



Stronger Counties. Stronger Ohio.

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Cheryl Subler, Executive Director

June 11, 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: JUNE 11, 2020 COVID-19 UPDATES

Key Resources

1. [CAB: Employees Returning to Work FAQs](#)
2. [CAB: Layoffs and Furloughs Under Civil Service Law](#)
3. [Treasury Guidance CARES Act Funds 4.22.2020](#)
4. [Treasury FAQs 5.28.2020](#)
5. [CAB: COVID-19 and Collective Bargaining Issues](#)
6. [Reopening Information](#)

[CCAO COVID-19 Resources Page](#)

Gov. DeWine's Press Conference: ODH Director Acton Resigns; expanded testing

In today's press conference, Gov. DeWine announced that Dr. Amy Acton is stepping down as Director of the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). She will continue to work with the governor as his Chief Health Advisor. As of today, Lance Himes, who served as a past ODH Interim Director, will again assume the duties of Interim Director.

Gov. DeWine announced that Ohio is expanding COVID-19 testing. Anyone who wants a COVID-19 test can now receive a test - even if they are low-risk or not showing symptoms. An interactive map of testing locations can be found [here](#).

The administration will release suggested best practices for places of worship today. Gov. DeWine emphasized that places of worship were never closed, but the administration wanted to offer suggestions for best practices on safety. The best practices can be found [here](#).

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services will receive an \$8.5 million federal Employment Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant to help reemploy individuals who lost their jobs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and to help employers rebuild their workforces. You can read more [here](#).



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Ohio has now had 40,004 COVID-19 cases. There have been 2,490 COVID-19 related deaths. These numbers include both confirmed and probable cases as reported by ODH.

A video of the governor's June 11th press conference can be found [here](#). **The next press conference is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16th at 2 p.m.** Press conferences can be viewed on www.ohiochannel.org.

CARES Act funds legislation heads to governor's desk via HB 481

The General Assembly took action this week to send legislation to Gov. DeWine's desk to distribute \$350 million in federal CARES Act funds to Ohio local governments. Senate Bill 310 had been the previous vehicle for these funds; however, the Senate on Wednesday amended SB 310 into [House Bill 481](#) along with several other additional amendments and subsequently passed the bill. The House voted to concur with the Senate's amendments to HB 481 this morning, which sends the bill to Governor DeWine's desk for his signature.

HB 481 is legislation dealing with land conveyances of state-owned property. The amendments added to the bill by the Senate, and concurred with by the House include the following:

- Senate Bill 310 – CARES Act funds
- Senate Bill 316 – Capital reappropriations
- Grants local governments 160 hours of furlough authority for exempt employees for state fiscal year 2021 due to COVID-19
- Makes certain nursing home funding Medicaid changes
- Authorization for the governor to enact pay freezes for non-union state employees
- An exemption from the Commercial Activity Tax for businesses that received CARES Act funds

The CCAO policy team will continue to monitor any further developments on HB 481 or any other legislation that may impact counties' response to COVID-19.

Ohio Public Defender Memo: COVID-19 and Indigent Defense Reimbursement

State Public Defender Tim Young sent a memo to county officials yesterday to provide an update on the options the Office of the Ohio Public Defender (OPD) has offered to counties, in an effort to provide support and assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. To read the memo, click [here](#).

County and Independent Fair Guidelines and Funding

On Wednesday this week, Gov. DeWine, Lt. Gov. Husted, Speaker Householder and Senate President Obhof submitted to county and independent fair boards a [letter](#) detailing guidelines for the conduct of county and independent fairs this summer and fall in light of ongoing concerns about COVID-19. You can access the guidelines [here](#). The guidelines contain information for how livestock competitions should be held, how grandstand events should take place, how sanitation should be ensured, and other issues.

In addition to the guidelines, the officials shared that to help conduct fairs in a safe manner, each fair that conducts a junior fair will receive \$50,000 and those that do not conduct a junior fair will receive \$15,000. The funding request is expected to be made to the State Controlling Board in the near future. The announcement also allows a fair board that cancelled their fair to apply for a new date with the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

OBM releases monthly financial report for May

The State Office of Budget and Management (OBM) released its [monthly financial report](#) for May on Wednesday this week. The report provides details on the economic condition of the state, including employment statistics, tax revenue collections and expenditure updates. As anticipated, the COVID-19 pandemic's economic impact continues to be felt across a host of economic measures. In particular, total sales tax collections for May came in 17.6% under estimate.

Looking forward, the report provides an updated revenue forecast for state fiscal year 2021. Using updated economic data, OBM is projecting state General Revenue Fund revenues to come in \$2.43 billion below budgeted estimates.

The complete monthly report can be accessed [here](#).

Recording of CCAO Webinar “Understanding the Federal CARES Act: How Counties can use Coronavirus Relief Fund Payments” available now

The recording of CCAO's webinar “Understanding the Federal CARES Act: How Counties can use Coronavirus Relief Fund Payments” is available [here](#). A copy of the presentation slides is available [here](#). Thank you to CCAO Senior Policy Analyst Jon Honeck for his work and presentation.

Auditor of State creates online list of COVID-19 Resources for Local Governments

The Auditor of State (APOS) has created an online resource to respond to questions and concerns that Auditor Faber has heard from local partners. The resource is available at: http://ohioauditor.gov/resources/COVID19_assistance.html. The information includes responses to COVID-19 [frequently asked questions](#) such as the use of electronic signatures, advice on creating special funds for federal resources under the CARES Act, and the procedure for a county to waive fees associated with the electronic payment of taxes. The site also has links to similar resources from other state agencies such as OBM and Job and Family Services, and a list of [deadline extensions](#) from state and federal agencies, including counties that have received permission to extend due dates for property tax payments.

Users will also find a list of Federal programs ([CARES Act and Federal Assistance Spreadsheet](#)) for which new or increased federal financial assistance, flexibilities, and waivers are available to Ohio local governments. The application window to apply for some of these programs is still open. Local governments can use the spreadsheet to identify programs they may be eligible to receive and find out more information about how to apply. AOS has a tutorial to show users how to navigate through over 90 federal programs listed.

Members with questions should contact Senior Policy Analyst Jon Honeck, jhoneck@ccao.org, 614-600-8900.

Ohio Initial Jobless Claims for Sunday, May 31, through Saturday, June 6, 2020

For the week ending June 6, 2020, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 35,430 initial jobless claims to the U.S. Dept. of Labor. The number of initial jobless claims filed in Ohio over the last 12 weeks (1,327,843) is more than the combined total of those filed during the last three years. To read more, click [here](#).

AOS Recognizes Need for Credit Card Purchasing Flexibility

The Auditor of State has recently recognized that given the extenuating circumstances around health and safety measures necessary to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, counties may amend their credit card policies to allow for related purposes.

While current ORC Sec 301.27 limits the allowable purchases that county agencies may make with credit cards, the Auditor of State's office has advised counties that boards of county commissioners may pass a resolution to allow for certain purchases on the credit card during the state of emergency for COVID-19. The policy should have clearly defined starting and ending dates. Counties are encouraged to involve the prosecutor in addressing the issue from a legal and policy perspective for the County as a whole. The Auditor of State could then audit against this resolution to make sure purchases were made with proper authority. Counties are encouraged to ensure the necessary documentation is kept for any such purchases.

We appreciate this flexibility in the short-term and look forward to longer-term conversations with stakeholders to identify ways to modernize county purchasing.

For more information or for sample resolutions, please contact Jon Honeck at jhoneck@ccao.org.

Ohio IT Association Virtual Event: Contact Tracing – June 18th

The Ohio IT Association is launching a virtual event series on issues related to technology and government. The first event is next Thursday, June 18th at 2 p.m. on the topic of Contact Tracing. For more information on the event and registration, click [here](#).

Other Resources

[ODJFS Updated FAQ Document 6.10.2020](#)

[Notes from White House Briefing Call 6.10.2020](#)

[Current Information Regarding Reopening](#)

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