



Stronger Counties. Stronger Ohio.

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Cheryl Subler, Executive Director

April 23, 2020

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

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

RE: APRIL 23, 2020 COVID-19 UPDATES

Key Resources

1. [CAB: Virtual Meetings during COVID-19](#)
2. [CAB: COVID-19 Employment Related FAQs](#)
3. [CAB: Layoffs and Furloughs Under Civil Service Law](#)
4. [Treasury Guidance CARES Act Funds 4.22.2020](#)
5. [Treasury FAQs 4.22.2020](#)
6. [CAB: COVID-19 and Collective Bargaining Issues](#)

[CCAO COVID-19 Resources Page](#)

Gov. DeWine's COVID-19 Press Conference

In today's press conference, Gov. DeWine and Dr. Amy Acton announced that Ohio now has 14,694 cases. There have been 656 COVID-19 related deaths. These numbers include both confirmed and probable cases as reported by ODH.

If you want to help Ohio's response to this pandemic, you can contact the state at together@governor.ohio.gov.

A video of the governor's April 23rd press conference can be found [here](#). The administration plans to hold press conferences daily at 2 p.m. Press conferences can be viewed on www.ohiochannel.org.

County Reopening Planning and Guidance

Gov. DeWine, Lt. Gov. Husted, and Dr. Acton plan to release more information about Ohio's plan to reopen next week. As we await this information, we encourage members to continue thinking about their operations plans. Part of this planning process should involve commissioners, county executives, and county councils convening other county officials to collaboratively develop a countywide strategy for reopening.



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



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



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CCAO members have started sharing their early plans and guidance for gradual return to work. We are sharing some of these plans with you with the understanding that these examples may change as Gov. DeWine and his administration release more information. If your county has examples you would like to share, please contact Policy Analyst Adam Schwiebert at aschwiebert@ccao.org.

[Fairfield County COVID-19 Safe Work Practice Guidance](#)

[Fairfield County communication regarding county-owned building usage](#)

[Wood County Planning and Reopening Guidance for Reopening](#)

Treasury Guidance Released for CARES Act Funding; Congress passes new economic relief legislation

COVID 3.5 package (HR 266 - Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act) was approved by the Senate earlier in the week and is being voted on by the House today. The bill includes funding for the Paycheck protection program for small business, emergency grants for health providers, and funding for COVID-19 testing. Some of the funds for testing will be made available to states and local governments. The bill does not include replacement for lost revenue for states or local governments.

The CARES Act that was passed in March included a \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund for states and local governments with a population greater than 500,000. The language was silent on the ability of states to provide assistance to smaller political subdivisions. The language in the CARES Act restricted these funds to necessary expenditures incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Moreover, expenses were eligible only if they had not been accounted for in the regular budget of the state or local government.

Earlier this week, Senators Portman and Brown co-signed a [letter](#) to Secretary of the Treasury Steve Mnuchin asking for flexibility in the use of the CARES Act and asking for support for aid to states and local governments in the next round of federal legislation. The letter pointed out the heavy reliance of Ohio local governments on the sales tax and the income tax. Please reach out and thank both Senators for this public display of support and continue to talk with your representatives in Congress about this issue.

As expected, the [Treasury Guidance](#) and [list of FAQs](#) that were released yesterday stated that: "Funds may not be used to fill shortfalls in government revenue to cover expenditures that would not otherwise qualify under the statute. Although a broad range of uses is allowed, revenue replacement is not a permissible use of Fund payments."

The guidance addressed certain issues that were not fully explained the law:

1. States will be permitted to transfer funds to local governments, provided that the transfer qualifies as a necessary expenditure incurred to the public health emergency. The guidance goes on to state that these funds *would be subject to recoupment by the Treasury Inspector General* if they have not been used in a manner consistent with the law.
2. Funds that are not used to cover expenditures before December 30, 2020 must be returned to the U.S. Treasury.
3. Governments may retain assets that are purchases with these funds, however the expenditures must be deemed "necessary." This means that "the expenditure is reasonably necessary for its intended use in the reasonable judgment of the government officials responsible for spending Fund payments."

4. Payments may only be used to cover costs not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020. A cost meets this requirement if either (a) the cost cannot lawfully be funded using a line item, allotment, or allocation within that budget *or* (b) the cost is for a substantially different use from any expected use of funds in such a line item, allotment, or allocation. *A cost is not considered to have been accounted for in a budget merely because it could be met using a budget stabilization fund or similar reserve account.*

The guidance defines five nonexclusive categories of eligible expenditures

- Medical
- Public health
- Payroll expenses for public safety, public health, health care, human services, and similar employees dedicated to responding to COVID-19.
- Expenses of actions to facilitate compliance with COVID-19 related public health measures; these include expenses of maintaining county jails related to sanitation and improvement of social distancing measures.
- Expenses associated with the provision of economic support, such as grants to small business, payroll support programs, or unemployment insurance costs not reimbursed by the federal government.

CCAO will be working with the legislature and the DeWine Administration to define a formula for the disbursement of funds to counties when the legislature returns to session. Members with suggestions or questions about federal legislation should contact Senior Policy Analyst Jon Honeck, [jhoneyck@ccao.org](mailto:jhoneck@ccao.org), 614-600-8900.

CCAO releases advisory bulletin on collective bargaining and COVID-19

CCAO is releasing the following [memo](#) on collective bargaining issues and the COVID-19 pandemic. Prepared by Marc Fishel, the bulletin is to inform members on collective bargaining law as it applies to the unique circumstances brought on by the pandemic. We hope that this information is helpful to you as you go about managing expenses in a time of decreasing revenues. To read the memo, click [here](#).

CCAO Submits Latest Legislative Priorities to Administration, General Assembly

As counties continue to face the dual threat of global pandemic and economic crisis, CCAO recently submitted a list of policy recommendations to the DeWine administration and leadership of the Ohio General Assembly. To read the recommendations, click [here](#). These recommendations, if adopted, will help counties navigate the economic challenges to come as well as stimulate local economic growth. The memo also provides considerations for state lawmakers regarding reduced state expenditures. Reducing state expenditures in key county programs, especially indigent defense, could cause significant budgetary pressures for counties. Finally, the memo concludes with an invitation for further discussion with lawmakers in regard to local usage of federal CARES Act funds.

Recording from today's SharedWork Ohio Webinar

The recording from today's webinar "Navigating Unemployment Insurance during COVID-19: Tips and Pathways for Employers" is available [here](#). Thank you to Julie Barone, Legal Chief, OUIO Legal Support, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services for her presentation on the SharedWork Ohio program.

Senator Rob Portman Update to Local Governments

Senator Rob Portman sent an update to CCAO regarding the Treasury Guidance for the Coronavirus Relief Fund. To read the update, click [here](#).

County Talk: Supporting Small Businesses

Counties are having conversations about how they can help small businesses in their community that are struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some examples of how counties are responding:

[Delaware County Small Business Assistance Program](#)

[Knox County Announces Emergency Business Loan Program](#)

If your county has a program or other initiative to help small businesses, please send information to Policy Analyst Rachel Massoud at rmassoud@ccao.org.

Montrose Group COVID-19 Economic Recovery Webinar Series: CDBG and Revolving Loan Funds Tomorrow 4/24

With the COVID 19 federal stimulus SBA small business loan programs out of money, the short and long term value of regional Revolving Loan Programs that can be created with funding from the \$5 B in CDBG federal stimulus package are more important than ever. Join the Montrose Group COVID 19 Economic Recovery Webinar Series: CDBG and Revolving Loan Programs on **Friday, April 24, 2020 from 11 a.m. to noon** to learn how to use the CDBG program to build and operate a regional revolving loan program and hear about best practices operating today. To register for this webinar, click [here](#).

Ohio Begins Implementing New Federal Unemployment Programs

Starting on Friday, April 24, Ohioans who are unemployed as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic but who don't qualify for regular unemployment benefits can begin pre-registering for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), a new federal program that covers many more categories of workers, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) announced today. For more information, you can read the news release [here](#).

CCAO/CORSA/CEBCO COVID-19 Weekly Briefing Call

CCAO, CORSA and CEBCO are hosting a weekly briefing call during the COVID-19 pandemic. **The calls will be on Thursdays at 3:30 p.m.** The next call will be Thursday, April 30th at 3:30 p.m. The call-in information is:

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

Our goal with these briefing calls is to provide our members with an informative and positive experience. In order to better achieve this goal and due to the volume of callers, we have decided to change the format. We ask that participants pose questions during the call by **texting** Rachel Massoud (CCAO policy analyst) at **513-543-3723**. Rachel will read the questions to our speaker(s) and state the name and title of the person who posed the question. Participants will remain muted throughout the duration of the call. We hope this format will reduce duplication, keep our calls focused and concise, and provide the best experience possible for our participants.

Other Resources

[Adult Protective Services COVID-19 Guidance](#)

[Editable #InThisTogetherOhio Logo](#)

[NACo COVID-19 webpage](#)

Visit <https://ccao.org/resources/coronavirus-updates/> for updates, FAQs and previous memos. 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 Adam Schwiebert, policy analyst, at aschwiebert@ccao.org, or Rachel Massoud, policy analyst, at rmassoud@ccao.org.