



## Seneca County EMA Situation Report #38

COVID-19 Response

May 4, 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, Seneca County Education Contacts and LEPC/HS and Mental Health Recovery Services

### Ohio

**Confirmed Cases:** 19,609 (+1,647 in last 72 hours)  
**Probable:** 865  
**Confirmed Deaths:** 975  
**Probable Deaths:** 81

### Seneca County

**Total Cases:** 14 (removed Probable Cases)  
**Confirmed Cases:** 5  
**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

**GOVERNOR:** During today's press conference, Governor DeWine said the task forces that he's initiated for the opening of salons, restaurants and other industries not yet announced, have made significant progress and there is an anticipated announcement on those opening dates and protocols coming this week.

In response to protestors who gathered outside of Director Acton's house on Saturday and harassed a reporter outside the Statehouse on Friday, DeWine called on them to stop being disrespectful and "obnoxious," saying that there is no place for it. "I'm the one who makes the policy decisions. Members of my cabinet, Dr. Acton included, work exceedingly, exceedingly hard," DeWine said. "But I set the policy."

DeWine also addressed the ramping up of testing today as he released an outline of new protocols and prioritization including the addition of residents in congregate living facilities. These are places that can see the virus spread quickly if not kept in check immediately.

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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

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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**

As buildings re-open under the "Responsible RestartOhio" plan that have had little to no water usage during the Stay at Home Order due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to flush water that has been stagnant in both cold- and hot-water distribution lines and fixtures. Low water usage can contribute to bacterial growth, including Legionella which can cause a serious type of pneumonia called Legionnaires' disease. It can also cause other water quality issues with potential health risks due to the build-up of lead and copper in stagnant water that's been collecting in older pipes and fixtures.

As buildings reopen, it is critical to drain, flush, and if necessary based on a review of building conditions, disinfect the hot and cold-water systems to remove harmful contaminants. Devices that store water, such as drinking water fountains, water heaters, storage tanks, and any droplet or mist-forming devices such as cooling towers, humidifiers, showerheads, and certain medical and manufacturing devices and process equipment should also be flushed and disinfected in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations or industry best practices.

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### **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**

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

### **Job and Family Services**

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 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

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suitable forums to allow student graduation. Unfortunately, the necessary coronavirus restrictions limits the options that are available.

### **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.

- **Television & Electronics Collection – Saturday, May 9 – CANCELLED**

With our Spring collections cancelled, we have compiled a listing of alternative options to properly dispose of items like paint, batteries, motor oil, TV's and electronics, and scrap metals. Click on: <https://recycleoss.org/special-collection-alternatives/> for more details.

- **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](https://recycleoss.org).

### **Economic Recovery**

The House 2020 Economic Recovery Task Force today heard from six witnesses all expressing frustration that they were not allowed to reopen May 1st, and do not know when they will be able to open at all.

Those testifying today included:

Pete St. Jean – Pete the Plumber, Inc.  
Michel Pate – Amarok Security  
Martin Lahey – ZDL Ventures, Manhattan's Pub N' Cheer  
Kevin Hollabaugh – Hollabaugh Training Systems  
Therese Vogel – Tiffin Academy of Hair Design  
Make Meilleur – Sola Salon Studios

Pete St. Jean, who operates his own plumbing business, told the committee that he's very fortunate right now because people are home significantly more so that has equated to an increase in business because of the higher use of residential plumbing systems. He anticipates that as more and more people lose their jobs or are unable to return to work, he'll begin to see a large decline in business because people will start trying to fix it themselves to save money.

At the end of committee St. Jean spoke up again and asked the task force members what actions they plan to take, and what advice they have for the small businesses who are losing their livelihoods. Chair Zeltwanger allowed the task force to respond to the question and Rep. Vitale was the first to speak up saying that he felt the order issued by the administration to close was unconstitutional and his advice to all businesses is to proceed as usual. Several other majority caucus members then echoed similar sentiments with Rep. Stoltzfus stating that this current policy of closure was never approved by the legislative leaders and therefore should not be allowed to continue.

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Today's other witnesses included Kevin Hollabaugh who owns and operates an athletic training center. He said his facility is different than a gym because it's personalized athletic training with more individualized appointment times. When the order was first announced, Hollabaugh said he asked his local officials how his business was classified, to which he was told if someone is sweating in his facility that is considered a gym so he must close. He said he believes this is an unfair categorization and his company should have never had to shut its doors. So far, Hollabaugh said he's lost over half of his client base because they are no longer able to afford his services.

Responding to the popular question about how long it would take your facility to reopen its doors, Therese Vogel with Tiffin Academy of Hair Design said they could do so as quickly as tomorrow. She said they have already purchased masks with adhesive to go around clients' noses and mouths rather than ears so they're able to keep everyone safe.

Martin Lahey with Manhattan's Pub N' Cheer in Toledo said that they have remained open for carry out during the closure, however purchasing products – especially beef – has been challenging given the increased price and lack of availability. He acknowledged that this is about to get significantly worse because of the meat packaging plant closures and the gradual opening of restaurants in other states.

**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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