



*Stronger Counties. Stronger Ohio.*

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Cheryl Subler, Executive Director

**September 10, 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: SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 COVID-19 UPDATES

### Key Resources

1. [CCAO CARES Act Funds Resources Webpage](#)
2. [OBM Ideas on How to Use Coronavirus Relief Funding](#)
3. [OBM CARES Act Funds Guidance 8.28.2020](#)
4. [CCAO Guidance on Using CARES Act Funds](#)
5. [Treasury Guidance CARES Act Funds 9.2.2020](#)
6. [Treasury CARES Act Funds FAQs 9.2.2020](#)
7. [CAB: Employees Returning to Work FAQs](#)
8. [CAB: Layoffs and Furloughs Under Civil Service Law 7.15.2020](#)

[CCAO COVID-19 Resources Page](#)

### **Gov. DeWine's Press Conference: Dr. Joan Duwve named Director of Ohio Department of Health**

During today's press conference, Gov. DeWine announced that he has selected Dr. Joan Duwve as Ohio's new director of the Department of Health. Dr. Duwve is a medical doctor and is currently the Director of Public Health at the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. She is expected to assume her new role around October 1<sup>st</sup>.

The administration released this week's [Public Health Advisory System](#) map. There are six Red Level 3 counties (newly Red in bold): Butler, Mercer, Montgomery, Preble, Putnam and **Summit**.

Two counties dropped from Red Level 3 to Orange Level 2: Lucas and Wayne. Nine counties moved from Orange Level 2 to Yellow Level 1: Hardin, Huron, Logan, Madison, Morrow, Sandusky, Seneca, Union and Van Wert.

A copy of the new map can be found [here](#). The state's Public Health Advisory System website now includes an interactive map detailing indicators in each county, which you can find [here](#). A county by county list of indicators for the week can be found [here](#). A chart of case rates by county can be found [here](#).



Fax: 614-220-0209  
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There was an increase of 1,121 total COVID-19 cases statewide from yesterday's data. For more COVID-19 numbers, visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

A video of the governor's September 10<sup>th</sup> press conference can be found [here](#). **The next COVID-19 press conference is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.** Press conferences can be viewed on [www.ohiochannel.org](http://www.ohiochannel.org).

### **Upcoming Webinar: Subgranting of CARES Act Funding – September 25<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.**

The Ohio Township Association, Ohio Municipal League, Ohio Mayors Alliance, and County Commissioners Association of Ohio invite you to join the Ohio Office of Budget and Management (OBM) to discuss the processes and procedures of subgranting CARES Act funds to other entities. **The webinar will take place on Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.** OBM Director Kim Murnieks and Stacie Massey will cover requirements under the CARES Act, how to establish a subgrant, innovative uses of CARES Act funds with other entities, and best practices for local governments looking to share resources or partner with other entities to deliver programs with CARES Act dollars. [Click here](#) to register for this webinar. If you are unable to register using the link, please contact Michael Zaky at [zaky@ohiotownships.org](mailto:zaky@ohiotownships.org).

### **Preliminary Non-Auto County Sales Tax Estimates sent to CCAO members yesterday**

Preliminary non-auto sales tax estimates from the Ohio Department of Taxation for July sales were emailed to CCAO members yesterday. Please keep an eye out for this information.

### **Preliminary August State Revenues Beat Estimates**

The Ohio Office of Budget and Management this week released its preliminary revenue collection numbers for August 2020. Similar to July, revenue collection in August once again outpaced state estimates. State General Revenue Fund tax receipts for the month exceeded estimates by \$69 million, or 3.2%. For the state sales tax, total collections beat estimates by 4.0%, with the auto sales and use tax leading the way at 9.9% above estimate. Non-auto sales and use tax came in at 2.9% above estimate.

The August revenues continue the trend of recovery following weak revenue performance earlier in the spring. OBM Director Kimberly Murnieks stated that strong revenue performance thus far in State Fiscal Year 2021 is a good sign, but the state economy is still likely experiencing the effects of federal stimulus. As stimulus continues to diminish in coming months, OBM anticipates to see a continued slowdown in revenue collections.

The preliminary revenue report for August can be access [here](#).

### **Recording and Slides from CCAO Webinar: How Counties Are Using CARES Act Dollars: Examples from Henry and Ottawa Counties**

The recording and presentation from CCAO's Webinar "How Counties Are Using Cares Act Dollars: Examples from Henry and Ottawa" are available on the [CCAO website](#) and are linked below.

[Webinar Recording](#)

[Henry County Presentation](#)

[Ottawa County Presentation](#)

Thank you to our speakers for taking time to present on this important topic.

**Henry County Speakers:** Commissioner Glenn Miller; EMA Director, Tracy Busch

**Ottawa County Speakers:** Commissioners Mark Stahl and Don Douglas; County Auditor Jennifer Widmer; County Clerk Rhonda Slauterbeck

### **COVID-19 Election Response Grants Available**

The Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL) recently announced the availability of \$250 million in grants to local election jurisdictions across the county to ensure a safe and timely election process for this coming November General Election. CTCL is a highly reputable non-partisan organization which has worked with Ohio elections officials in the past. These grant funds can be used for a number of election-related purposes with few strings attached.

With COVID-19 creating unique (and at times, costly) challenges for election administration this fall, we encourage CCAO members to share this unique program with your county board of elections as a potential way to absorb some of these costs.

Additional information on the grant program can be found [here](#).

### **Ohio Jobless Claims for Sunday, August 30, through Saturday, September 5, 2020**

Ohioans filed 17,983 initial jobless claims last week, according to statistics the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported to the U.S. Dept. of Labor today. This was 256,232 fewer than – or less than 7% of – the peak earlier this year. Ohioans filed 328,515 continued jobless claims last week, which was 447,787 fewer than – or less than half (42.3%) of – the peak earlier this year. To read more, click [here](#).

### **US Treasury releases additional Coronavirus Relief Fund Guidance on Public Safety Payroll Expenses**

Federal funds released to the states and local governments through the federal CARES Act – Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) are subject to regulations developed by the US Treasury. In order to inform recipients, Treasury uses a formal [guidance document](#) and a separate document with [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQs). Both documents have been periodically revised throughout the spring and summer. On September 2, Treasury added important new language to both documents.

The formal guidance adds two new sections: (1) “Supplemental Guidance on Use of Funds to Cover Payroll and Benefits of Public Employees” and (2) “Supplemental Guidance on Use of Funds to Cover Administrative Costs.” The first section reiterates that a public employer may presume that public health and public safety employees are substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to COVID-19, unless the chief executive or the relevant government determines that specific circumstances indicate otherwise. Work performed by such employees is considered to be a *substantially different use* than accounted for in the most recently approved budget as of March 27. Therefore, all of the costs of these employees may be covered with CRF resources.

The guidance clarifies that “public safety employees would include police officers (including state police officers), sheriffs and deputy sheriffs, firefighters, emergency medical responders, correctional and detention officers, and those who directly support such employees such as dispatchers and supervisory personnel.” (p. 6)

The guidance also clarifies that “Covered benefits include, but are not limited to, the costs of all types of leave (vacation, family-related, sick, military, bereavement, sabbatical, jury duty), employee insurance (health, life, dental, vision), retirement (pensions, 401(k)), unemployment benefit plans (federal and state), workers compensation insurance, and Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes (which includes Social Security and Medicare taxes).” (p. 7)

The second section related to administrative costs reminds recipients that they cannot apply traditional federal indirect costs rates to CRF payments. If they track time consistently across a department, however, they may cover the portion of payroll and benefit costs of employees that spend time on administrative work necessary because of the COVID-19 emergency.

The FAQ document contains new information about four issues: (1) costs related to safe reopening of schools; (2) expenses related to public health infrastructure such as improving access to running water; (3) instructions for entities that have a fiscal year starting July 1 or October 1; and, application of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to CRF payments. The FAQ related to schools is reprinted below:

*May Fund recipients incur expenses associated with the safe reopening of schools?*

Yes, payments from the Fund may be used to cover costs associated with providing distance learning (e.g., the cost of laptops to provide to students) or for in-person learning (e.g., the cost of acquiring personal protective equipment for students attending schools in-person or other costs associated with meeting Centers for Disease Control guidelines).

To this end, as an administrative convenience, Treasury will presume that expenses of up to \$500 per elementary and secondary school student to be eligible expenditures, such that schools do not need to document the specific use of funds up to that amount. [FAQ #53, p. 10]

CCAO will post the updated documents on its CARES Act [Resources page](#). Members with questions should contact Jon Honeck, [jhoneck@ccao.org](mailto:jhoneck@ccao.org), 614-600-8900.

### **Request for counties to share CARES Act spending plans with CCAO policy team**

With CARES Act funds being distributed to local governments across the state, counties have a number of options for how they may utilize their funds. As your county decides how to spend its CARES Act funds, please share your ideas with the CCAO policy team. Your ideas can serve as valuable examples to other counties considering different funding options. Please send any resolutions or spending plans to Jon Honeck at [jhoneck@ccao.org](mailto:jhoneck@ccao.org).

### **Other Resources**

[ODJFS Director Hall Weekly Call Notes 9.8.2020](#)

[ODJFS Updated FAQs 9.9.2020](#)

[Public Health Advisory System Map and Resources](#)

[Ohio COVID-19 Travel Advisory Information](#)

[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](http://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](mailto:together@governor.ohio.gov). If you have questions regarding this memo or best practice suggestions relating to COVID-19, please contact Rachel Massoud, policy analyst, at [rmassoud@ccao.org](mailto:rmassoud@ccao.org).