



**Seneca County EMA Situation Report #37**  
**COVID-19 Response**  
**May 1, 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:** 17,962 (+1,834 in last 24 hours)  
**Probable:** 781  
**Confirmed Deaths:** 922  
**Probable Deaths:** 80

**Seneca County**

**Total Cases:** 16  
**Confirmed Cases:** 7  
**Deaths:** 1  
**Recovered:** 8

**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**

State officials on Friday issued a new "stay safe" order that extends key portions of a stay-at-home order that expires at the end of the day.

The new directive, signed by State Health Director Dr. Amy Acton, sets new operating standards through May 29.

The order allows certain businesses to open, provided they follow recommended workplace safety precautions.

It adds that schools, bars and restaurants, appearance and beauty enterprises, child care and entertainment and gymnasiums must remain closed.

Among other things, the new order outlines operational standards for public transit and encourages those traveling from Ohio to other states to self-quarantine for 14 days following their return.

It is part of the DeWine Administration's "Responsible RestartOhio plan."

**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



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**

The Seneca County Board of Commissioners met digitally via Zoom Thursday morning. One topic of discussion was how office operations may change as parts of the state begin to re-open. Commissioner Shayne Thomas said many offices including the commissioners' office, will continue to be closed on Fridays for budgetary reasons until finances recover.

According to Gov. Mike DeWine's press conference earlier this week, office activity can restart on May 4. The commissioners tasked County Administrator Stacy Wilson with purchasing the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (hand sanitizer, masks, cleaning wipes) to be able to gradually open offices to the public. Many offices have closed their lobbies and are conducting business via phone calls and e-mail.

Commissioner Mike Kerschner said this is likely to continue and he urged people to communicate and call ahead to come up with a plan to conduct business with the county.

Thomas said he believes business is successfully being transacted digitally, and added that there have not been any problems as the county has had to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Elected officials and department heads across the county are taking the situation day-by-day and changes to operations are possible. The changes were made with safety and budgetary concerns in mind.

The board's plan, which started being implemented two weeks ago, includes 20-percent decreases to salaries and wages in the General Fund to help meet the shortfall created by the pandemic.

The cut in salaries is combined with several other expense decreases. The board's initial goal for the General Fund was to cut about \$2 million from this year's budget.

This plan was formulated following the Seneca County Budget Commission reducing its General Fund revenue projection for 2020 by \$2 million earlier this month.

Nearly \$2 million in cuts were formalized by the approval of a resolution during last week's session.

On Thursday, the board approved a replacement resolution that made some tweaks to the resolution.

The new resolution can be viewed here, it includes about \$1.9 million in reductions to the General Fund. Any changes from the previous resolution are highlighted.

In other business, the board agreed to honor a previous agreement with the Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services to advance funding for a couple of new vehicles. The department has been traveling frequently so they can continue to provide services to children and families across the county.

Also during the meeting, Seneca Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Charlene Watkins recognized Janie Weasner, who is the clerk and treasurer for the Village of Bloomville. Weasner

**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



is retiring today after 26 years of public service! The board also wished a happy 88th birthday to former county employee and frequent board meeting attendee Tom Breidenbach.

In other action, the board heard from its Human Resources consultant Aaron Weare, from Clemans-Nelson and Associates. Weare and Carol Kern, from Seneca County DJFS, discussed unemployment compensation. The commissioners are to consider creating a shared work program that could allow county workers who are unemployed or underemployed to receive more benefits. The program is to be explored by the commissioners and by other departments across the county.

In new business, the board approved:

- \* A \$50,000 supplemental appropriation for unemployment expenses.
- \* A fund advance repayment to the county from the Wolf Creek Ditch Project Fund to the General Fund.
- \* Accepting the Contract with Transportation Equipment Services Corp. for Two (2) eight-passenger four-wheelchair vans on Behalf of the Seneca County Opportunity Center.
- \* Authorizing Commissioner Shayne Thomas to sign the 2021 Workers Compensation Group Retrospective Rating Plan between the county and the County Commissioners Association of Ohio.

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

The Health Commissioner clarified the Seneca County Coronavirus numbers as 16 total confirmed cases of the COVID19 virus which INCLUDES 7 currently ill (one of those currently hospitalized), 8 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 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."

**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



### **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**

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

### **Job and Family Services**

For the week ending April 25, 2020, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 92,920 initial jobless claims to the U.S. Dept. of Labor. The number of initial jobless claims filed in Ohio over the last six weeks tops 1 million (1,057,486).

To put that in perspective, the total for the last six weeks of claims is 341,974 more than the combined total of 715,512 for the last two years.

Over these last six weeks, ODJFS has distributed more than \$1.45 billion in unemployment compensation payments to more than 481,000 claimants.

ODJFS urges individuals to file their claims online, if possible, at [unemployment.ohio.gov](http://unemployment.ohio.gov).

### **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. Superintendent's have collaborated with the 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 constrains 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 limits the options that are available.

**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



### **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**
- **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](http://recycleoss.org).

### **Economic Recovery**

After taking Tuesday off, the House 2020 Economic Recovery Task Force resumed hearings today starting with a fitness center owner whose opening day of the company was the day the closure order came down from the Governor. Darin Ward said while it's challenging, he understands the need for health and safety.

Ward also noted that he is a firefighter and paramedic. Answering questions from the committee as a first responder from the Mahoning Valley, a COVID hotspot, he said it has been very challenging to be with these individuals as they transport them to the hospital. He explained that most are extremely scared they might not make it as many struggle with difficulty breathing.

Several representatives from COSI Science Center in Columbus explained the unique position that they are in trying to balance the logic of science, but also the struggle to be able to open their doors again as a museum. A pathogens specialist, Dr. Frederick Bertley, said his focus was immediately on the preservation of their facility. After laying off 85% of their workforce, Stephen White with COSI says they are feeling more confident that they will be able to come back, and as a result he has begun doing more public awareness about the dangers of the pathogen in the local media.

COSI also told the committee that they are preparing processes for social distancing in their exhibits that have been traditionally designed to allow for kids to freely roam and play within the space.

Returning to the committee to further discuss the child care limitations, Kathleen Bryan from Cincinnati warned that since the announcement they are seeing signs of parents opting to not return to their jobs because their children still have to be home. Some of these companies that are able to return to work on May 4th are not considered essential workforce and they won't qualify for pandemic child care centers. As a result Bryan said parents are facing difficult choices of not returning to work, or even worse, leaving their child home alone so they can get a paycheck again.

Bryan also told committee members that according to her resources, there has yet to be a single positive COVID-19 case within pandemic centers. She says that other child facilities need to know a date so they are able to get protocols in place and acquire PPE.

**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



The task force also heard from two different dog-based companies, one that trains service animals as well as a pet grooming salon. Jenni Lough Watson, owner of Greatdogs LLC, trains dogs to respond to the medical needs of their owner. Because of travel restrictions, Watson will have to revisit trainings for the dogs currently in her program, and will also face a shortage for of trained dogs in 2022 because she has been unable to secure puppies to train. This means people who are relying on her for a service dog to help them respond to medical episodes will have to wait several more years before she is able to help them, or they will have to turn to a company elsewhere.

Misty Gieczys, owner of Designer Paws Salons, explained to committee members that grooming is not simply for the appearance of a dog, their work is able to identify infections or other issues with dogs and inform the owner so they are able to take care of the problem. Because groomers see a pet much more regularly than a veterinarian, they are often the first line when it comes to alerting an owner of medical issues. She also told committee members that since they are not allowed to be open, but vet offices are, they are losing a significant amount of business to the vet offices who offer grooming services.

At the conclusion of today's meeting, Chairman Zeltwanger said the task force will not be meeting tomorrow and will resume Friday, May 1st 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](mailto:jspahr@senecacountyohio.gov) by 2:30 p.m. each day.**

**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