



**Seneca County EMA Situation Report #14**  
**COVID-19 Response**  
**March 31, 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:** 2199 (+266 in last 24 hours)  
**Deaths** 55

**Seneca County**

**Confirmed Cases:** 1  
**Deaths:** 1  
**Recovered:** 1

**Resources:**

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

**CDC:** [CDC.gov](https://CDC.gov)

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

**Executive Summary**

**INNOVATION:** Battelle and OSU Wexner Medical Center have been able to develop a rapid COVID-19 testing mechanism that will help expedite the diagnostic process.

**OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH:** Health Director Amy Acton order on ventilators and other equipment requires entities at all layers of the supply chain to report weekly – by 5 p.m. Wednesday – how many ventilators they possess and where they reside. The reporting requirement applies to entities including but not limited to manufacturers, transporters, retails, and hospitals.

**OHIO EPA:** The Ohio EPA has issued an order to prevent water utilities from being disconnected for those Ohioans who are unable to pay their bill during the state of emergency. Governor DeWine has also asked that the order include all of those houses to be reconnected who have been turned off since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. This is to ensure that during this crisis, everyone has clean and safe drinking water.

The CARES Act establishes a new \$349 billion Paycheck Protection Program. The Program will provide much-needed relief to millions of small businesses so they can sustain their businesses and keep their workers employed.

“This legislation provides small business job retention loans to provide eight weeks of payroll

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and certain overhead to keep workers employed,” said Secretary Mnuchin. “Treasury and the Small Business Administration expect to have this program up and running by April 3rd so that businesses can go to a participating SBA 7(a) lender, bank, or credit union, apply for a loan, and be approved on the same day. The loans will be forgiven as long as the funds are used to keep employees on the payroll and for certain other expenses.” More information can be found at [SBA.gov/coronavirus](https://www.sba.gov/coronavirus)

Governor Mike DeWine announced that the USDA has given approval to Battelle to use its PPE sterilization technology. The company has two units located in central Ohio, and two more to be transported for use in hotspot areas in New York City and Seattle. Each device can decontaminate 80,000 materials per day.

DeWine also announced that Ohio schools will be closed through Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup> as directed by an order to be signed by Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton. They plan to reevaluate as that date approaches.

**HOSPITALS:** Currently, 25 percent of Ohio cases are resulting in hospitalization and 8 percent are requiring ICU care. About 18 percent of the cases are health care workers. Adj. Gen. John Harris is working to help double hospitals' capacity through the use of alternative locations and other resources to accommodate the increased demand.

All press releases, FAQs and information regarding Ohio's response can be found at [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov).

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>.

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

Seneca County Health Commissioner will produce Facebook Live videos 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**

The Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA) is receiving reports of spam calls to Ohioans from individuals claiming to be from the Ohio EMA and requesting personal protected information, such as a Social Security number. “The Ohio Emergency Management Agency is not calling Ohioans and asking for their protected personal information,” said Executive Director Sima Merick. “If you receive such a call, it is a scam. Please hang up the phone.” Please see the attachment for the entire release.

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

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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**

On March 24, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced a new initiative to collect plasma, referred to as convalescent plasma, from those who have recovered from this new coronavirus (COVID-19) to treat patients with serious or immediately life-threatening COVID-19 infections. Convalescent plasma has antibodies specific to COVID-19 making it ideal for these patients. I am proud to share that the American Red Cross will be playing a critical role in helping to execute this new development in the fight against COVID-19.

Though we know this treatment is still experimental, the Red Cross believes it is necessary to enable rapid access to potentially lifesaving care for the most seriously ill. We will be collecting and distributing plasma from carefully screened and recovered COVID-19 patients. COVID-19 positive individuals are not eligible to participate.

At this time, the Red Cross is working closely with the FDA to develop a process to identify and qualify individuals who have recovered from the virus and have the necessary antibodies to participate in this effort. The first step in this process is establishing a new webpage on [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org/plasma4covid), where these individuals will be asked to give their contact information and answer questions to help determine initial eligibility. The link for potential donors is [RedCrossBlood.org/plasma4covid](https://www.redcrossblood.org/plasma4covid). The Red Cross will then follow-up with prospective candidates to confirm eligibility and participation.

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. **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."

## **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**

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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.

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

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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.

### **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

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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 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 May 1st 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**

Andrew Saul, Commissioner of Social Security, reminds the public that Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefit payments will continue to be paid on time during the COVID-19 pandemic. The agency also reminds everyone to be aware of scammers who try to take advantage of the pandemic to trick people into providing personal information or payment via retail gift cards, wire transfers, internet currency, or by mailing cash, to maintain Social Security benefit payments or receive economic impact payments from the Department of the Treasury.

"Social Security will pay monthly benefits on time and these payments will not be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic," Commissioner Saul said. "I want our beneficiaries to be aware that scammers may try to trick you into thinking the pandemic is stopping or somehow changing your Social Security payments, but that is not true. Don't be fooled."

**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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