

THIS WEEK AT THE STATEHOUSE AUGUST 21, 2020



CURRENT COVID STATS

Ohio:

- 106,063 confirmed cases
- 12,615 hospitalizations
- 3,650 confirmed fatalities

United States:

- 5.59 million cases
- 174,000 fatalities

World:

- 22.6 million cases
- 792,000 fatalities

NEXT WEEK'S SCHEDULE

Monday:

Tuesday:

-Governor DeWine Press Conference

Wednesday:

Thursday:

-Governor DeWine Press Conference
-Weekly Unemployment Report

Friday:

DeWine's Orders Address Reopening

Governor DeWine issued several executive orders this week as the state sets careful precautions for reopening. During his Tuesday press conference, DeWine stated he would be issuing a sports health order. The order outlines health provisions athletic teams must follow for play this fall, including spectator limits, social distancing and testing. The sports order was supplemented by several physicians from Ohio hospitals who joined the Governor's press conference to offer advice on safe play. On Thursday, DeWine announced reopening plans for adult daycare facilities and senior centers. The facilities, which have been closed since March 23, will be allowed to reopen on September 21 at limited capacities. An additional order issued in tandem with the reopening date requires all 765 assisted-living facilities across the state to comply with testing for staff and residents (at no cost to facilities).

Election Preparation and Precautions

Federal turmoil over recent actions of the United States Postal Service ahead of the November election has prompted Ohio politicians to address the safety and efficacy of voting throughout the state. Secretary of State Frank LaRose announced that every county board of elections will have a drop box this fall and has been working with the Dept. of Administrative Services to provide face masks for poll workers. The Secretary is also requesting up to \$3 million from the Controlling Board to cover the cost of return postage on absentee ballots. Mail-in voting is expected to double from the 1.2 million absentee ballots cast in the 2016 election. Meanwhile, the US Postmaster General agreed to suspend any changes to postal services until after the election. Members of the Ohio Congressional delegation on both sides have called for assurance that the USPS will work with the OHIO Secretary of State's office to implement policies prioritizing ballots requests, mail-in voting, and other election-related mail.

Unemployment Update

July unemployment rate for the state fell 2.1 percentage points, as the state gained 62,700 jobs. Ohio's current unemployment rate is 8.9 percent – 1.3 percentage points lower than the national average for July. The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services reported that the number of unemployed workers in the state had decreased in the past month, and recent jobless claims were more than 400,000 fewer than the state's peak earlier this year in the peak of the pandemic.

Introduced Bills

HB 748 – School Health Orders: To prohibit the Department of Health from issuing a special or standing order or rule that supersedes a decision made by a school district.

HB 749 – Depreciation Adjustments: To temporarily suspend provisions relating to bonus depreciation adjustments for a taxpayer with a federal net operating loss.

HB 750 – Public Corruption: To prohibit a person who is currently charged with a public corruption offense from taking office as a member of the General Assembly, to require a current member who is charged with a public corruption offense to repay certain amounts to the state, and to declare an emergency.

HB 751 – Property Tax Valuations: To modify the law regarding property tax valuation complaints.

SB 353 – Pre-Trial Detention: To modify the pretrial detention and release laws regarding risk assessment tools, bond schedules, non-cash release methods, a continuum of pretrial supervision options, cite-and-release, pretrial screening and diversion, criminal justice system personnel training, a statewide bail data collection system, and request Supreme Court modification of certain rules.

SR 542 – School Waivers: To urge the United States Secretary of Education to extend the school assessment and accountability waivers issued for the 2019-2020 school year through the 2020-2021 school year due to the ongoing COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.