



## Seneca County EMA Situation Report #12

COVID-19 Response

March 29, 2020

County EOC Status: **Monitoring**

State EOC: **Activated**

Distribution List: Villages, Townships, Seneca County Elected Officials, City of Tiffin Elected Officials, City of Fostoria Elected Officials, Fire Chiefs, Law Enforcement, LEPC/HS and Mental Health Recovery Services

### Ohio

**Confirmed Cases:** 1653 (+247 in last 24 hours)  
**Deaths** 29

### Seneca County

**Confirmed Cases:** 2  
**Deaths:** 0

### Resources:

Ohio ODH: [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov)

CDC: [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

Seneca County General Health District: [senecahealthdistrict.org](https://senecahealthdistrict.org)

### Executive Summary

(The following summary is from Wood County EMA) Governor DeWine stated that we don't not have enough N95 masks and that these masks are so very important. He reported that they are working very hard on trying to source these masks. This problem is not unique to Ohio. Battelle Lab has developed a machine with the capability to sterilize 80,000 masks per day. Battelle Labs is a Columbus based company. They have two of these machines in Ohio. He stressed that getting these on line is urgent. We have been waiting for FDA approval. This morning, the FDA approved it, but not for 80,000/day as desired. The governor stated that this made him very angry. At that point, he called President Trump, and had a great conversation to make sure this got done today. Also, he has been in contact with senators and congressman regarding this matter. The press conference today is to appeal directly to the FDA and express to other states that help on the way if we can get this approved. Several minutes ago, the FDA commissioner called Governor DeWine as he was heading into the FDA situation room, and he said this would be cleared up today and he thought we would be able to get what we wanted. We have not gotten the approval yet, but the governor is hopeful. This press conference today was held to draw attention to this matter.

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According to Battelle, their process uses hydrogen peroxide vapor, and their testing began 2 years ago. The masks will be under pressure for 2 hours, let sit for 6 hours to release the hydrogen peroxide. With their process each mask can be sterilized up to 20 times without causing any degradation to the mask. The process will go as follows: hospitals will collect the masks, they get wrapped in plastic. They get placed into another bag and couriered to the Battelle facility. Then with Battelle staff in full PPE, these masks get loaded into storage containers with liners and sensors. Then they get pressurized with hydrogen peroxide for sterilization, then they package the same masks up and send back to the same hospitals. They would start this process tomorrow in Ohio if they get the approval today. They plan on taking masks from all over the state.

Governor DeWine delivered the news that an Ohio company has 2 pieces of equipment that if the FDA would approve their use, could sanitize up to 160,000 masks per day for re-use thus relieving some of the strain on procuring masks for health professional. The Governor made a public plea to the FDA to expedite approval of this technology. The Governor also made a public plea to private labs to report their tests and findings to the Ohio Department of Health to assist in planning purposes.

Governor DeWine reports that there is now an email set up to coordinate donations and offers to help. This address is [together@governor.ohio.gov](mailto:together@governor.ohio.gov).

Dr. Acton reports there is a new coronavirus interactive dashboard at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/dashboard>.

Lt. Governor Husted reinforced that health departments should not be called for interpretations of the rules only for enforcement. He suggested that people visit the unemployment website at varying times of the day because it is open 24/7.

#### **Seneca County General Health District:**

Seneca County Health Commissioner will produce Facebook Live videos starting next Monday at 10:30 with updates from the Health District. These will occur at 10:30 Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Videos will be archived on Facebook and can be viewed live on the Health Department's and Commissioner's FB pages.

#### **Emergency Management Agency**

EMA reports localized flooding along Rock Creek including but not limited to Heidelberg University's Hoerneman Stadium and lower parking lots and Lower Hedges Boyer Park. Please heed road closure signs.

EMA is continuing to accept and process Personal Protective Equipment from non-emergency sources to help support the supply for the Health Department. Contact the EMA at 419.934.1967 to arrange a drop-off. The Donation Center at the Public Safety building will be accepting donations from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. M-F. These resources will be prioritized and dispensed on the directive of the Seneca County General Health District.

#### **Blood Collection**

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The American Red Cross now faces a severe blood shortage due to an unprecedented number of blood drive cancellations in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Across the country, more than 9,000 blood drives have been canceled, resulting in more than 250,000 uncollected blood donations. **Blood donation is considered an essential service** to ensure the health of the community and is listed as an exception in the state order. While everyone is being asked to avoid mass gatherings, it's very important to note that blood drives are *not* considered "mass gatherings." Blood drives are controlled events with trained staff and appropriate safety measures to protect donors and our staff. The Red Cross remains open to take blood donations and people are encouraged to continue to donate blood so hospital patient care can continue.

The Red Cross has implemented new measures to ensure blood drives and donation centers are even safer for our donors and staff, including:

- Checking the temperature of staff and donors *before* entering a drive to make sure they are healthy
- Providing hand sanitizer for use before the drive, as well as throughout the donation process
- Spacing beds to follow social distancing practices between blood donors
- Increasing enhanced disinfecting of surfaces and equipment.

Together, we must ensure a readily available blood supply for patients who are counting on us. Individuals can schedule an appointment to give blood with the American Red Cross by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org), using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, calling 1-800-RED-CROSS or activating the Blood Scheduling Skill for Amazon Alexa.

### **Mental Health and Recovery Board of Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot Counties**

During these uncertain times, our office may be closed to the public, however, we are still hard at work to ensure that community member's needs are met. Our board staff is ready to help you navigate the resources. Call our office at 419.448.0640 for any questions regarding behavioral health.

### **County Commissioners**

The Seneca County Board of Commissioners approved a state of emergency declaration Thursday March 26<sup>th</sup> in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that is affecting communities across the world. The proclamation, which can be viewed in its entirety at [senecacountyohio.gov](http://senecacountyohio.gov), gives limited emergency powers to County Administrator Stacy Wilson, could set the county up to receive state or federal emergency funds and allows the commissioners to hold digital meetings. This declaration can be read in its entirety at [senecacountyohio.gov](http://senecacountyohio.gov)

### **City of Tiffin**

Mayor's Messages: Due to the current COVID-19 health crisis, I have determined it necessary to waive late fees for sewer bills for all residences and businesses for March, April, May and June in 2020. This authority is granted to me under the emergency powers of the Mayor in Chapter 131 of the Tiffin City Charter.

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Declarations and orders by the Mayor and City Council can be found at [tiffinohio.gov](http://tiffinohio.gov).

### **Courts**

The Common Pleas Courts have postponed all jury trials for the time being, and are asking those with trial and hearing dates to call ahead of time to confirm that they need to appear in person. When appearing, only bring those persons that are necessary to the case. Family members and others will not be admitted to the courthouse.

### **Clerk of Courts**

The Title office is temporarily closed to the public until further notice.

### **Seneca County Veterans Services**

The Veterans Services department has stopped all in-person meetings with clients. Services will continue using phone and email. Contact the Seneca County Veterans' Services Office for more information.

### **Job and Family Services**

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services urges individuals to file their claims online, if possible, at [unemployment.ohio.gov](http://unemployment.ohio.gov).

Employers with a critical need for employees are looking for workers. Go to [Ohiomeansjobs.gov](http://Ohiomeansjobs.gov) to search and apply.

### **Healthcare**

Nursing homes have ended visitation at this time to limit the exposure of the residents.

Testing for the coronavirus is not necessary for everyone who may have the symptoms. Testing is not necessary for asymptomatic individuals. Testing will be reserved for Health Care workers and vulnerable populations only. Please call your doctor or health care provider if you think you have symptoms or call ahead to the hospital before you travel to the ER. If you are in distress, call 911 and tell the dispatcher your symptoms.

### **EMS**

Dispatchers in Seneca County have been doing a great job at screening calls for symptoms of the COVID19 and passing that information on to first responders to protect our front line emergency medical workers.

EMS services in the county continue as usual, however, it is requested that you call your health care provider before calling 911 regarding symptoms of COVID-19. If you are in respiratory distress, call 911.

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### **Law Enforcement**

The Seneca County Sheriff has ended prisoner visitation for the foreseeable future to limit exposure to the inmates and staff of the jail and Sheriff's department personnel.

Tiffin City Police officers are taking reports by phone as much as is prudent, but still responding to emergency calls. Officers will remain on patrol throughout the city.

Fostoria Police Officers are also taking reports and patrolling; responding to emergencies as needed.

Tiffin PD and Fostoria PD have met and agreed to share resources (officers and dispatchers) if the need arises to continue to provide a safe level of service.

### **Business**

Lt. Gov. Husted advised that seasonal workers are needed by companies such as Kroger, Wal-Mart, Amazon, and others during this incident. You can get more information at [Ohiomeansjobs.com](http://Ohiomeansjobs.com). Other information for businesses can be found at [coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

Lt. Gov. Husted said that businesses can defer BWC payments for March, April and May. BWC and the state government will revisit that timeline in May. This decision will leave \$200 million in the local economies. Department of Transportation will issue waivers for weight and size restrictions on critical supply shipments and will waive the fee for oversized loads of critical supplies. SBA loans are available for impacted businesses at [disasterloan.sba.gov](http://disasterloan.sba.gov). Health Insurance payments from businesses can be waived for 60 calendar days as well.

TSEP and the City of Tiffin have put together webpages to direct the public to restaurants with carryout and delivery options.

### **Higher Education**

Tiffin University has suspended classroom learning and moved to an online environment.

Heidelberg University campus will close at 5:00 p.m. Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Classes will resume Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> remotely through the end of the spring semester. Heidelberg will lock all exterior doors of buildings Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> with staff reporting to campus for work. No in-person business will be conducted. Some employees will be approved to work remotely.

### **Public/Private Schools**

Seneca County Opportunity Center: We are currently closed to the general public but are available by phone (419) 447-7521. We currently are video teaching and providing educational services via technology as well as determining eligibility for EI and our adult services. We have been contacting all those who receive services for wellness checks. This includes monitoring over 550 individuals and families to ensure that they have food, Medical Supplies and staffing needed to ensure health and safety as well as monitoring for symptoms of the COVID-19. We have been receiving calls and reassigning staff to support residential providers as we work through this situation. We need Masks, Hand Sanitizer, and other PPE as we assign staff to go out to individuals' homes who are showing the symptoms and are

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unable to care for themselves. We have distributed the resources that we have maintained and looking for ways to support other agencies who support individuals with Developmental Disabilities.

As per the Governor's order, schools are closed through April 3rd for the time being. Some schools are providing breakfast and lunch, delivered to sectors around the area for students and teachers are reaching out to students to assist them in learning while at home.

### **Administration**

FEMA is working with the states to get their agreements in place for an Emergency Declaration. This is very different than a Disaster Declaration. The Department of Health and Human Services will be the lead on this Emergency Declaration, and this is unprecedented. It is vital that agencies that are experiencing extra costs in overtime, supplies, etc. keep a detailed record of expenses and time worked. There is no guarantee right now that these expenses will be reimbursed through FEMA, however, if there is a match required for grants or relief, overtime, volunteer time and time worked outside of regular hours, if documented, could be used to offset match requirements. Requests for Public Assistance applications will be distributed to government entities, hospitals and other health-related organizations and schools and universities.

**This daily situational report will be sent around 4 p.m. each day M-F and as needed over the weekend. If you wish to update or add information to this report, please get it to the EMA at [jspahr@senecacountyohio.gov](mailto:jspahr@senecacountyohio.gov) by 2:30 p.m. each day.**

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