



Seneca County EMA Situation Report #31

COVID-19 Response

April 23, 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: 13,609 (+359 in last 24 hours)

Probable: 508

Confirmed Deaths: 584

Probable Deaths: 26

Seneca County

Total Cases: 11

Confirmed Cases: 5

Deaths: 1

Recovered: 5

Resources:

Ohio ODH: coronavirus.ohio.gov

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

Seneca County General Health District: senecahealthdistrict.org

Executive Summary

GOVERNOR: Gov. Mike DeWine on Wednesday called on hospitals to reassess the surgeries and procedures that were postponed. He asked hospitals to review those procedures and make a joint decision with the patient on if the procedure should happen based on the patient's symptoms and their understanding of the inherent risk of contracting COVID-19 while in the hospital.

Lt. Gov. Husted says in his work with businesses over the past week, employers have successfully demonstrated best practices that they plan to implement to reopen doors. He warned that this does not mean that the virus is any less dangerous, it just means that we are being proactive and better equipped to protect ourselves. Husted says employers will need to rely heavily on masks, sanitizer, disinfectant and distancing.

OHIO MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION: Through a collaboration between The Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA), the Ohio Hospital Association (OHA), the Ohio Manufacturing

John Spahr Emergency Management Administrator
Mike Klaiss Emergency Management Deputy/911 coordinator
126 Hopewell Ave., Tiffin, Ohio 44883
Office: 419.447.0266 • Fax: 419.448.5064



Extension Program (Ohio MEP) and JobsOhio, the Ohio Emergency PPE Exchange has been launched. This portal allows to both share and purchase PPE.

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.

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

Seneca County

County Administrator Stacy Wilson has been working closely with elected officials and department heads across the county over the past week to come up with budget decreases after the commissioners formalized a reduction plan last Thursday.

The board's plan includes 20-percent decreases to salaries and wages in the General Fund to help meet the revenue shortfall created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The cut in salaries is coupled with the zeroing out of the travel budget and the halving of the supply budget. The commissioners also instituted a hiring freeze, are in the process of re-evaluating and canceling many contracts and are not planning to undertake any capital projects without outside funding.

These changes followed the Seneca County Budget Commission reducing its General Fund revenue projection for 2020 by \$2 million last week.

Wilson said most departments had submitted a plan Thursday morning, but some were still working on finding cuts. She said nearly \$1.9 million of reductions had been submitted by county offices so far.

Wilson also said many county offices plan to shut down on Fridays to help meet the budget reduction plan. She said the Seneca County Justice Center, RTA Building and commissioners' office all are to be closed on Fridays starting this week. Other buildings across the county also are closing on Fridays, if possible.

One office that will remain open is the Seneca County Board of Elections, so staff can continue to run this month's Presidential Primary Election. If you have questions about any office hours, please contact the office in question.

Seneca County General Health District:

The Health Commissioner clarified the Seneca County Coronavirus numbers as 11 total confirmed cases of the COVID19 virus which INCLUDES 5 currently ill (one of those currently hospitalized), 5 recovered from the illness and 1 deceased due to complications of COVID19.

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

Emergency Management Agency

We would like to thank everyone who has donated PPE and other supplies to our health care workers and first responders through the EMA. We are continuing to accept donations of the following

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items: N95 masks, surgical/procedure masks, gowns, goggles, face shields, eye protection, disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer, bulk disinfectant, bulk hand soap, Isopropyl alcohol, Lysol concentrated cleaners and thermometers. 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

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

The Mental Health and Recovery Services Board contracts with Firelands Counseling and Recovery Services who are making the attached resource available to our healthcare workers and first responders during this time.

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.

City of Tiffin

Due to the continuing concern regarding COVID-19, the Tiffin Parks and Recreation Department is cancelling all public programs, events and day camps for the 2020 summer season. This very difficult decision was made in the interest of public safety, to protect the participants and staff.

This summer is going to be a different year for us with our very limited seasonal staff. We will do our very best to insure our parks are well maintained during this time. Tiffin Parks and Recreation staff will continue to provide the residents of Tiffin and its surrounding area with full access to local parks and trails. We simply ask that everyone continue to recognize the importance of social distancing and observe all guidance from the Ohio Department of Health designed to control the spread of COVID-19.

The swimming pool will remain closed until the Director of the Ohio Department of Health indicates it is safe for public pools to be opened, realizing there may be limitations applied to any permission to do so.

No decision has yet been reached regarding the 4th of July fireworks display. While the City would very much like to celebrate this holiday as we have done in the past, doing so would be impossible if social distancing restrictions remain in place. Perhaps the fireworks may need to be delayed until later in the year, but hopefully they will not need to be cancelled entirely.

As always during this period of social distancing, The Great Outdoors remains open. Tiffin parks include over 180 acres of land and more than 4 miles of trails throughout the city. Tiffin Parks and Recreation encourages individuals to explore the parks, get some fresh air, and enjoy nature.

Declarations and orders by the Mayor and City Council can be found at tiffinohio.gov.

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Job and Family Services

For the week ending April 11, 2020, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 158,678 initial jobless claims to the U.S. Dept. of Labor. The number of initial jobless claims filed in Ohio over the last four weeks stands at 855,197. To put that in perspective, the total for the last four weeks of claims is 139,685 more than the combined total of 715,512 for the last two years. Over these last four weeks, ODJFS has distributed more than \$227 million in unemployment compensation payments to more than 271,000 claimants.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services urges individuals to file their claims online, if possible, at unemployment.ohio.gov.

Employers with a critical need for employees are looking for workers. Go to Ohiomeansjobs.gov or coronavirus.ohio.gov to search and apply.

Education

Ohio School Districts received notice from Governor Mike DeWine that all public, community, private and parochial schools are to remain closed for the remainder of the school year. With the ongoing status and developments of the Coronavirus pandemic, this announcement places additional responsibilities on the schools to provide reasonable educational services to the respective district students. Additionally, concerns remain as to whether schools will be able to open in the fall as is customary.

Through the leadership efforts of district superintendents, schools have been proactive in addressing the impact of the Coronavirus on student populations, teachers, parents and communities. Substantial efforts are being made to providing alternative services and learning opportunities for students. Superintendents have collaborated with North Central Ohio Educational Service Center through multiple weekly video conferencing meetings to discuss options and maintain consistency between school districts.

School districts are also attempting to address options to allow for graduation for senior high school students despite the constraints of social distancing and congregating of people. Administrators recognize the importance of traditional events typically held at this time of the year such as award programs, proms, and the "symbolic" graduation ritual. With graduation being the pinnacle for students and parents, districts are researching options to provide suitable forums to allow student graduation. Unfortunately, the necessary coronavirus restrictions limit the available options.

OSS Solid Waste District

Due to the health and safety concerns involving the COVID-19 epidemic for local citizens, contracted businesses, OSS staff, and assisting community service workers and volunteer groups, the District is canceling all spring recycling collection events.

- **Household Hazardous Waste Collection – Saturday, May 2 – CANCELLED**

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- **Television & Electronics Collection – Saturday, May 9 – CANCELLED**
- **Ottawa County Appliance Collection – Saturday, June 13 – CANCELLED**

The District plans to hold the scheduled fall recycling collection events. Fall collections will be held to accept materials for household hazardous waste, televisions and electronics, appliances and tires. Fall dates and information can be found at recycleoss.org.

Economic Recovery

The committee started today hearing from the owner of Fast Track Inc., Herb Washington, whose company owns several McDonald's franchises in the Youngstown area. Washington discussed the sanitary precautions that they have taken at their locations since the outbreak of Coronavirus and explained that they will continue to implement the practices. He added though that he felt the use of gloves is unnecessary because the virus can still live on the gloves, adding that hand sanitizer or hand washing will be far more beneficial.

Washington also explained the perils of applying for the small business and PPP loans that the federal government has been supporting. Based on communication with other business owners in his area, he has heard from many that the larger banks are not helping to secure these loans for particularly small businesses that only have a handful of employees. In one example, he told the committee of someone in the community who had to go to a small local bank in Utah to get the loan after being told by their larger bank in Ohio that they could not help them.

Chad Whittington from Columbus Area Performing Arts (CAPA) explained to the task force the difficulties that their theatres, such as the Ohio Theatre, are going to face given the likely situation that they will not be allowed to fill a theatre for a show for the foreseeable future. Whittington explained how this is a particularly difficult problem for the Broadway performances that are scheduled at the ir theatre through the next year because they have signed a contract with these traveling Broadway groups and they must eat the cost of any tickets they are unable to sell.

Whittington also used the opportunity to lobby for funds when and if the legislature decides to do a capital appropriations budget, stressing the importance of arts and the high need for additional revenue through that funding mechanism.

As a jewelry store owner in Mercer County, Joseph Hibner expressed deep frustration with the fact that Wal-Mart can remain open as an essential business and sell from their jewelry counter, however a small facility such as his cannot open. He and his wife are the only employees of their store, and their facility has over 2,000 square feet of space where they say they can easily keep customers an appropriate distance from each other.

The final witness was Tony Nighswander, owner of APT Manufacturing Solutions in western Ohio. He told the committee of several policies they have implemented to keep their employees and customers safe, including reducing their business hours from five to four days a week in order to use the fifth day for cleaning. Nighswander also explained flexible sick and leave policies that he has been using for his employees, which has made them feel safe in returning to work regularly, while also knowing that if they feel sick they can take time to stay home.

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The task force plans to meet again tomorrow beginning at 10am.

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 by 2:30 p.m. each day.

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