>

1. **What about senior centers and adult daycare facilities?**

The Governor announced March 20, 2020 that senior centers would be closing at the close of business day March 23, 2020. All facilities providing older adult day care services and senior centers will close.

Each center has made preparations to ensure that those who depend on food will get it, and it will be safely delivered to their door. If you have questions about logistics, you can reach out to your usual center directly.

1. **Does this include adult day services for those with developmental disabilities?**

These locations across Ohio are ordered to close effective at close of business March 21, 2020. We have worked with the providers to ensure each client still receives necessary services.

Settings of 10 people or less are still permitted, as well as services in someone’s home- as long as they follow preventative measures. For specific information about your program, reach out to the program itself.

1. **What has the Governor recommended for corrections facilities?**

The Governor’s Office has ended prison visitation for the time being to Ohio’s prison system. There is also an order expected for community jails and community corrections facilities throughout the state prohibiting visitation. Other protocols to screen vendors, contractors, etc. will be put into place as well.

1. **What has the Governor recommended for colleges and universities?**

The Governor has recommended colleges and universities:

* Screen students returning from international travel or cruise ships
* Eliminate international travel for students and staff
* Cancel/postpone university-sponsored travel and large meetings
* Move toward online/remote learning

1. **What has the Governor recommended for K-12 schools?**

Children around the world have not experienced complications like the elderly when dealing with this illness, and appear to bounce back well, but they are still carriers of the disease.

Governor DeWine announced March 12, 2020 that all Ohio schools, public and private, will be closed to limit the spread of this virus. This closure will begin at the end of the school day Monday, March 16, 2020 and they will remain closed for three weeks. The closure will be re-evaluated as the situation progresses. There are no exceptions to this order. All physical school buildings are closed to students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

We expect schools to keep learning going, and many schools have plans for online learning. There are a wealth of free, online resources, such as Kahn Academy, that schools and educators can share with students. You can also sign some children up for the Governor’s Imagination Library to receive free books up to age five.

In response to school closures, the Columbus Metropolitan Library announced they are closing all locations from March 13, 2020 until April 6, 2020 to promote social distancing. Library sources can still be accessed online at columbuslibrary.org

Other libraries throughout the state may make independent decisions about whether to close or not, but Governor DeWine asked them on March 18 in his press conference to deliver their services in a way that does not put people together.

1. **How will kids get food while schools are closed if they rely on school for meals daily?**

The state is working to make sure meal services will be able to continue for kids who rely on their school system for these provisions. The US Department of Agriculture approved two of Ohio’s waiver requests to keep school breakfast and lunch programs going while schools are closed. During closure, schools will be able to provide every child under 18 with “grab and go” meals, ensuring that no child goes hungry while school is out. Some school districts also now have the unprecedented ability to deliver a healthy meal right to a student’s home. The Ohio Department of Education will be sharing additional information with schools shortly.

1. **What about school-mandated testing?**

Governor Mike DeWine has been in contact with legislative leaders and will be asking the General Assembly to pass legislation to forgo state testing for the 2019-2020 school year.

1. **What about childcare?**

Starting on March 26, 2020, all childcare centers must operate under a Temporary Pandemic Child Care license. We will also go down to a maximum of six children per room. Ratios of one worker to no more than six children will also go into effect. These centers are to limit the use of shared spaces. If shared space is used, it must have a rigorous cleaning schedule.

Centers should keep children of parents who work at the same employer together, and should limit all parent interaction at drop off and pick up.

This will operate until April 30, with the potential to extend and adjust as needed.

If you are working from home, please consider caring for your child to lessen the burden on childcare centers. For those of you who can’t, start thinking about what you would do for childcare if they did close down.

If you normally rely on elderly grandparents to provide emergency childcare, please consider alternative options since older Ohioans are considered high risk. This is the time where we look to neighbors and friends to provide support.

The Governor signed an executive order that will provide temporary relief to childcare providers regarding teacher to student ratios. These will apply to preschool and school-aged children.

The Department of Jobs and Family Services will work with our publicly-funded childcare providers to make sure they continue to receive payments when a child is absent, or if they need to close due to COVID-19. They have also provided guidance to make sure facilities are as clean as possible to prevent the spread of infection.

1. **I heard there was an announcement about childcare. Are they closed?**

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) announced March 17, 2020 that they would be taking emergency action to provide childcare to families where the parents work in health, safety, and essential service fields during the pandemic. The agency will issue temporary pandemic childcare licenses to ensure communities have access to child care.

New temporary pandemic child care centers will operate under reduced regulations focused solely on the health and safety of children. Pandemic child care center licenses can be granted to already existing child care centers or new child care centers that may be created in response to community needs.

Parents who are able should identify a safe and healthy alternative child care option during the pandemic that will keep their child(ren) out of a group setting and not with an elderly provider. However, we recognize that this is not an option for all families and want to ensure all children have a safe option while parents provide health, safety, and other essential services.

A previous executive order, EO 2020-02D, increased the number of children allowed to be supervised by child care staff, depending on the type of program and ages of children being served. It also increased from 10 to 20 the number of paid absent days for providers serving children in the Publicly Funded Child Care program, and it provides child care programs with 21 paid days if they must close their programs because of the pandemic.

1. **Are bars and restaurants closing?**

Governor DeWine and Dr. Acton have ordered all restaurants and bars to close, except for carry-out and delivery services.

This order takes place the night of March 15, 2020 at 9:00 pm. This begins ahead of the St. Patrick's Day holiday that has the potential to bring out thousands of people - and beyond - to gather.

NOTE: Ireland also intends to close pubs through the end of March to promote social distancing.

1. **Does this apply to university dining halls?**

At this time, university dining halls should also only provide carryout or delivery service, and close dine-in options too.

1. **Does this apply to cafeterias at medical facilities?**

This order does not apply to food service in healthcare facilities.

1. **Does this order apply to services in VFWs?**

Gathering of more than 50 individuals in indoor and outdoor spaces are now prohibited.  The Order prohibiting the consumption of food and beverages in bars and restaurants is a further refinement of the mass gathering order. Bars and restaurants are prohibited from allowing patrons to eat or drink on the premises—it is carryout only as permitted by law. Both taken together are designed to eliminate large numbers of people gathering together as a way to reduce the likelihood of infection.

1. **Does this apply to food and bar services at weddings or funerals?**

This order does not apply to catering at weddings or funerals.

On March 17, the Governor made additional recommendations for weddings and funerals. For weddings, we ask you to figure out a way to celebrate your wedding but postpone the large gathering. For funerals, we suggest holding a small, private memorial, but do the large service later. These are requests, but not orders.

1. **How will we help small businesses and wait staff who are hurt by this order?**

You can support these businesses by still ordering carryout and delivery from these locations. Continue to use these services, while practicing social distancing.

To assist Ohio workers directly impacted by the COVID-19 health emergency, Governor DeWine announced he will issue an executive order that makes several changes to Ohio’s unemployment law and state agency policy.

The order will broaden current state policy to clarify that individuals that are quarantined by a health professional or by their employer are considered to be unemployed and will not be subject to requirements to actively seek work during the period of emergency. This also applies to companies that determine it is necessary to temporarily shut down operations due to the current emergency.

Ohio currently has a one week waiting period before an individual can receive unemployment. In order to expedite the payments to impacted Ohioans, they are waiving the waiting week so that workers eligible for unemployment benefits will receive them for the first week of unemployment. For future taxes, the costs of these additional benefits will be mutualized.

More questions can be pointed to 1-877-644-6562.

ODJFS will also waive employer penalties for late reporting and payments for the next quarter to assist employers impacted by lack of staff availability. The Governor’s Office is also working with the federal government to allow small businesses and non-profits to apply for low-interest loans to pay for certain expenses incurred by COVID-19.

To ensure the process of qualifying the state is done as quickly as possible, we are asking any small business owner who has been impacted by this public health crisis to send their contact information to [BusinessHelp@Development.Ohio.Gov](mailto:BusinessHelp@Development.Ohio.Gov) . Once received, Development Director Lydia Mihalik and her team will work quickly to follow-up and gather the needed information.

Additional information on the SBA’s Economic Injury Disaster Loan program is available at SBA.gov/disaster or by contacting the SBA disaster assistance customer service center by calling 1-800-659-2955 (TTY: 1-800-877-8339).

1. **Where can businesses go to find resources and information to help during this time?**

Businesses and workers can now access all our resources at[**www.coronavirus.ohio.gov/businesshelp**](http://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov/businesshelp)

This portal includes information on unemployment benefits, the Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program, the Liquor Buyback Program, modified rules for trucking to help ship critical supplies into the state, the delay of BWC Premiums, etc.

1. **Are fitness centers, gyms, bowling alleys, REC centers, movie theaters, indoor water parks, or trampoline parks closing?**

Governor DeWine and Dr. Acton have ordered these facilities to close. This order will take place on March 16, 2020. More information will be available once the official order is released. It will be posted at [www.coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov)

1. **Are salons allowed to stay open?**

On March 18, 2020 Governor DeWine ordered barber shops, nail salons, beauty salons, and tattoo parlors to close at end of business March 18. This will help limit the spread of COVID-19.

This includes all hair salons, day spas, nail salons, barber shops, tattoo parlors, body piercing locations, massage therapy locations, and tanning facilities. They also apply to services that may be delivered in the customer’s home or in the home of the licensee.

This does not apply to dog grooming salons.

1. **How are we addressing the personal protective equipment (PPE) shortage and demand?**

The State of Ohio has requested access to the national stockpile of personal protective equipment. The Governor has asked Ohioans to cancel any upcoming elective or outpatient surgeries to help preserve the PPE for those who really need it to care for sick patients.

We are also asking those who have extra PPE to consider donating it, to make sure those who need it have enough. If you have some you’d like to donate, first call your local EMA to notify them of the availability of PPE, should it be needed. You should not drop it off; instead you should hold onto it so that it can be redirected to an area of need, should the need arise.

ODH follows CDC guidelines. The CDC does not recommend that healthy people wear a mask to protect themselves from illnesses, including COVID-19. You should only wear a mask if a healthcare professional recommends it. A facemask should be used by people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms. This is to protect others from the risk of getting infected. The use of facemasks also is crucial for health workers and other people who are taking care of someone infected with COVID-19 in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

1. **President Trump and Vice President Pence requested construction sites donate N-95 masks to hospitals. The Governor and Dr. Acton requested professionals donate PPE if they can afford to. How do we do that?**

If you’re a professional who has surplus PPE that you’re able to donate, please first reach out to your county Emergency Management Agency (EMA), who will then coordinate next steps to ensure PPE is available to those that need it. Please do not deliver PPE directly to the agency. Just hold on to the PPE for now, until the EMA can redirect it to an area of need, should the need arise.

The President also asked that they avoid making additional orders.

1. **Elective procedures have been rescheduled and delayed. What does that mean exactly?**

This order will go into effect March 18, 2020 at 5:00 pm. All elective surgeries and procedures that utilize PPE should no longer be conducted.

All non-elective surgeries can continue, since they are not optional. This would include surgeries that are life-saving, a procedure that saves an organ, time sensitive surgery that prevents the rapid decline to severe symptoms, or a surgery that prevents the progression of disease.

Also, eliminate all non-essential individuals from surgery/procedure rooms and patient care areas to preserve PPE. Only individuals essential to conducting the surgery or procedure shall be in the suite or other patient care areas where PPE is required.

This will remain in effect until the state of emergency ends, or otherwise noted.

1. **Who does this order apply to?**

This order applies to all hospitals and outpatient surgery or procedure provider, whether public, private, or nonprofit. They will establish an internal structure to ensure the principles are followed.

1. **How will I know if my procedure is cancelled?**

Your healthcare provider will contact you directly.

1. **Why have I seen the National Guard out? Are they going to quarantine communities?**

On March 18, 2020 Governor Mike DeWine activated the Ohio National Guard to support food banks that are short staffed due to COVID-19. They will be available to help food pantries that request assistance. This is routine nationwide when dealing with a crisis. They are not going to be enforcing quarantines, or ordering citizens to stay in their homes or anything along those lines. They are simply being asked to help provide resources to Ohioans in need.

1. **Governor DeWine said all businesses should be taking their employees’ temperatures before they come to work. I am an employer and I am not able to find thermometers to purchase due to shortages. What should I do to comply with the order to take employees’ temperature at work?**

If it is not feasible to take employees’ temperatures at work, employers should require that employees take their temperature before arriving to work. Anyone with a temperature above 100.4 degrees or higher should self-quarantines with members of their household. If they have a fever, they need to stay home until they are fever-free for at least three days.

If at all possible, employees should be working from home and not coming in to work. If any employee is experiencing symptoms like sore throat or a cough, they should stay home and limit their exposure to anyone.

There is a shortage of thermometers currently, so you may not be able to get thermometers to use. So, if you are still unable to take temperatures or have them take their own temperature, you should screen each of your employees with a basic set of questions:

* Do they have any symptoms, including fever, cough, or shortness of breath?
  + If yes, they should stay home until they no longer have these symptoms.
* Have they been exposed to someone with confirmed COVID-19?
  + If yes, but they don’t have symptoms, then they should stay home for 14-days from the time they were exposed to someone.
  + If yes, and they have these symptoms, they need to stay home for at least seven days from the time they started feeling symptoms, and at least three days after their fever has disappeared.

If the answers to these questions are no, then they can proceed to work.

If employers want to purchase thermometers and can’t find them, you can tell BUSINESSES ONLY to reach out to their county EMA. Do not tell the general public to call them.

1. **My employer is not complying with preventative measures, like social distancing and screening employees. How can I report them?**

You should talk to your employer about your concerns.

Continue to practice proper preventative measures for yourself if you are worried about getting sick. This includes staying at least six feet away from others and washing your hands frequently. You can view our website for more resources.

If things continue, you can try to contact your local health department or law enforcement’s non-emergency number to report the employer.

1. **What did Dr. Acton mean when she said 100,000 Ohioans are infected?**

Public health experts have estimated up to 1% of the population could be infected after identifying multiple cases of community spread of coronavirus. We now have multiple cases identified in Ohio.

The estimates consider that:

* Testing is limited.
* Most individuals that have the disease are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms.
* The incubation period can be up to 14 days so people are incubating the illness and aren’t showing symptoms.
* We know that this virus is highly transmissible.

Based on how quickly the virus multiplies and infects people and based on the modeling, we can figure that there are thousands of Ohioans who may already have been infected.

We know that sounds extremely scary but please consider:

* The majority of people who have this illness will experience mild or moderate symptoms. They won’t require testing. And they will be prescribed treatment to help ease their symptoms. For fever, we will give Tylenol or acetaminophen. For coughs, they likely will take cough medicine and cough drops.

A smaller number of cases will have severe infections that will require hospitalization. That’s why individuals need to be vigilant in monitoring symptoms and reach out to a healthcare provider if symptoms worsen. Individuals with shortness of breath or a high fever should see a provider.

That healthcare provider will use clinical judgment combined with a medical evaluation and history to decide if testing is necessary. Testing requires a doctor’s order.

Find out more at [www.coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov)

1. **How will all this be enforced?**

The law requires all citizens to obey orders issued by the Director of Health (Revised Code Section 3701.352). Boards of health of a general or city health district, health authorities and officials, police officers, and sheriffs among others can enforce orders and rule of the department of health (Ohio Revised Code Sections 3701.56 and 3701.57).  A violation of a 3701.352 is a second degree misdemeanor (Revised Code 3701.99) and law enforcement can issue citations to the business owner and the patrons violating the orders. Finally, law enforcement can issue a citation to anyone who fails to disperse when ordered to do so by law enforcement. (Revised Code 2917.04).

If you can confirm the caller is law enforcement or a prosecutor, it is ok to share the general number for the Office of General Counsel and one of the ODH attorneys can work with the caller.  That number is 614-466-4882

If the caller is a citizen and is reporting a violation advise them to contact their local health department and/or the non-emergency number for local law enforcement to report the violation.

1. **I heard state parks were closing down. Can we not go to parks now?**

In response to the developing public health situation with COVID-19 and the Ohio Department of Health’s guidance, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources has closed all Ohio State Park offices to public visitation as of 5 p.m. March 19 to protect the health of both visitors and staff.

Camping, cabin, golf course operations, and the parks themselves will remain open to guests at this time.

All state parks will remain open with staff available by phone and email at local park offices to respond to questions regarding local facilities, as well as current and new reservations. Visit [www.ohiostateparks.org](http://www.ohiostateparks.org) to find the park office number for each park.

To reschedule or cancel current reservations, or to make new reservations, visit [www.reserveohio.com](http://www.reserveohio.com) or call 866-644-6727.

1. **With the bureau of motor vehicles closing, how will we get items renewed?**

On March 18, 2020, Governor Mike DeWine announced he would be closing most of the BMV locations in the state starting at close of business March 18. Five locations will remain open to perform essential services. All other services will be paused or offered online or through the mail.

Five will remain open because they are essential to issue/renew commercial drivers' licenses so that our transportation system can keep moving.

1. **Why is COMPANY X (call center, mall, factories, etc.) allowed to stay open and be full of customers or workers if others are closed?**

Closing these facilities may be something considered in the future after further assessment, but owners have the choice to do what they feel is best for their employees and the Ohioans they serve. We have started with the locations that have the largest impacts, and more closures will be considered as the situation evolves.

All businesses have been asked to allow as many employees as possible to work from home to promote social distancing. If employees are continuing to work at the facility, employers should make sure no employees come to work if sick or with a fever. They should all also be following guidance from our website, coronavirus.ohio.gov, to make sure they clean and disinfect accordingly.

1. **How are jail releases happening?**

Jail releases are happening at the county level.  These decisions are being made between the local judge, the local prosecutor, and the local sheriff’s office.  They are identifying low level offenders and changing their bonds to personal recognizance bonds.  Questions about these would need to be directed to your local courts.

There are no releases happening from our state prisons.  The state prisons have taken extremely effective steps to prevent the spread of the virus.  We are not willing to let people out of prisons before they have served their sentence.

1. **What is the state doing about price gauging?**

The Governor has talked to Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost, and he is ready to take action against price gauging in this time of worry, to make sure Ohioans are not charged more than fair price for items they need.