



Stronger Counties. Stronger Ohio.

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Cheryl Subler, Executive Director

March 17, 2020

TO: ALL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY EXECUTIVES, COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS,
COUNTY ADMINISTRATORS, AND COUNTY CLERKS

FROM: CHERYL SUBLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
RACHEL MASSOUD, POLICY ANALYST

RE: MARCH 17, 2020 COVID-19 UPDATES

Gov. DeWine Press Conference

Today, Gov. DeWine held another press conference regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Ohio now has 67 confirmed cases in 16 counties.

In today's press conference the governor answered several questions regarding the postponement of Ohio's primary election. A video of the governor's March 17th press conference can be found [here](#). The administration plans to continue daily press briefings at 2 pm. Press conferences can be viewed on www.ohiochannel.org.

LAST CALL: Legislative Requests

Tomorrow, CCAO will be submitting recommendations for legislative changes that would help county operations during the COVID-19 pandemic to the administration and legislators who are former CCAO members. Your feedback has been instrumental in formulating our recommendations. Thank you to those counties who have submitted questions and concerns to CCAO. If you have items you would like considered, **please send them to Adam Schwiebert at aschwiebert@ccao.org by noon tomorrow (3/18).**

Election Day in Ohio

Since we sent our memo yesterday, there have been a lot of developments regarding today's previously scheduled primary election. Ultimately, last night Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton ordered polling locations closed for today's primary election. The entirety of the order can be accessed [here](#). Early this morning, the Ohio Supreme Court denied a legal challenge to the state's delay of the Ohio primary election. The 4-0 [ruling](#) by Chief Justice O'Connor, Justices Fischer, Donnelly and Stewart was issued without an opinion. Secretary of State Frank LaRose last night also released the following [directive](#), outlining the delayed election process for a June 2nd primary. LaRose is expected to seek remedy in the courts to establish the delayed vote. CCAO will watch this process closely as it unfolds through the courts.

Today, Ohio Speaker of the House Larry Householder and Ohio Senate President Larry Obhof issued statements regarding possible legislative action to set a new primary election date. You can find Speaker Householders' first statement [here](#) and second statement [here](#). President Obhof's statement can be found [here](#).



Fax: 614-220-0209
www.corsa.org



Fax: 614-229-4588
www.cebco.org



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Frequently Asked Questions

Question: Does the county have to declare an emergency in order for its small businesses to qualify for Small Business Administration (SBA) COVID-19 federal funding?

Answer: No. The Ohio Development Services Agency is gathering information in order to declare a state of emergency statewide which will allow Ohio businesses to qualify for the SBA dollars.

Question: Do the commissioners have the authority to close or control access to county buildings?

Answer: As the owner of the building, the commissioners can control access, except in the courthouse/spaces occupied by another independent office holder. With respect to county boards of DD and fairgrounds, while the commissioners hold title to the buildings, the county boards and county agricultural societies have management authority according to statute, thus giving them the access control. With respect to government buildings that have space leased to a private third-party, commissioners may close the portion of the building the commissioners/county staff occupy but need to leave access to the third-party lessee unless there is a lease provision stating otherwise.

Sample County Policies and Resolutions

Judges of the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas issued the following order declaring a judicial emergency. The order includes language regarding continuity of operations for the court:

[Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas Order](#)

Butler County Commissioners entered into the following agreement with their health district:

[Butler County Commissioners Agreement with Health District During Emergency](#)

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is using the following 3 documents while transferring some of their employees to teleworking. They may serve as an example for county teleworking policies:

[ODJFS Telework Management Guidance](#)

[ODJFS Teleworking Agreement](#)

[ODJFS County Technology Update for Teleworking](#)

OCCO Webinar Friday March 20th on COVID-19 and Employment Law issues

OCCO is offering a webinar this Friday, March 20th at 1:00 p.m. on employment law issues relating to COVID-19. COVID-19 is and will be a major disruption to employers. This webinar will address ADA, FMLA, overtime laws, union contracts, and human resources issues and will provide guidance to employers on how to respond and to prepare for the current and anticipated issues. The webinar will be presented by Jonathan Downes, Attorney, Zashin & Rich.

[Click here](#) to register for this timely educational opportunity. If you are unable to register to the link above, please email [Nedra Benson](mailto:nbenson@ccao.org), nbenson@ccao.org, CCAO administrative professional, and provide her with your email address.

PUCO Suspends Utility Disconnections

Last week the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) took action to ask utilities to suspend disconnection, and waive any requirements for reconnections, for all types of customers (residential and business). All of the utilities are complying, however, PUCO knows that many are unable to edit their automated billing systems to stop sending disconnection notifications. **Utilities are not following through with disconnections.**

[PUCO extends utility reconnect order](#)

[Utility companies directed to review disconnection and social contact policies](#)

Utility customers with questions or concerns should contact the PUCO online at www.PUCO.ohio.gov/contact-us.

CCAO/CORSA/CEBCO Bi-weekly COVID-19 Briefing Call

CCAO, CORSA, and CEBCO will host a biweekly COVID-19 briefing call for members every Monday and Thursday at 3:30 p.m. The call-in information is as follows:

Dial 1-877-273-4202
Access code 889-229-624

These calls will serve as a way for us to share information and answer questions from counties, as well as provide a space for our members to discuss their best practices if they wish. If you know you have a question that you would like answered, please send it to Adam Schwiebert (aschwiebert@ccao.org) in advance to give staff some time to research the answer.

County Talk

Issues we're currently hearing about from across the counties:

Emergency Declarations: A number of counties have declared emergencies over the past several days while others are considering doing so. CCAO will be providing information regarding what an emergency resolution entails, what this may accomplish in light of the declared state emergency, and how doing so may impact programs.

County Revenues: We're hearing early discussions about how fluctuating markets, dine-in restaurant restrictions, casino closures and other factors may negatively impact county revenue streams. While the magnitude of revenue reductions remains unknown, this will likely significantly impact county general funds in the months to come.

Intergovernmental Agreements: Counties are working closely with other governmental entities, such as local health districts, while navigating the COVID-19 pandemic. Some counties have adopted resolutions formalizing their agreement during with their health district. CCAO will look to provide examples of such agreements and how counties can partner with other entities.

Please send any challenges, barriers, questions, etc. your county is experiencing to Adam Schwiebert at aschwiebert@ccao.org.

Other Resources

[White House March 18th Briefing Call Registration and Update](#)

Visit <https://ccao.org/resources/coronavirus-updates/> for updates and previous memos. As a reminder, current information from the Ohio Department of Health can be found at www.coronavirus.ohio.gov. If you have

questions regarding this memo or best practice suggestions relating to COVID-19, please contact Rachel Massoud, policy analyst, at 614-220-7996 or rmassoud@ccaio.org.