DATE: May 8, 2020

TO: Board of Health & Environment Members

FROM: Jacquelyn Phillips, MPH, BSN, RN, Secretary

SUBJECT: Agenda for May 12, 2020

City of Middletown Board of Health & Environment will meet in remote session on May 12, 2020, at 7:30AM, with the following agenda. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please call 425-1818.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

ROLL CALL- Motion to excuse absent members

CITIZEN COMMENTS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –April 2020

RECEIVE AND FILE FINANCIAL REPORT –April 2020

EDUCATION PRESENTATION
   COVID-19-Update

OLD BUSINESS
   PHAB

NEW BUSINESS
   1. Travel Authorizations-None
   2. Approval of Agreement For Facility Use with Miami University-Renewal
   3. Approval of MBHE 2020-01-Health Commissioner, Clear and Present Danger-Emergency
   4. Approval of MBHE 2020-02-Health Commissioner/Registered Sanitarian, Sanitarian-Clear and Present Danger-Emergency
   5. Approval of Crisis Response Grant Contract
   6. Approval of CMHD Contact Tracer Agreement

REPORTS
   Health Commissioner
   Medical Director
   Director of Nursing
   Environmental Health Director

ADJOURNMENT

It is the policy of the City of Middletown to make all public hearings and meetings accessible to all persons, in accordance with state and/or federal laws. If you have a disability which requires accommodation in order for you to attend and/or participate in this meeting, please contact us at 425-7851 or 425-7705 (TDD) at least forty-eight hours prior to the time of the meeting to advise the need for accommodation, and reasonable efforts shall be made to provide the same.
CITY OF MIDDLETOWN  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
Minutes  
April 14, 2020

The City of Middletown Board of Health met in remote session at 7:30 AM on April 14, 2020.

Members Present  
Mayor Nicole Condrey, BS, President  
Jeff Bonnell  
Dr. Anita Scott Jones, Ed.D., MBA, BS  
Sally Kash, MS, RN  
Charlene Kurtz, BSN, RN  
Dr. Ken Patrick, DVM  
David Schul

Health Department Staff Present  
Jackie Phillips, MPH, BSN, RN  
Carla Ealy, RS  
Paul Jennewine, MD  
Chandra Corbin, BSN, RN  
Amanda McDonald

Absent and Excused  
Margie Davis, RN

ROLL CALL  
Motion: Ms. Kurtz moved, seconded by Ms. Kash to excuse Ms. Davis.  
Roll call Vote: Yes-6 (Bonnell, Jones, Kash, Kurtz, Patrick, Schul). No-0. Motion passed.

CITIZEN COMMENTS  
None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES-March 2020  
Motion: Ms. Kash moved, seconded by Ms. Kurtz to approve the March 2020 Board of Health Meeting Minutes.  
Roll call Vote: Yes-6 (Bonnell, Jones, Kash, Kurtz, Patrick, Schul). No-0. Motion passed.

RECEIVE AND FILE FINANCIAL REPORT- March 2020  
Ms. Phillips explained to the board that health department revenue remains stable during COVID-19 at this time. Another grant has become available to offset some of the costs associated with COVID-19. Ms. Phillips stated that all over-time worked by CMHD staff is paid in comp time versus extra pay, keeping the department from exceeding the budget.  
Motion: Ms. Kurtz moved, seconded by Mr. Bonnell to receive and file the March 2020 Financial Report.  
Roll call Vote: Yes-6 (Bonnell, Jones, Kash, Kurtz, Patrick, Schul). No-0. Motion passed.

EDUCATION PRESENTATION-Coronavirus (COVID-19)  
Dr. Jennewine stated that City of Middletown has 20 positive COVID-19 cases, with four hospitalizations. Only one of those four remains in the hospital at this time. Butler County, as a whole, has had 108 cases with a hospitalization rate of around 38%. Dr. Jennewine explained that at this time, the data is still incomplete. We have no way of knowing the exact number of people that have really had this virus.
unless they have been tested. Board members posed questions to Dr. Jennewine and COVID-19 discussion followed.

OLD BUSINESS
PHAB
Ms. Phillips stated that the PHAB site visit has been placed on hold, the board will be informed as more updates become available.

NEW BUSINESS
Travel Authorizations
None.

NAPH (Name, Address, Phone, Health history) Form Update
Ms. Phillips explained that NAPH forms are updated yearly as a part of CMHD’s Emergency Preparedness Plan.

1st Quarter Report
Ms. Phillips explained that we are still waiting on the March Communicable Disease Report from Butler County to complete the 1st Quarter Report. Disease numbers reported currently only reflect January-February totals. All other data included in the 1st Quarter Report is complete.

REPORTS
Health Commissioner
Ms. Phillips informed the board that Hamilton County has altered their Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) activities due to COVID-19. They are taking clients by appointment only, while trying to find an alternative site for the SEP van on Thursdays. CMHD has suspended the SEP contract for the 2nd quarter of 2020.

Ms. Phillips stated that she and Ms. Corbin have been working with local long term care facilities regarding new director’s orders concerning the release of information of COVID-19 positive residents and employees.

Ms. Phillips stated that we are still working with local businesses in providing guidance on adhering to director’s orders throughout COVID-19, and encouraging individuals to stay at home.

Medical Director
Dr. Jennewine reported on the February Communicable Disease Report.

February
Chlamydia 37
Gonococcal Infection 20
Hepatitis A 3
Hepatitis B 1
Hepatitis C 15
Influenza-associated hospitalization 20
Lyme Disease 1
Invasive Streptococcus pneumoniae 3
Syphilis-all stages 2
Environmental Director
Ms. Ealy stated that CVHD has received the results of the food survey report from Ohio Department of Health (ODH). ODH is requiring an action plan on one item, requiring a revision of ordinance 2003-02 adding the terminology “clear and present danger.”

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 AM. The next meeting will be held on May 12, 2020 at 7:30 AM.

Jacquelyn D. Phillips, MPH, BSN, RN
Secretary

Nicole Condrey, President
City of Middletown Board of Health
CMHD FINANCIAL NOTES THROUGH APRIL 2020

Indigent Burials:
- Year to date (YTD) 2020 $6,975.00 approved- 9 applications (+$1,550.00, +67% YOY)
- Average age of Indigents YTD 2020 = 50 (ranging from 19 to 87)
- 2020 (2) overdoses recorded for our indigent burial program to date (up 100% YOY)
  - Overdose statistics- both females (38 y/o & 19 y/o)

Environmental Revenue:
- Monthly $5,419.00 collected in Environmental Revenue (-$717.50 down, -13% MTM)
- 2020 Environmental YTD ($104,261.41, up $13,005.91 or +12%)
- Environmental revenue increases for the month:
  - Sewage (+$1830.00, +98%)
  - RFE (+$859.00, +74%)
- Environmental revenue decreased for the month:
  - Pools/Spas (-$2,460.00, -52%)
  - Food Service Operations (-$946.50, -100%)

Vital Statistics:
- The City of Middletown Health Department is the ONLY health department in our county working in the office and providing services to the public. All surrounding health departments local & county are closed to the public, providers and those they license. While closed to the public they put a full stop on any/all public or business requests for any services outside of COVID-19 related activities. They have informed their staff to direct requests for services to our department.
- Monthly Vital Statistics revenue collected $4,981.88 (-$4,122.72, -45% MTM)
- 2020 Vital Statistics YTD $33,262.08 (-$2,163.85, -6%)
- For the month, 397 certificates were sold and/or filed helping customers virtually for the entire month
  - Note- the above certificates order were fulfilled with the building being closed to the public and the administration staff taking orders online and over the phone
  - The administrative team continues to go above and beyond the call of duty to assist the Middletown funeral homes since the building has been closed to the public, by donning a mask and meeting their runners in the lobby to deliver the certificates and burial permits needed to for them to continue operations
- The administrative team also deposited 50 Environmental payments totaling $10,393.30

CoronaVirus (COVID-19):
- Today’s BOH meeting 5.12.2020, marks the 122nd day in a row the CMHD has been working on CoronaVirus (COVID-19) activities.
- All CMHD staff are essential in this pandemic and have been fully dedicated to the residents, healthcare providers, first responders, long term care facilities, schools, funeral homes, homeless shelters, businesses and employers in our city and beyond. The CMHD has been highlighted in the Journal News more times than we can mention and the CMHD has uploaded/distributed more than 450 documents to the public via the CMHD’s website, fax, email, USPS and meetings just in the last 3 months.
- The CMHD has revamped its entire website for ease and use by the public to access vital information and resources as we continue to move through this event.
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**Total** 331488.19
AGREEMENT FOR FACILITY USE

This Agreement for Facility Use (this “Agreement”) is made and entered into between Miami University, on behalf of its Middletown campus, hereinafter referred to as "Property Owner"; and the City of Middletown Board of Health, hereinafter referred to as “Health Board”.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, Property Owner operates a regional campus located at 4200 North University Blvd., Middletown, OH 45042, which includes a facility called Johnston Hall (the “Facility”) and Finkleman Auditorium (drive thru POD); and

WHEREAS, Health Board desires, when it deems reasonably necessary, to establish a Point of Dispensing (POD) Site for mass prophylaxis at the Facility.

Now, therefore, it is mutually agreed by and between the parties as follows:

1. Mass prophylaxis is the capability to protect the health of the population through the administration of critical interventions in response to a public health emergency in order to prevent the development of disease among those who are exposed or are potentially exposed to public health threats. Health Board may only use the Facility under this Agreement as a POD Site for the purpose of mass prophylaxis.

2. After meeting its responsibilities to its faculty, staff, and students, Property Owner agrees that it will permit Health Board, to the extent reasonably possible and upon request of Health Board as specified in this Agreement, to use of the Facility on a temporary basis for a POD Site.

3. The parties have designated their respective contact person(s) who have authority for implementing this Agreement (identified below). The parties can hereafter designate different contact persons upon written notice to the other party.

   Property Owner:

   Name: ____________________________
   Title: ____________________________
   Phone: ____________________________
   Email: ____________________________

   Health Board:

   ____________________________
   President
   513.425.7831
   Nicole@cityofmiddletown.org

4. Property Owner agrees that it will, prior to releasing the Facility to Health Board for use, evaluate the Facility and secure valuable property not required for Health Board activities, to the extent reasonably possible.

5. The parties agree to exercise reasonable care in the conduct of its activities under this Agreement, and to reasonably supervise, care, and control all of their respective employees, contractors, and volunteers
during any mass prophy/axis event at the Facility. Health Board shall to the maximum extent permitted by the Constitution and laws of the State of Ohio, bear full legal and financial responsibility for the use of the Facility as a POD Site. Health Board agrees to replace or reimburse Property Owner for supplies or materials belonging to Property Owner that may be used, damaged, or destroyed by Health Board’s use of the Facility as a POD Site.

6. Health Board covenants and agrees that it will: (a) use and occupy the Facility in a careful, safe, and lawful manner which does not interfere with the use of the surrounding premises; (b) remove all of Health Board’s property, garbage, and debris from the Facility when the Facility is no longer needed as a POD Site; and (c) return the Facility and the surrounding premises to the condition in which they existed when Health Board commenced use of the Facility as a POD Site, to the extent Health Board is responsible for any change in the condition of the Facility or surrounding premises.

7. A representative of Health Board will meet with the designated Property Owner representative periodically to evaluate the necessity for the continuation of operations and to resolve any other operational concerns.

8. It is understood that it is the responsibility of the Health Board to establish, staff, maintain, and dismantle the operations of the POD Site at the Facility.

9. This Agreement shall be construed under the laws of the State of Ohio. The parties shall adhere to and be bound by Ohio common law and statutory principles as to indemnification and contribution.

10. Property Owner shall keep in effect, at its sole expense, commercial general liability insurance for bodily injury and property damage arising out of the use of the premises, or cover such liability and property damage by means of membership in a joint self-insurance pool, or by some combination thereof. Health Board shall maintain general liability insurance that covers its activities as contemplated by this Agreement.

11. In no event shall Property Owner be liable in damages to Health Board for failing to provide space or rendering assistance; for the lack of speed in providing space or rendering assistance; or for any inadequacy or negligence in providing space or rendering assistance.

12. Either party may discontinue this Agreement in writing at any time unless the Facility is currently being used as a POD Site during a Public Health emergency.

13. Health Board represents that it is knowledgeable about and has inspected the Facility. Property Owner makes no warranties whatsoever regarding the condition of the Facility. Health Board acknowledges and agrees that it has inspected the Facility and found it suitable for purposes as a POD Site.

14. Health Board expressly acknowledges that the sole purpose of this Agreement is to provide physical space for the temporary location of a POD Site and the Property Owner is not required to provide any other physical space, resources, or services (e.g. transportation, personnel, supplies, lodging, etc.). The parties acknowledge that this Agreement does not include any obligation to provide food or beverage services or medical or psychological care at the POD Site.

15. The term of this Agreement shall commence on the date it is completely executed by both parties, and shall continue uninterrupted until June 30, 2021, unless earlier terminated.

16. All amendments or modifications of this Agreement must be in writing and signed by authorized representatives from both institutions.
In witness thereof, the parties have caused this Agreement to be executed, said agreement to become effective and operational upon the affixing of the last signature hereto.

[Signature Page Follows]
AGREEMENT FOR FACILITY USE

*Signature Page*

City of Middletown Board of Health

By: ________________________________

Nicole Condrey, President
City of Middletown Board of Health

Date

Miami University

By: ________________________________

David K. Creamer
SVP for Finance and Business Services

Date
MBHE ORDINANCE NO. 2020-01

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE HEALTH COMMISSIONER TO TAKE ACTION THAT MAY BE TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF HEALTH AS LICENSOR PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE SECTIONS 3717.29(D)(1) OR 3717.49(C)(1) TO SUSPEND OR REVOKE A LICENSE ISSUED TO A RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENT OR A FOOD SERVICE OPERATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ORDAINED by the City of Middletown Board of Health, Butler/Warren Counties, Ohio, that:

Section 1

The Health Commissioner of the Middletown Board of Health is hereby authorized to take action pursuant to Section 3717.29(D)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code to suspend or revoke a license issued by the Board as licensor to a retail food establishment in accordance with R.C. 3717 if it has been determined that a violation presents a clear and present danger to the public health.

Section 2

The Health Commissioner of the Middletown Board of Health is hereby authorized to take action pursuant to Section 3717.49(C)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code to suspend or revoke a license issued by the Board as licensor to a food service operation in accordance with R.C. 3717 if it has been determined that a violation presents an immediate danger to the public health.

Section 3


Section 4

This ordinance is declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health, safety, and general welfare, to wit: the need for immediate action where a violation of laws or rules relating to retail food establishments or food service operations have been violated, and shall take effect and be in force from and after its adoption.

Nicole Condrey, President
Middletown Board of Health

Adopted: ______________________

Approved as to form:

Jacquelyn D. Phillips, Secretary
Middletown Board of Health

Law Director
MBHE ORDINANCE NO. 2020-02

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE HEALTH COMMISSIONER, ANY REGISTERED SANITARIAN OR SANITARIAN-IN-TRAINING EMPLOYED BY THE BOARD OF HEALTH TO TAKE ACTION THAT MAY BE TAKEN BY THE BOARD AS LICENSOR PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE SECTIONS 3717.29(C)(1) OR 3717.49(B)(1) TO SUSPEND OR REVOKE A LICENSE ISSUED TO A RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENT OR A FOOD SERVICE OPERATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ORDAINED by the City of Middletown Board of Health, Butler/Warren Counties, Ohio, that:

Section 1

The Health Commissioner, any registered sanitarian or sanitarian-in-training of the Middletown Board of Health is hereby authorized to take action pursuant to Section 3717.29(C)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code to suspend or revoke a license issued by the Board as licensor to a retail food establishment in accordance with R.C. 3717 when a violation does not present a clear and present danger to the public health.

Section 2

The Health Commissioner, any registered sanitarian or sanitarian-in-training of the Middletown Board of Health is hereby authorized to take action pursuant to Section 3717.49(B)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code to suspend or revoke a license issued by the Board as licensor to a food service operation in accordance with R.C. 3717 when a violation does not present an immediate danger to the public health.

Section 3


Section 4

This ordinance is declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health, safety, and general welfare, to wit: the need for immediate action where a violation of laws or rules relating to retail food establishments or food service operations have been violated, and shall take effect and be in force from and after its adoption.

Nicole Condrey, President
Middletown Board of Health

Adopted:

Approved as to form:

Jacquelyn D. Phillips, Secretary
Middletown Board of Health

Law Director
AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE BOARD OF HEALTH OF THE
BUTLER COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT AND
CITY OF MIDDLETOWN HEALTH DEPARTMENT

THIS AGREEMENT is made and entered into by and between the Board of Health of the Butler County General Health District, hereinafter referred to as the "Board," and the City of Middletown Health Department, hereinafter referred to as the "Contractor."

WITNESS TO:

WHEREAS, the Board has awarded the Contractor portions of the Coronavirus Response grant on behalf of the Ohio Department of Health; and

WHEREAS, the Butler County portion of the Coronavirus Response grant is composed of the following health jurisdictions: Butler County, Hamilton City, and Middletown City; and

WHEREAS, the public health leadership in each of the respective health districts desires to work together to accomplish the Coronavirus Response workplan,

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the mutual promises, covenants, and agreements herein contained, the parties hereto mutually agree as follows:

Section 1. Scope of Services

A. Contract Requirements

1. Contractor will submit all grant documentation as directed by the Board and the Coronavirus Response guidance documents by the assigned deadline.

2. Contractor will submit monthly program reports and monthly expenditure reports:
   - Monthly program reports will follow the template provided and be submitted to the Board by the identified deadlines (Attachment A).
   - Monthly expenditure reports will be submitted to the Board by the identified deadlines (Attachment B).
   - Reports must be received in accordance with the requirements of the Ohio Grants Administration Policies and Procedures (OGAPP) manual and this Agreement before the Board will release any additional funds.
   - Contractor shall inventory and place an Ohio Department of Health inventory tag on any equipment over $1000 purchased with these grant funds by the Contractor

3. Contractor will participate in completion of all elements of the Butler County Coronavirus Response Workplan (Attachment C).
4. Contractor will maintain responsibility for all Coronavirus Response operations within their respective jurisdiction.

B. Additional Grant Requirements

Contractor will provide written documentation, and any required certification, to the Board in the development of a work plan to meet goals and objectives set forth in the Coronavirus Response grant standards.

Contractor must provide evidence that workplan activities have been met prior to submitting a request for payment.

If the Contractor fails to complete a workplan activity or submits incomplete documentation, a request for payment will be denied. Should the Ohio Department of Health provide the opportunity to resubmit failed or incomplete workplan activities, the Board will extend the same opportunity to the Contractor.

Contractor must record and provide the Board with evidence of all time and effort and retain these records per the OGAPP manual.

Section 2. Term

This agreement shall be effective from the date it is executed by the parties and shall continue in effect through March 15, 2021 unless terminated as provided in this Agreement. Services eligible for payment under this Agreement shall be performed on or after March 16, 2020 to March 15, 2021, and which are timely invoiced as provided in this Agreement.

Section 3. Compensation and Method of Payment

A. Compensation:

1. The Board agrees to pay the Contractor up to but not in excess of $42,200.00, as full and complete compensation for the deliverables required and outlined in this Agreement.

2. Payment will be reimbursed upon completion of monthly expenditure reports and monthly program reports by their respective deadlines

B. Method of Payment:

1. Payment will be made by the Board as the Contractor submits monthly invoices for the reimbursement of expenditures for activities performed under this Agreement when the following conditions have been met: Submission of the detailed monthly invoices/expenditure reports specifying that the contractor has performed the work under this Agreement and has progressed according to the grant requirements. Invoices will be submitted to the Board by the 5th of each month.

2. Any periodic payments from the Board specified in this Agreement will be contingent upon performance of contractual obligations to date, including the proper receipt of
supporting invoices, reports, statements, or any other supporting information as required by the Board in this Agreement.

a. Failure to satisfactorily meet any one of the Agreement obligations by the Contractor may result in the Board not approving periodic payments to the Contractor and/or filing liens as may be necessary against the Contractor's assets or future assets, until the Contractor satisfactorily fulfills its obligations under the Agreement or satisfactorily reimburses the Board for any prior payments.

b. The Board also reserves the right to seek any other legal financial remedies as necessary pursuant to any damages the Board may have encountered through the Contractor's default on any of the Agreement obligations until all or part of the Board's prior payments have been recouped as the Board deems appropriate but not to exceed the total amount of any prior payments.

c. The Board also reserves the right in the event of non-performance of this Agreement to prohibit any future or limited contractual relationships with the Contractor either directly or indirectly.

Section 4. Availability of Funds

This Agreement is conditioned upon the availability of state funds which are appropriated to ODH and allocated to the Board for payment as described in this Agreement. If funds are not allocated and available for the continuance of the function performed by the Contractor hereunder, the products or services directly involved in the performance of that function may be terminated by the Board at the end of the period in which funds are available. The Board will notify the Contractor at the earliest possible time of any products or services which will or may be affected by a shortage of funds. No penalty shall accrue to the Board in the event this provision is exercised, and the Board shall not be obligated or liable for any future payments due for any damages as a result of termination under this section.

Section 5. Prohibitions

Contractor will adhere to the ODH Coronavirus Response program guidance regarding any prohibited use of funds.

Section 6. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

A. Generally - The Contractor in the performance of services under this Agreement shall comply with all applicable statutes, ordinances, regulations, and rules of the Federal Government, and the State of Ohio.

B. Equal Employment Opportunity Program - This Agreement is subject to the State’s Equal Employment Opportunity Program.

Section 7. Reports, Information and Audits

A. Contractor, at such times and in such form as the Board may require, shall furnish the Board such reports as may be requested pertaining to the work or services undertaken pursuant to
this Agreement, the costs and obligations incurred or to be incurred in connection therewith, and any other matters covered by this Agreement. Contractor shall retain all financial and administrative records for a period of five years after the expiration or termination of this Agreement, and shall provide the Board or any of the Board’s representatives or auditor access to such records.

B. The Board and/or the Auditor of State shall have the right to audit or cause to be audited financial data or records of Contractor pertaining to the work or services undertaken pursuant to this Agreement at any time with 15 days prior notice.

C. Contractor shall cooperate with the Auditor of State or any independent auditor hired by the Board and provide to such auditor on a confidential basis, medical records as well as other patient or financial records pertaining to the work or services undertaken pursuant to this Agreement for a management audit. All parties shall comply with requirements established by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information (Privacy Rule 45 CFR Part 160 and Subparts A and E of Part 164) regarding safeguarding and protecting individually identifiable health information ("Protected Health Information" or "PHI"). It is the intention of the parties that the provisions of this Section reflect the requirements of HIPAA, as adopted, amended and interpreted from time to time.

Section 8. **Time is of the Essence**

The Contractor acknowledges that time is of the essence for all dates or times set forth in this Agreement. Failure of the Contractor to meet such dates or times shall constitute a breach of contract and may result in the Board denying claims for payment arising from such breach of contract at the Butler County General Health District’s Health Commissioner’s option.

Section 9. **Contractor Responsibility**

Contractor shall be solely responsible for and shall defend Board against any claim for damages or expenses (including attorney fees, court costs, and other litigation expenses) for injury to person or damage to property which arises directly or indirectly from Contractor’s performance or nonperformance of the functions described in this Agreement or from any other action or inaction on the part of Contractor in connection with the Agreement.

Section 10. **Amendments**

Any revisions in the Agreement will require the express approval of the Board and the Contractor, and shall be by written instrument signed by an authorized representative of each party.

Section 11. **Termination**

This Agreement may be terminated with or without cause and without liability by either party by sending a written notice of termination to the other party thirty (30) days prior to the date of termination (hereinafter, the "Termination Date") set forth in the notice. If this Agreement is terminated, the Board agrees to pay Grantee for all work performed and expenses incurred up to the
Terminate Date. Upon termination, Contractor shall provide the Board with all documents (written, digital, electronic, etc.) produced up until the Terminate Date.

Section 12. **Independent Contractor**

The Contractor shall perform all work and services described herein as an independent contractor and not as an officer, agent, servant, or employee of the Board. The Contractor shall have exclusive control of and the exclusive right to control the details of the services and work performed hereunder and all persons performing the same and shall be solely responsible for the acts and omissions of its officers, agents, employees, contractors, and subcontractors, if any. Nothing herein shall be construed as creating a partnership or joint venture between the Board and the Contractor. No person performing any of the work or services described hereunder shall be considered an officer, agent, servant, or employee of the Board, nor shall any such person be entitled to any benefits available or granted to employees of the Board.

Section 13. **Assignments and Delegation**

The parties expressly agree that this contract shall not be assigned by the Contractor without the express prior written approval of the Board. The Contractor may not delegate or subcontract any of the services agreed to in this contract without the express prior written consent of the Board. All subcontractors are subject to the same terms, conditions, and covenants contained within this Agreement. Contractor is responsible for making direct payment to all subcontractors for any and all services provided by such contractor.

Section 14. **Certification as to Non-Debarment**

The Contractor certifies that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in the transaction covered by this Agreement. The Contractor acknowledges and agrees that if he/it(s) principals is/are presently debarred then he/it shall not be entitled to compensation under this Agreement and that he/it shall promptly return to the Board any funds received pursuant to this Agreement. In such event, any materials received by the Contractor pursuant to this Agreement shall be retained as liquidated damages.

Section 15. **Ownership of Property**

The Contractor agrees that at the expiration or in the event of any termination of this Agreement that any Memoranda, Equipment, Vouchers, Spreadsheets, Maps, Drawings, Working Papers, Reports, and other similar documents produced in connection with this Agreement shall become the property of the Board and the Contractor shall promptly deliver such items to the Board. The Contractor may retain copies for the Contractor's record.

Section 16. **Conflict of Interest**

The Contractor agrees that no officer, employee, or agent of the Board who exercises any functions or responsibilities in connection with the planning and carrying out of the program, nor any immediate family member, close business associate, or organization which is about to employ any
such person, shall have any personal financial interest, direct or indirect, in the Contractor or in this Agreement and the Contractor shall take appropriate steps to assure compliance with this provision.

Section 17. Notices

Service - This Agreement requires that all notices shall be personally served or sent by U.S. mail, postage prepaid, addressed to the parties as follows:

To the Board: To the Contractor:
Health Commissioner Health Commissioner
Butler County General Health District City of Middletown Health Department
301 S. Third Street One Donham Plaza
Hamilton, OH 45011 Middletown, OH 45042

Section 18. Waiver

This Agreement shall be construed in a manner that a waiver of any breach of any provision of this Agreement shall not constitute or operate as a waiver of any other breach of such provision or of any other provisions, nor shall any failure to enforce any provision hereof operate as a waiver of such provision or of any other provision.

Section 19. Severability

This Agreement shall be severable, so if any part or parts of this Agreement shall for any reason be held invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, all remaining parts shall remain binding and in full force and effect.

Section 20. Entire Agreement

This Agreement and the Exhibits attached hereto contain the entire contract between the parties as to the matters contained herein. Any oral representations or modifications concerning this Agreement shall be of no force and effect.
Section 21. Authority

The persons signing this Agreement represent and warrant that they are authorized to represent their respective parties and to execute this Agreement on behalf of the party that they represent.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Board and the Contractor have executed the Agreement on this __________ day of ______________________, 2020.

THE BOARD OF HEALTH OF
THE BUTLER COUNTY
GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT
Tax ID 316000061
301 S 3rd St.
Hamilton, OH 45011

Motion No. 2020-04-010

Approved as to Form Only

Jennifer Baier, RN, MS
Health Commissioner

Assistant Prosecuting Attorney

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

Jacquelyn Phillips, MPH, BSN, RN
City of Middletown Health Commissioner

City of Middletown Law Director
Attachment A: Monthly Program Reports

Contractor Program Reports must be completed and submitted to the Board of Health as required by the Agreement by the following dates. Program reports must follow the template provided in this Agreement. All program report attachments must clearly identify the authorized program name and grant number.

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<th>Report Due Date</th>
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<td>May 1 – 31, 2020</td>
<td>June 5, 2020</td>
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<td>March 1 – 15, 2021</td>
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COVID-19 Monthly Report Template

Agency Name:

Program Reporting Period:

Date Submitted:

The activities listed in this monthly report must align with those activities listed in the COVID-19 Workplan (Domains 2 and 5 are not applicable, so not included).

Domain 1 - Incident Management for Early Crisis Response

Activity Title: Emergency Operations and Coordination

Monthly Update: Please describe activities conducted by your local health department this month to address this domain/activity. Use the activity description in the Butler County Coronavirus Response Workplan (Attachment C) as a point of reference for allowable activities under this domain/activity.

Activity Title: Identification of Vulnerable Populations

Monthly Update: Please describe activities conducted by your local health department this month to address this domain/activity. Use the activity description in the Butler County Coronavirus Response Workplan (Attachment C) as a point of reference for allowable activities under this domain/activity.

Domain 3 – Information Management

Activity Title: Emergency Public Information and Warning

Monthly Update: Please describe activities conducted by your local health department this month to address this domain/activity. Use the activity description in the Butler County Coronavirus Response Workplan (Attachment C) as a point of reference for allowable activities under this domain/activity.
Domain 4 - Countermasures and Mitigation

Activity Title: Nonpharmaceutical Interventions

Monthly Update: Please describe activities conducted by your local health department this month to address this domain/activity. Use the activity description in the Butler County Coronavirus Response Workplan (Attachment C) as a point of reference for allowable activities under this domain/activity.

Activity Title: Quarantine and Isolation Support

Monthly Update: Please describe activities conducted by your local health department this month to address this domain/activity. Use the activity description in the Butler County Coronavirus Response Workplan (Attachment C) as a point of reference for allowable activities under this domain/activity.

Domain 6 – Biosurveillance

Activity Title: Public Health Surveillance and Real-Time Reporting

Monthly Update: Please describe activities conducted by your local health department this month to address this domain/activity. Use the activity description in the Butler County Coronavirus Response Workplan (Attachment C) as a point of reference for allowable activities under this domain/activity.

Activity Title: Public Health Laboratory Testing, Equipment, Supplies, and Shipping

Monthly Update: Please describe activities conducted by your local health department this month to address this domain/activity. Use the activity description in the Butler County Coronavirus Response Workplan (Attachment C) as a point of reference for allowable activities under this domain/activity.
Activity Title: Data Management

Monthly Update: Please describe activities conducted by your local health department this month to address this domain/activity. Use the activity description in the Butler County Coronavirus Response Workplan (Attachment C) as a point of reference for allowable activities under this domain/activity.
Attachment B: Monthly Expenditure Reports

All expenditure reports will be submitted monthly. Submission of the Monthly and Final Expenditure reports must be in accordance with OGAPP. Submitting the report to the Board of Health signifies authorization of the submission by an agency official and constitutes acknowledgment and acceptance of OGAPP rules and regulations.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1 – 15, 2021</td>
<td>March 20, 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final Expenditure Reports:
A Final Expenditure Report reflecting total expenditures for the fiscal year must be completed and submitted to the Board of Health by 4:00 p.m. on or before April 15, 2021.

The Final Expense Report serves as an invoice to return unused funds.

Inventory Report:
A list of all equipment purchased in whole or in part with current grant funds must be submitted to the Board of Health as part of the subrecipient Final Expenditure Report. Equipment purchased with ODH grant funds must be tagged as property of ODH for inventory control. Such equipment may be required to be returned to ODH at the end of the grant program period.
Attachment C: Butler County Coronavirus Response Grant Workplan

Crisis Response Grant (COVID-19) Workplan

Agency Name: Butler County General Health District

Date: 4/08/2020

Summary

For the purposes of this workplan the Butler County Public Health agencies refers to the Butler County General Health District (BCGHD), the City of Hamilton Health Department (CHHD), and the City of Middletown Health Department (CMHD). The Butler County Public Health agencies will work together and with partners to complete various activities within the following Domains: (1) Incident Management for Early Crisis Response, (3) Information Management, (4) Countermeasures and Mitigation, and (6) Biosurveillance. Activities within each include Emergency Operations and Coordination, Identification of Vulnerable Populations, Emergency Public Information and Warning, Nonpharmaceutical Interventions, Quarantine and Isolation Support, Public Health Surveillance and Real-Time Reporting, Public Health Laboratory, Testing, Equipment, Supplies, and Shipping, and Data Management. Each of the Butler County Public Health agencies will work to complete the activities outlined in this Crisis Response Workplan in order to slow the transmission of disease, minimize morbidity and mortality, preserve healthcare, workforce, and infrastructure functions and minimize social and economic impacts of COVID19 in Butler County, Ohio.

Activity Descriptions:

Domain 1 - Incident Management for Early Crisis Response

Activity Title: Emergency Operations and Coordination

Activity Summary:

The Butler County Public Health agencies will establish their own Incident Command Structure (ICS) as well as collaborate with the Butler County Emergency Management Agency by providing Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF 8) representation to the Butler County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Public Health will utilize ICS in their own agencies to define their Incident Command Structures and work within those organizational structures to respond to COVID-19 within their jurisdictions. This includes providing ESF 8 support to the Butler County EOC. Participation at the Butler County EOC will include involvement in daily briefings, participation in situation update reporting, and participation in planning workgroups. This activity will allow a structured and collaborative approach to adapting to disruptions caused by community spread, addressing medical surge, and preserving healthcare, workforce, and infrastructure functions while minimizing social and economic impacts in Butler County.
Activity Title: Identification of Vulnerable Populations

Activity Summary:

Butler County Public Health agencies will lead and participate in a Butler County Vulnerable Populations Workgroup tasked with developing a Vulnerable Populations Plan for Butler County, Ohio that identifies vulnerable populations and addresses slowing the transmission COVID-19 and minimizing the morbidity and mortality within those populations. This activity will include providing a point of contact from each local health department to represent vulnerable populations planning for their jurisdiction.

Domain 3 – Information Management

Activity Title: Emergency Public Information and Warning

Activity Summary:

Butler County Public Health agencies will utilize Public Information Officers to engage the public and partners through social media, agency websites, agency phones, and traditional media pathways. These individuals and their support teams will provide important education to the public about public health initiatives in order to minimize spread and transmission of COVID-19 in the community. This activity will involve developing relationships with media partners, participating in press conferences and interviews, engagement with the public through social media platforms, updating agency websites, and being available to the press for questions through phone, email, and website contact forms.

Domain 4 - Countermeasures and Mitigation

Activity Title: Nonpharmaceutical Interventions

Activity Summary:

The Butler County Public Health agencies will appoint agency staff to enforce local and statewide orders to ensure these nonpharmaceutical interventions are being implemented at the local level. These individuals and departments will be tasked with investigating reports of violations of public health orders, fielding calls from the public related to order enforcement, and working with legal representation and law enforcement officials to enforce orders, as necessary. These enforcement activities will result in slowing the transmission of COVID-19 and minimizing morbidity and mortality within the Community.

Activity Title: Quarantine and Isolation Support

Activity Summary:

The Butler County Public Health agencies will provide support to individuals under quarantine and/or isolation orders from their local health department. This activity may involve food support, mental health support, physical health support, and other resource support. By supporting these individuals, local health departments are increasing the likelihood of compliance with quarantine/isolation orders and therefore minimizing potential spread in the community.
Domain 6 – Biosurveillance

Activity Title: Public Health Surveillance and Real-Time Reporting

Activity Summary:

The Butler County Public Health agencies will actively engage in contact tracing of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in their jurisdictions as well as monitoring of individuals in quarantine and isolation. Monitoring may be active daily monitoring, self-monitoring, or a combination of the two. Butler County Public Health agencies will continue to engage in 24/7 communicable disease reporting functions as part of this activity.

Activity Title: Public Health Laboratory Testing, Equipment, Supplies, and Shipping

Activity Summary

The Butler County Public Health agencies will actively engage with healthcare facilities in need of assistance with shipment and transportation of samples to the Ohio Department of Health Laboratory. Assisting with these processes ensures timely transportation of critical samples from the community therefore minimizing potential spread in the community and ensuring protection of critical infrastructure and staff supporting those critical infrastructures in the community.

Activity Title: Data Management

Activity Summary

The Butler County Public Health agencies will produce a Butler County Epidemiology Report that showcases data collected through epidemiological investigations of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Butler County. This Epidemiology Report will inform public health interventions by providing important epidemiological data on confirmed COVID-19 cases within Butler County.
## Coronavirus Response Grant Funding by Jurisdiction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Initial Funding</th>
<th>Supplemental Funding (4/28/2020)</th>
<th>Total Current Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butler County General Health District</td>
<td>$222,918.00</td>
<td>$104,720.00</td>
<td>$327,638.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Hamilton Health Department</td>
<td>$54,144.00</td>
<td>$25,435.00</td>
<td>$79,579.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Middletown Health Department</td>
<td>$42,200.00</td>
<td>$19,824.00</td>
<td>$62,024.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grant Total:  

- $319,262.00  
- $149,979.00  
- $469,241.00
Emergency Contact Tracer Agreement

Name ___________________________ Affiliation ___________________________ Date Completed ______

EMERGENCY CONTACT TRACER AGREEMENT

I ______ hereby acknowledge that I have been recruited to participate in the City of Middletown Health Department’s response to COVID-19 pandemic. I further acknowledge I am a temporary worker and not an employee, nor the City of Middletown Health Department (CMHD). I understand and agree that all work performed, and materials produced during the time at CMHD shall be the sole property of CMHD. I acknowledge that my time worked will be compensated in the amount of fifteen (15) dollars/hour.

I agree and understand that I will follow the directions of CMHD while participating in this Agreement. In addition, as applicable, I agree to follow all pertinent federal and state laws, rules and regulations, including policies and standards related to and governing the access of CMHD data, databases, and data sets.

I waive, release, forever discharge any and all rights, claims and liabilities against the CMHD, its administrators, agents, representatives which may arise now or in the future because of their participation in assisting with assigned activities. I acknowledge that this release and waiver includes, but is not limited to, any claims of bodily injury and property damage, whether sustained before, during or after the time working as a Contact Tracer CMHD.

I understand that my information, as well as any additional information requested, may be shared with other federal and state agencies, including, but not limited to, law enforcement and security agencies. I understand that the CMHD will not make this information available for any purpose except as set out in this Agreement.

I understand I may have access to certain confidential or protected health information ("Confidential Information") in my capacity as a Contact Tracer. Accordingly, I understand and agree that:

1. Confidential Information is specifically protected under state and federal law. Unauthorized release of Confidential Information may make me subject to legal and/or disciplinary action.

2. It is my legal and ethical responsibility to protect the privacy, confidentiality and security of all Confidential Information, including business, employment and medical information relating to patients, members, volunteers and health care providers. I shall respect and maintain the confidentiality of all discussions, deliberations, patient care records and any other information.

3. I will only access the minimum necessary information to satisfy my duties and responsibilities. I shall only access or disseminate Confidential Information in the performance of my assigned duties and where required by or permitted by law, and in a manner which is consistent with officially adopted policies, or where no officially adopted policy exists, only with the express approval of my supervisor. I shall make no voluntary disclosure of any discussion, deliberations, or Confidential Information.

4. My obligation to safeguard Confidentiality Information continues after my termination of my Contact Tracer assignment(s).

5. I may not assign this Agreement or any interest herein without prior written consent from the CMHD.

CMHD reserves the right to terminate this Agreement at any time without prior notice to the Contact Tracer. Termination is in the complete discretion of CMHD. The Parties intend that all items listed above shall survive the effective dates or any.

City of Middletown Health Department | One Donham Plaza, Middletown, Ohio 45042 | T 513.425.1818 F 513.425.7852

Created April 2020
termination of this Agreement.

This Agreement shall be in effect from the date of signature below until the Agreement is terminated or until my Contact Tracer assignment is complete.

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the foregoing information and that my signature below signifies my agreement to comply with the above terms. In the event of a breach or threatened breach of the Confidentiality Agreement, I acknowledge that the CMHD may, as applicable and as it deems appropriate, pursue action to enforce this Agreement.

Contact Tracer Name ____________________________ Date ____________

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have set their hands the day and year first above written.

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN BOARD OF HEALTH

By: ____________________________
President

Attest: ____________________________
Secretary

CONTACT TRACER

By: ____________________________
Contact Tracer

Approved:

_________________________________
Law Division, City of Middletown
CMHD HIPAA AGREEMENT: SIGN, RETURN A COPY, AND KEEP A COPY FOR YOURSELF

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FOR EMERGENCY CONTACT TRACERS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that during the course of my participation or performance of duties at the City of Middletown Health Department, hereby referred to as “facility,” that I may receive access to confidential information of the facility that is prohibited from disclosure to others.

“Confidential Information” means information provided by the facility that is not commonly available to the general public, or is required by law or regulation to be protected from disclosure to third parties not considered part of the facility’s “workforce” as that term is defined by federal and state health information privacy regulations such as the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act.

Confidential Information includes information contained in patient medical records and any other health information which identifies a patient; quality assurance, research or peer review information; and information concerning the facility’s employees, services or business operations. Such information can be acquired by any means and in any form, written, spoken or electronic.

I agree not to share, disclose or discuss Confidential Information with anyone who does not have a legitimate interest in such information. I will abide by the facility’s policies and procedures concerning the use or disclosure of Confidential Information and I will contact a representative if I have any questions regarding these policies and procedures.

I will maintain and protect the privacy of the facility’s employees, staff and patients in my use and disclosure of Confidential Information and I will not misuse or be careless with such information.

I understand that any violation of this Agreement or the facility’s policies related to access, use or disclosure of Confidential Information may result in significant legal ramifications for which I will be held solely responsible with respect to this Agreement.

I acknowledge that I have reviewed all of the information above.

I understand that compliance with the principles, policies and procedures expressed above is a condition of my participation and continued presence at the facility.

Name (please print) __________________________________________

Signature __________________________________________________

Date __________________
We saw 34 people today at Middletown Exchange. We gave out 1435 syringes and took in 5.2lbs (approx 850 used syringes). We also gave out 21 Narcan’s, 68 Fentanyl test strips, 39 hygiene, 50 wound care, 22 feminine & 15 safe sex kits. We made 3 referrals and everybody today was made aware that there are treatment beds available and given Hopeline’s information. We also gave out 22 face masks (thanks for these Jackie, sorry l didn’t get a chance to give you the heads up that Scott was picking these up). Nic Graham from the Journal stopped by (I let Jackie and Brandy know) – he took a few pics (none with consumers in them) and we gave him all the positive reasons for blood borne pathogen prevention programs and informed him that per Jackie he could only do a story if it has a positive spin 😊. Jackie have you heard anything from HCHD about when they may be considering restarting services/contract? Thanks Daryl

Daryl Hams RN
Project Coordinator
Regional Exchange Collaborative
NOTICE: This electronic mail transmission is for the use of the named individual or entity to which it is directed and may contain information that is privileged or confidential. It is not to be transmitted to or received by anyone other than the named addressee (or a person authorized to deliver it to the named addressee). It is not to be copied or forwarded to any unauthorized persons. If you have received this electronic mail transmission in error, delete it from your system without copying or forwarding it, and notify the sender of the error by replying via email or by calling Access Counseling Services, LLC at 513-649-8008, so that our address record can be corrected.

Written communications to and from public officials or public employees, including e-mails, are subject to the Ohio Public Records Act, and in most cases must be made available to any person, including the media, upon request. E-mail, which qualifies as a public record, will be released, unless it clearly falls under a specific exemption in the state law.
Butler County General Health District
COVID-19 Update (05/06/2020)

Confirmed and Probable COVID-19 Cases
Reported to Butler County*
Butler County Residents, 2020

Total # of Cases*: 359*
Total Number of Deaths: 10
First Case Reported: 3/13/2020
Last Case Reported (so far): 5/6/2020
Confirmed Cases: 355
Probable Cases: 4
Age Range: <1-101
Median Age: 50
Mean Age: 49.23
Incidence Rate: 93.7 per 100,000

Figure 1. Total Cases Reported* to Butler County by Symptom Onset Date

All figures show reported cases of COVID-19 in Butler County as of 0900 EDT 05/06/2020. Due to delays in reporting, the numbers of confirmed and probable cases on Figure 1 are subject to change between reports and confirmed and probable case counts are likely to increase. *This should not be assumed to be the total disease burden of COVID-19 in Butler County only those that have been laboratory confirmed OR meet ODH probable case criteria AND reported to Public Health.

*Data is provisional – only confirmed COVID-19 cases are included in counts. Report reflects time period since the introduction of SARS-CoV-2 into humans, measured in days. Data accessed from the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) on 05/06/2020 at 0900 EDT.
Figure 2. Cumulative Cases* Reported to Butler County By Date Reported

- Total Cases
- New Cases

Case Count

Date Reported


Figure 3. Total Recovered** Cases Reported to Butler County

- Total Recovered

Count

Date of Symptom Resolution


136

**Recovery is based on the recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) which recommend the lifting of home isolation after a minimum of 7 days after the onset of symptoms and 72 hours with the resolution of fever without medication and the marked improvement of all symptoms. This should not be assumed to be the total amount of individuals in the county of have developed COVID-19 and recovered.

All figures show reported cases of COVID-19 in Butler County as of 0900 EDT 05/06/2020. Due to delays in reporting, the numbers of confirmed and probable cases on Figure 1 are subject to change between reports and confirmed and probable case counts are likely to increase. This should not be assumed to be the total disease burden of COVID-19 in Butler County only those that have been laboratory confirmed OR meet ODH probable case criteria AND reported to Public Health.

*Data is provisional—only confirmed COVID-19 cases are included in counts. Report reflects time period since the introduction of SARS-CoV-2 into humans, measured in days. Data accessed from the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) on 05/06/2020 at 0900 EDT.
Demographics of COVID-19 Cases Reported to Butler County
Butler County Residents, 2020
(as of 0900 EDT 05/06/2020)

Table 1: Total Reported* Cases by ZIP Code

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZIP Code</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
<th>Rate per 100,000</th>
<th>% of Confirmed Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45014</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>189.0</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45011</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>116.3</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45044</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45069</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45013</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45042</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45015</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>137.9</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45056</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45050</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45067</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45264</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45241</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45053</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45003</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45005</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Butler County (inclusive) 359 100%

Zip-codes not calculated have most of their population outside of Butler County. Rate given for comparison by population and will be higher than the actual amount.

Table 2. Exposure Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Healthcare Exposure</th>
<th>First Response</th>
<th>Household contact</th>
<th>Travel associated</th>
<th>Congregate setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>235</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Clusters in Butler County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster Associated Cases</th>
<th>81</th>
<th>22.5%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cluster Association</td>
<td>Number of Clusters</td>
<td>Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregate setting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Reported* Cases of COVID-19 by Sex
Butler County Residents, 2020

Figure 5. Reported* Confirmed Cases by Age Group
Butler County Residents, 2020

All figures show reported cases of COVID-19 in Butler County as of 0900 EDT 05/06/2020. Due to delays in reporting, the numbers of confirmed and probable cases on Figure 1 are subject to change between reports and confirmed and probable case counts are likely to increase. *This should not be assumed to be the total disease burden of COVID-19 in Butler County only those that have been laboratory confirmed OR meet ODH probable case criteria AND reported to Public Health. *Data is provisional – only confirmed COVID-19 cases are included in counts. Report reflects time period since the introduction of SARS-CoV-2 into humans, measured in days. Data accessed from the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) on 05/06/2020 at 0900 EDT.
Figure 6. COVID-19 Cases Reported to Butler County by risk
Butler County Residents, 2020

Risk status***
(Underlying Health Conditions or Older than 65)
***High risk status does not necessarily make one more susceptible to transmission, but does increase the likelihood of a more severe illness

Figure 7. COVID-19 Cases Reported to Butler County by Hospitalization
Butler County Residents, 2020

Figure 8. Cases Reported to Butler County by Race/Ethnicity

All figures show reported cases of COVID-19 in Butler County as of 0900 EDT 05/06/2020. Due to delays in reporting, the numbers of confirmed and probable cases on Figure 1 are subject to change between reports and confirmed and probable case counts are likely to increase. *This should not be assumed to be the total disease burden of COVID-19 in Butler County only those that have been laboratory confirmed OR meet ODH probable case criteria AND reported to Public Health. *Data is provisional – only confirmed COVID-19 cases are included in counts. Report reflects time period since the introduction of SARS-CoV-2 into humans, measured in days. Data accessed from the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) on 05/06/2020 at 0900 EDT.
Clinical Statistics For Reported Butler County Cases
Butler County Residents, 2020
(as of 0900 EDT 05/06/2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4. Laboratory Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmatory Tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range (in days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median (in days)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5. Hospitalization Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hospitalized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases with information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently Hospitalized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admitted to Intensive Care Unit (ICU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required intubation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Length of Stay (in days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Length of Stay (in days)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6. Symptoms Reported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases with Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortness of Breath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myalgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runny Nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore Throat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nausea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdominal Pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymptomatic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7. Recovery** Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases Recovered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases with Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range from Illness onset to recovery (in days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median time from Illness onset to recovery (in days)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recovery is based on the recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) which recommend the lifting of home isolation after a minimum of 7 days after the onset of symptoms and 72 hours with the resolution of fever without medication and the marked improvement of all symptoms. This should not be assumed to be the total amount of individuals in the county of have developed COVID-19 and recovered.

All figures show reported cases of COVID-19 in Butler County as of 0900 EDT 05/06/2020. Due to delays in reporting, the numbers of confirmed and probable cases on Figure 1 are subject to change between reports and confirmed and probable case counts are likely to increase. *This should not be assumed to be the total disease burden of COVID-19 in Butler County only those that have been laboratory confirmed OR meet ODH probable case criteria AND reported to Public Health. *Data is provisional -- only confirmed COVID-19 cases are included in counts. Report reflects time period since the introduction of SARS-CoV-2 into humans, measured in days. Data accessed from the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) on 05/06/2020 at 0900 EDT.
State of Ohio*:

Confirmed and Probable Cases: 21,576  
Age Range: <1-106  
Median Age: 51  
Sex F:M Ratio: 44:55  
Hospitalizations: 4,052  
Deaths: 1,225

A note about the statistics of COVID-19:

At this point we are seeing evidence of community spread of the virus throughout Butler County. Like all statistics, the surveillance epidemiology of COVID-19 must be taken in context and with the understanding of potential factors that could interfere with the presentation of disease. The zip-codes that are listed are those where the cases reside, and not necessarily where they work, socialize, worship, shop, etc. Not every community will have an equal risk. Some communities have more travel-associated cases or clusters of close peer-groups that make their statistics appear lopsided. Other communities have more true community spread though their absolute number may be lower. Some communities are tighter knit promoting transmission within the community, and some have large portions of commuters that could potentially be importing the virus. Testing policies by health networks to this point have not been homogenous. Some communities have greater access to hospitals that have less strict testing standards. So, it is important to use this tool for the community’s situational awareness and not a layperson’s risk assessment.

Something that has changed since my last update in this section has been the increase in testing capacity in our region. As more testing occurs we will begin to get a better picture of the true spread in the community. We will also get a better understanding of the disease as it presents itself. You will have noticed that the proportion of high risk and hospitalized cases has been come down since my last message. This is what we would expect. That being said, we will catch less asymptomatic cases because the symptomatic cases are more likely to be tested.

If you would like more information about how to protect your family, please go to the following websites:
The Butler County General Health District:  
http://health.bcohio.us/our_services/novel_coronavirus.php  
The Ohio Department of Health (ODH):  
https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/COVID-19/home  
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):  

Right now, the best defense that our community has against this virus is to remain calm and listen to the public health authorities that have been working tirelessly to protect us. We learn more about this disease every day, and every day that you make the hard sacrifices that we know you’re making is another day that we come closer to ending the pandemic.

We’re all in this together.

-Jordan Lutrell-Freeman, MPH  
Epidemiologist  
Butler County General Health District

All figures show reported cases of COVID-19 in Butler County as of 0900 EDT 05/06/2020. Due to delays in reporting, the numbers of confirmed and probable cases on Figure 1 are subject to change between reports and confirmed and probable case counts are likely to increase. *This should not be assumed to be the total disease burden of COVID-19 in Butler County only those that have been laboratory confirmed OR meet ODH probable case criteria AND reported to Public Health.  
*Data is provisional – only confirmed COVID-19 cases are included in counts. Report reflects time period since the introduction of SARS-CoV-2 into humans, measured in days. Data accessed from the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) on 05/06/2020 at 0900 EDT.
# Smoking Complaint Spreadsheet

## May-20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Notice of Report</th>
<th>Dismissed</th>
<th>Notice of Violation (30 Days)</th>
<th>Letter of Warning (15 Days)</th>
<th>Civil Fine Letter</th>
<th>Violation Contested</th>
<th>Notice of Hearing</th>
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<td>1. Hillbilly Heaven</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Observed smoking in facility (2nd fine w/in 2 years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The Well</td>
<td>6/5/2019</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Observed smoking in facility</td>
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<tr>
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<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Observed smoking in the facility</td>
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<td>2/20/2020</td>
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<td>Investigation to be conducted</td>
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Notes:

*Created December 2011* 

*Revised October 2018*
# City of Middletown Health Department April 2020

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## Environmental Inspections

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<td>Retail Food Establishments (RFE)</td>
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## Animal Bite Events

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<tr>
<td>Bat</td>
<td>0</td>
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April 28th, 2020

Dear Middletown Health Department,

We want to thank you for consistently putting your lives on the line and continuing to keep our community safe during this difficult time. We hope these face masks will aid you in providing an extra layer of protection against the Covid-19 virus. We greatly appreciate all the support you have provided our international students over the years, and offer these masks as a small gesture in return.

THANK YOU!!!

Quest Holding International Student Center, partner of Miami University
Dear Ms. Phillips,

My name is Cameron Mason, a 5th grade at Wildwood. I wanted to say thanks for keeping Middletown safe and healthy.

My mom and I read an article that said you were focusing on the 3Fs: faith, family, and facts. I really like that. My whole family appreciates what you do.

From Cameron.
No pools open in area until at least June

Local officials won’t open facilities while under state orders.

May 4, 2020

Fairfield leaders are meeting on Monday to discuss the opening of the Fairfield Aquatic Center (above) and some of the larger summer events, including concerts and fireworks. Fairfield Parks and Recreation Director Tiphanie Howard said “health and wellness” is one of the pillars of the department, so every decision is based on the safety of residents and staff. NICK GRAHAM / STAFF
By Rick McCrabb
Staff Writer

CORONAVIRUS: THE LATEST

BUTLER COUNTY — Here’s what we know: Butler County swimming pools and splash pads will not open as scheduled on Memorial Day weekend after Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine’s administration extended the stay-at-home orders, renaming it “Stay Safe Ohio,” through May 29.

Here’s what we don’t know: When, or if, the pools and splash pads will open this year.

It appears the water attractions won’t open until the DeWine administration lifts the state’s orders.

That means directors are taking a wait-and-see approach.

It may be a long, hot and dry summer for those who enjoy swimming or running through splash pads.

Hamilton’s eight water features, six splash pads in neighborhoods and two in Marcum Park, won’t open until the city receives the OK from the governor or the city health department, said Steve Timmer, director of Hamilton Parks Conservancy that operates the parks.

Hamilton’s Health Commissioner Kay Farrar said the decision to keep the water attractions closed or reopen will be based on DeWine’s recommendations.

“I do not know when/if that will happen,” she said.

Timmer said the Hamilton water features are assembled for the season and can be operational within one day after chemicals are added.

Middletown is unclear when or if its two splash pads will open, a city official said. The city will follow directions from the governor when to
open its splash pads at Douglass and Smith parks.

Fairfield leaders are meeting today to discuss the opening of the Fairfield Aquatic Center, and some of its larger summer events, including concerts and fireworks, said Tiphanie Howard, director of Parks and Recreation.

She said “health and wellness” is one of the pillars of the department, so every decision is based on the safety of residents and staff.

“Safety is of the up-most importance,” she said.

When asked when the center will open, Howard said: “It’s so hard to make that decision. We’re stuck in a hard place.”

Howard said operating the aquatic center is a “breakeven” business for the city.

“That makes it a lot easier decision,” she said.

Still, she said, she would hate not to open the pools because residents enjoy swimming and it gives lifeguards work experience.

She said the center will be closed until at least the renamed “Stay Safe Ohio” order expires, and admitted: “It’s not looking good for Ohio this summer.”

In Oxford, the aquatic center is postponing its opening until the end of June and will not be selling season pool passes, said Jessica Greene, assistant city manager. The city will re-evaluate the pool in late May to see if it will open later in the summer.

She said that decision will be guided by the Butler County General Health District.
Contact this reporter at 513-483-5216 or email Rick.McCrabb@coxinc.com.
DeWine: Testing capacity boost coming to Ohio

He promises more info on reopening salons, restaurants in few days.

May 5, 2020

COLUMBUS — Ohio is dramatically ramping up testing for the coronavirus from about 3,500 per day to 22,000 per day — a key step to keeping tabs on the virus spread as businesses reopen throughout May, the DeWine administration said Monday.

“We now have a very, very aggressive testing program. We’re able to test, in about a week, up to 22,000 a day,” Gov. Mike DeWine said. “We are very, very happy about that. This expanded testing is key, really, to protecting Ohioans and it is particularly key as we go through this reopening phase.”

Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton said Ohio has been testing about 41 people for every 100,000 Ohio residents and the goal is to boost it to 150 tests per 100,000 people.

Manufacturing, distribution, construction and general offices were allowed to reopen Monday, while retailers can reopen May 12. The governor promised more information in the next few days on when restaurants, hair salons and other businesses may be allowed to restart. Also, Bureau of Motor Vehicle offices are expected to open in late May with online check-in systems to reduce lines.

The Ohio Department of Health reported 19,609 confirmed cases, plus 865 probable cases; 3,809 hospitalizations; 975 deaths, plus 81 deaths attributed to probable cases.
Testing for the coronavirus, which requires a doctor’s order, will be prioritized. The top priority remains people with symptoms who are hospitalized or are heath care workers; second tier is symptomatic people who live in congregate settings such as nursing homes or shelters, are 65 and older, have underlying conditions, or work as first responders or in critical infrastructure. Staff who work in outbreak hotspots also fall into the second tier.

The third testing tier includes Ohioans with or without symptoms who are undergoing surgeries or procedures.

As Ohio businesses gradually reopen, many workers face a grim choice: their health or their paycheck.

Employees with underlying health conditions that put them at high risk for COVID-19 complications are worried about their safety in the workplace.

“As we go through this, we know that people will be differently situated,” said Lt. Gov. Jon Husted. “You may be older, you may have children you don’t have child care for, you may have a number of issues. We have encouraged employers to work with their employees during this transition period.”

Husted said workers are required to return to work if called back, though health conditions could be a mitigating factor. “It’s not a hard and fast rule but if your job is offered to you, you’re supposed to go back to work.

There is a list of exemptions for that,” he said.

More than 1 million Ohioans have filed for unemployment benefits over the past six weeks.
State lawmakers are scheduled to return to Columbus this week. By June 30, lawmakers and DeWine will have to agree on a budget correction bill to addresses the dramatic fall off in sales and income taxes that fuel state government.

Contact this reporter at 614-224-1624 or email Laura.Bischoff@coxinc.com.
Companies in Butler get back to business

Offices, dental facilities making changes that can let clients feel safe.

Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park reopened Monday but only for members after being closed due to the coronavirus pandemic. The museum, its welcome center and restrooms remain closed, and guidelines are in place for social distancing by visitors.

NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

May 5, 2020

By Eric Schwartzberg
Staff Writer

A new set of businesses started operating Monday, some as part of Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine's plan to gradually reopen the state and others by their own choice.
Jason Crank, partner at United Heartland Insurance, said his Butler County firm never officially closed, but the majority of its staff — 14 out of 17 employees in its Hamilton office and all four of its Blue Ash staffers — have worked remotely from home.

The insurance agency on Monday started formulating plans to return the office to normalcy, coinciding with Ohio allowing offices to resume operations.

"Today, we started discussing, the other owners and I, kind of the plan of attack of how we can begin to slowly bring people back in here and let the clients come in and feel comfortable coming in," Crank said. "We don’t want people coming in here feeling less comfortable than they did three months ago."

Bringing every employee back all at once isn’t necessary because they already are working efficiently in their remote environments, Crank said.

"We’re finding out that we can do a lot of what we do remotely," he said. "Talking to clients, answering questions. A lot of our communications come through email anyway and were before so that’s just picked up a little bit more."

To that end, the firm is discussing making physical changes within the building, requiring face masks and cleaning “from top to bottom” throughout the day, Crank said. By the end of May, it hopes to slowly open to more foot traffic and gradually bring staffers back to the office.

DeWine’s administration last week gave Ohio manufacturers, construction companies, distributors and some offices the green light to reopen Monday.

But a good number of them never truly closed, especially if they were able to meet new needs created by the pandemic.

Some of the conditions for reopening include daily health assessments
for employees and good hygiene.

Dental Care of Fairfield, an affiliate of Heartland Dental, had been limited by the state to providing emergency procedures only, which led to laying off six staffers, according to Dr. Marcia Irving-Ray.

DeWine’s administration allowed medical and dental offices to see patients starting Friday for nonemergency procedures.

“Now we’re seeing everybody,”

Irving-Ray said. “A lot of us knew it was going to happen and so we were kind of expecting it. I’m glad I can provide care to my patients.”

Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park & Museum started the first piece of its re-opening Monday. Park hours will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily and for Pyramid Hill members only.

The popular Butler County attraction will reopen in phases to ensure it is able to provide the safest experience, according to Sean FitzGibbons, its executive director.

Remaining closed are all indoor facilities, the visitor center, gallery and Ancient Sculpture Museum. All park restrooms and water fountains will remain off and closed.

There’s no set time for the start of the next phase, he said.

“We’d like to move as fast as possible, but at the same time, it’s more important to be as safe as possible,” Fitz- Gibbons said.

Social distancing guidelines will be enforced, including keeping at least six feet between oneself and others and keeping carloads to the same household. It also includes not gathering in groups of 10 or more while in the park, not meeting up with other households and not touching any of the sculptures.
“We aren’t really opening Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park & Museum. What we’re doing is opening Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park,” Fitz- Gibbons said. “With everything that’s going on we felt that we had the ability to be a resource for our community in unprecedented time and in order to open, we needed to make sure that we’re doing everything as safely as possible.”

Dan Bates, president and CEO of the Greater Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, said Monday’s reopening isn’t that big because construction and manufacturing never really closed.

“The hospitals are allowed to do nonessential procedures because they are all sitting empty,” he said. “Local hospitals have laid off hundreds of professionals while they are losing millions of dollars leaving beds open for an anticipated spike.”

Bates said the reason people are upset is the inconsistency in the mandates and enforcements.

“The governor needs to take into consideration all the businesses that can safely open within the guidelines,” he said. “All businesses are essential and I fear the economic destruction will far surpass the destruction from the virus.”

DeWine plans to give details this week on other businesses reopening, like restaurants and salons.

Contact this reporter at 513-755-5126 or email Eric. Schwartzberg@coxinc.com.

Twitter: @eschwartzberg

MORE DETAILS

Ohio’s reopening schedule
May 1: Health care reopenings: Non-essential procedures, doctors, dentists, veterinarians

May 4: Manufacturing, distribution, construction and general office

May 12: Consumer, retail and services

The general safe business practices all companies must follow as they reopen are:

- Requiring face coverings for all employees, and recommending them for clients and customers at all times

- Conducting daily health assessments or self-evaluations of employees to determine if they should work

- Maintaining good hygiene at all times, such as hand washing and social distancing

- Cleaning and sanitizing workplaces throughout the day and at the close of business or between shifts

- Limiting capacity to meet social distancing guidelines
2 grocery chains limit meat-purchasing

Kroger, Costco place cap to make products accessible to more.

The meat department at Kroger in Springfield. The grocery chain will limit purchase of some meat items.
BILL LACKEY / STAFF

May 5, 2020

By Marcus Hartman
Staff Writer

At least two of the national grocery chains serving Southwest Ohio are limiting quantities of some meat items that can be purchased per person per trip to their stores.

At Cincinnati-based Kroger, that covers ground beef and fresh pork, but corporate affairs manager Erin Rolfes declined to identify how much a person can buy.

"We feel good about our ability to maintain a broad assortment of meat and seafood for our customers because we purchase protein from a
diverse network of suppliers,” Rolfes, who handles the Cincinnati/Dayton region, said via email.

At Costco, fresh poultry is limited along with beef and pork. According to a post on that company’s website, members may purchase three items from each category.

“Costco has implemented limits on certain items to help ensure more members are able to purchase merchandise they want and need,” according to the company.

“Our buyers and suppliers are working hard to provide essential, high demand merchandise as well as everyday favorites.”

Walmart has opted not to place any limits at this time.

“Meat continues to be in high demand as customers stock up on protein,” the company said. “As we would normally do during periods of high demand, we are working through our supply chain to continually replenish items as quickly as possible to help us meet the needs of our customers.”

The need to do that is another result of the worldwide coronavirus pandemic that has altered many aspects of life in the United States and beyond.

Multiple large meat-packing and processing facilities have closed or had production cutback in recent weeks after outbreaks of the disease hit plants that typically require large numbers of workers to work in close proximity, increasing the chance of the spread of the virus.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention found cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus, at 115 meat or poultry processing plants in a total of 19 states — including one facility in Ohio — in a survey of data from April 9-27.
Nearly 5,000 workers were diagnosed with 20 coronavirus-related deaths reported, according to the CDC.

While that organization’s report acknowledged the working environment presents challenges to preventing the spread of coronavirus, it also expressed a belief some measures could be effective.

Those include cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces, increased emphasis on hand hygiene and maintenance of social distancing practices. It also encouraged adjusting medical leave policies to greater dissuade workers from coming to work when potentially ill.

The Associated Press reported a large pork plant in South Dakota owned by Smithfield reopened Monday with new disease-prevention methods in place, including a tent for screening employees for COVID-19 symptoms.

Tyson also reopened a pork plant in Indiana on Monday with more to follow according to the AP.

While large grocery chains such as Kroger, Walmart and Costco rely heavily on large suppliers such as Tyson and Smithfield, there are others across the country they can tap when necessary.

The closure of schools and many restaurants since March also presents opportunities to reroute meat that might otherwise be headed to those places to grocery stores instead.

“While some processors are experiencing challenges,”

Rolfes of Kroger said, “there is plenty of protein in the supply chain.”

Contact this reporter at 937-225-2396 or email Marcus.Hartman@coxinc.com.
Middletown sees 7 more confirmed coronavirus cases over the weekend

May 5, 2020

By

Ed Richter, Staff Writer

MIDDLETOWN —

Seven more coronavirus cases were reported in the city of Middletown over the weekend.

Nancy McKillop of the Middletown City Health Department said there were six confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported on Saturday and another confirmed case reported on Sunday. Those included:

Saturday: A 38-year-old female; a 69-year-old male; a 69-year-old female; an 80-year-old female; a 67-year-old female; and a 66-year-old male.

Sunday: A 68-year-old female.

No new confirmed cases were reported in Middletown as of 2 p.m. Monday.

McKillop said none of the new cases required hospitalization.

These new cases raises the number of confirmed cases in the city to 39.

As of 2 p.m. Monday, the Ohio Department of Health has reported 19,609 confirmed cases in Ohio with 3,809 hospitalizations that includes 1,090 admissions to intensive care units across the state.
The median age of cases is 51 and the age range is from less than 1 year to 106. There have been 975 confirmed deaths statewide.

There were 865 probable cases and 81 probable deaths that may be linked to the fast-spreading disease.
Some Black Americans see issues with masks

Mask wearing could raise specter of racial profiling in retail stores.

Southwest Ohio musician Reggie ‘Moon’ Morgan said he’s not concerned about being profiled when he wears his protective mask in Dayton, but says he would be if he were in larger cities such as New York or Los Angeles.

JIM NOELKER/STAFF

April 30, 2020

By Ismail Turay Jr.
and Rick McCrabb
Staff Writers

BUTLER COUNTY — Many Americans wear homemade masks and makeshift face coverings such as T-shirts, scarves and bandannas to
protect against COVID-19 following a recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

But some black Americans — particularly men — say they have trepidation about partially covering their faces in stores because they have a fear of being racially profiled.

There’s another concern for black men, said Rodney Coates, director of the black world studies program at Miami University. Because of the health risks associated with the coronavirus, black men also will be “more scrutinized” if they choose not to wear a mask in public.

“Damned if you do and damned if you don’t,” he said.

The possibility of being racially profiled while wearing a mask should not discourage anyone from protecting themselves against COVID-19, said Michael Bailey, pastor of Faith Church in Middletown.

“I’m more fearful of the virus,” Bailey, who is black, said when asked about racial profiling. “But I get where people are coming from.

We are not on a level playing field.”

Bailey said he and his wife took a walk Wednesday while wearing their masks.

He said they walked to a bank and tried to use the drive-through, but were told to come to the front door because of safety concerns.

They were not allowed inside the bank, but a teller assisted them, he said.

He never has been apprehensive about wearing his mask, Bailey said.

COVID-19 has killed more than 55,000 people in the United States, and blacks are disproportionately affected, according to the CDC. Among
states with more than 100 coronavirus-related deaths, the mortality rate for blacks is nearly 19 percent, although they make up 13 percent of the population, according to the latest CDC data.

In Ohio, about a quarter of the state’s COVID-19-related deaths are black Americans, although they make up 14 percent of the population.

In comparison, 50 percent of whites who are infected with the virus have died as of Monday afternoon, according to the Ohio Department of Health. As of Wednesday, there were 856 COVID-19-related deaths, with an additional 81 probable deaths.

The disparities in the death rate can be attributed to several underlying factors that have historically plagued the black community, said Dr. Karen Mathews, executive director of health and psychological services at Central State University. The factors include limited access to health-care, living conditions, socio-economic conditions and chronic illnesses such as high blood pressure, hypertension and lung and heat diseases, she said.

Although they’re concerned about being profiled, some black men say they will continue protecting themselves against the virus while also trying not to look threatening. Steve Hankle, a University of Dayton music professor who is black, wears a homemade mask when he goes grocery shopping. He also puts on a pair of headphones while in the store in hopes of putting people at ease so they don’t confuse him for a criminal, he said, noting that he’s also conscious about the way he dresses.

From a cultural perspective, La Fleur Small, a Wright State University sociology professor, understands why Hankle and others would dress a certain way in an effort to put others at ease.

“Artifacts and uniforms culturally convey meaning,” she said. “These meanings are culturally shared and can differ across cultures, but we all
practice anticipatory socialization — often including uniform — to convey a certain meaning and gain cultural acceptance. A suit for a businessman, scrubs for a physician and clothing and accessories for a black male who when wearing a mask, is aware of implicit bias and wants to evade potential harm.”

Profiling black men who wear protective masks is rooted in public policy, Coates said. Policies such as the war on drugs, which led to blacks being incarcerated at a disproportionate rate, have conditioned society to believe blacks are more threatening, he said.

“Black males have historically been dealt with differently,” he said. “There has been a long history of people being afraid of black men.”

Instead, he said, black men should be concerned about how they’re perceived in society. He said during these “stressful times” black men may even more be viewed as more dangerous.

Still, he recently bought several masks and he has encouraged his 21-year-old son and his friends to wear protective masks.

“You will be victimized if you don’t wear a mask,” he said.

Contact this reporter at 937-225-2433 or email Ismail.

Turay@coxinc.com. Contact this reporter at 513-483-5216 or email Rick.McCrabb@coxinc.com.
DeWine: Call off graduation party plans for now
April 30, 2020

Ceremonies are up to districts, but they must follow distancing rules.

COLUMBUS — How high school graduation ceremonies are held is up to Ohio’s 612 school districts, but they must comply with social distancing and gather no more than 10 people at a time, Gov. Mike DeWine said on Wednesday.

“As a father of eight and grandfather of 24, Fran and I know about graduations. We know how important they are. They are occasions of great joy for a family,” DeWine said.

The state health and education departments issued guidance to local school districts that says virtual graduations are the preferred option, followed by a drive-in ceremony for each student to get his or her diploma at a designated time and place. The third option — the least preferred — would be to gather in groups of no more than 10 people.

DeWine also issued a plea to families to cancel plans for graduation parties.

“This is a tough issue and I would ask people to remember that because graduation parties can pose as much risk or more risk, frankly, than a graduation.

Remember that our order prohibits gatherings of more than 10 people at a time. While it is time to graduate, it is not the time to have a graduation
party. That will have to wait. I understand how hard this is for the class of 2020," he said.

The Ohio Department of Health on Wednesday reported 16,601 confirmed cases, plus 702 probable coronavirus cases; 3,421 hospitalizations; 856 deaths, plus 81 deaths attributed to probable cases.

As Ohio begins to reopen segments of the economy in May, employers and businesses will have to follow new protocols to provide social distancing, hand hygiene and worker masking.

The governor said businesses today will be safer from any infectious diseases than they’ve ever been because of the new precautions.

The issue of masks has sparked questions and strong feelings on both sides of the matter. People with underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk for coronavirus complications have argued that universal masking is the best way to protect them. Ohioans who oppose masks see a mandate as a government overreach that steps on individual liberties.

DeWine on Wednesday announced $16 million in federal CARES Act grant money available for law enforcement entities to defray costs associated with the coronavirus.

The money can be used for items such as overtime costs, video conferencing technology purchases, testing in jails, medical expenses for jail inmates or buying personal protective equipment.

The governor also announced that the state shipped 4.4 million pieces of protective equipment to local emergency management agencies, which will distribute the gear to nursing homes, jails, hospitals, first responders and others.

Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton also said the state
expects to kick off a prevalence study on Monday, which involves taking blood samples from 1,000 randomly selected Ohioans to check to see if they have antibodies indicating they’ve had COVID19. Results are expected in two to three weeks, she said.

Contact this reporter at 614- 224-1624 or email Laura.Bischoff@coxinc.com.
Major Middletown events: Organizers waiting on decisions for key summer gatherings

Local News
April 26, 2020
By

Ed Richter, Staff Writer

MIDDLETOWN —

Organizers are closely monitoring state actions and guidance for their affect on major outdoor events in Middletown such as the Broad Street Bash, the July 3 Broad Street Blast and city fireworks and the Ohio Challenge hot air balloon festival.

Many major events and concerts scheduled later this summer throughout the state have been cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ohio’s stay-at-home order prohibits gatherings of more than 10 people and asks for social distancing and wearing of personal protective equipment such as gloves and masks.

Middletown Health Commissioner Jackie Phillips said the city is looking at how to hold parades and festivals as well as graduations safely.

“The worst thing we could do is have multiple mass gatherings at the same time,” she said. “We need to do things strategically.”
The 14th season of the Broad Street Bash was scheduled to open May 27 at Governor’s Square in downtown Middletown. Organizer Adriane Scherrer said that “won’t happen.” She said organizers will announce updated information about the summer concert series when it becomes available.

The concert series featuring local and regional bands attracts between 1,750 and 2,000 people downtown per concert, she said.

The annual Broad Street Blast concert downtown and city’s Independence Day Celebration fireworks at Smith Park are scheduled for July 3 but no decisions have been made yet about cancelling or postponing the fireworks show as of Thursday.

Shelby Quinlivan, city spokeswoman, said discussions are underway but will depend on what orders are in effect after May 1, when the current stay-at-home order expires in Ohio.

“We don’t have any official plans yet,” she said.

Quinlivan said the annual event is paid for by city funds and sponsorships with a $50,000 to $55,000 budget.

“(We) haven’t been able to do all of the sponsorship asking like we planned due to COVID-19,” she said.

Last December, Middletown City Council approved an emergency ordinance to appropriate up to $35,000 from the 2019 city budget for the 2020 fireworks show.

Quinlivan said the 2019 fireworks attracted more than 25,000 people. This will be the fifth year for the fireworks that were reinstated after a number of years without a Fourth of July show. Yokum Fireworks of Cincinnati was contracted for the 2020 fireworks show.

David Pearce of the Ohio Challenge board said the annual hot air balloon festival remains “in a holding pattern awaiting greater guidance from local and state health officials.”
“We’re still evaluating,” he said. “Our number one priority is to keep everyone, our guests, volunteers, performers and vendors, safe. It wouldn’t make sense to hold it if we can’t have a safe environment for everyone.

The event attracts between 25,000 and 30,000 over two days at Smith Park. Pearce said at peak times during the day there are about 10,000 to 15,000 people at the event.

Mary Hutlinger, the Middletown Visitors Bureau executive director, said event organizers are not putting down any money until they get clear answers from the state.

“It’s a huge unknown with sponsorships,” she said. “They’re trying to be optimistic but as each week goes by, it’s harder to be optimistic.”

Hutlinger said the numbers at local hotels are doing their best to survive the coronavirus as they hang on until everyone gets on the other side of the pandemic.

As for the work of the visitors bureau this year, Hutlinger said they have shifted its focus to becoming a hub of information in the community. Among the activities are keeping a list of local restaurants that are open for carry-out; knowing what assets and attractions that can be visited in a safe way in Middletown; and obtaining other information to share with people.

In addition, the visitor’s bureau sponsored a virtual bingo game that attracted 500 unique visitors to play for gift cards to local restaurants and shops. The bureau gave away $1,600 in gift cards to 25 winners, Hutlinger said.

Another social media challenge was launched this week that allows people to accent photos with Middletown stickers online. She said there will be a winner each week to receive a gift card. The bureau also created a “Middletown busy book” filled with games, puzzles and things to color.

“We’re trying to create a space with positivity and fun,” Hutlinger said.
Middletown still operating needle exchange program after loss of truck due to coronavirus

April 27, 2020

MIDDLETOWN —

Middletown has been forced to alter its needle exchange program because of changes its partners made in response to the coronavirus.
The city formerly used a truck in a partnership with Hamilton County to operate the program next to a building in the 400 block of Crawford Street. Because Hamilton County has moved to an appointment system and the truck is not available, Middletown sets up a tent in the same location to continue operating.

Middletown Health Commissioner Jackie Phillips said the change in operations came at the end of March. She said Middletown has partnered with Hamilton County and the Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Services for nearly five years to operate the local needle exchange with the truck.

She said Access Counseling Services is taking the place of Hamilton County Health Department in the Regional Exchange Project which also includes BCMHARS in the partnership.

The needle exchange is at the same location on Crawford Street from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesdays.

For 2020, Middletown has budgeted $55,000, according to Shelby Quinlivan, city spokeswoman.

In 2019, $52,129 was budgeted for the Middletown program, according to city officials.

Phillips said that “these things still need to be done and we need to try to do at the least the bare minimum.”

A second needle exchange site in Butler County that was part of the Hamilton County outreach program is also closed.
“(The) Fairfield site temporarily discontinued due to (the coronavirus). It should be back up at some point,” said Butler County Health Commissioner Jenny Bailer.
Pandemic taxing Butler County Care Facility finances

Receiving Medicaid, Medicare reimbursements slowed, as expenses exceeding revenues by $1M.

April 28, 2020

By Denise G. Callahan
Staff Writer

BUTLER COUNTY — The novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, has taken its toll on the fragile Butler County Care Facility, exacerbating financial and staffing problems to the point expenses currently exceed revenues by about $1 million.

Butler County Administrator Judi Boyko told the commissioners Monday the finances at the home have been impacted because there have been delays in receiving federal Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement during the pandemic.

“There have been some challenges with receipting, especially the last couple months, because of just the Medicaid, Medicare and the processing of all government functions,” Boyko said. “I’ll be candid we are trending about $1 million expenditures higher than revenues at this point.”

Boyko said she hopes this is a short-term issue, “we’re hoping that once the restoration to all levels of government and we start to see some fluid services, we hope to see reimbursements come in more quickly.”

The county commissioners have routinely had to give the nursing home cash infusions.
They approved a $300,000 loan in January after a $300,000 subsidy in December. Multiple issues, from ever-changing Medicaid regulations and rates to internal reimbursement processing problems, have hampered operations at the home that has been financially fragile for years.

Before the coronavirus pandemic struck Boyko said the latest subsidy is a loan and will be repaid to the county general fund.

Commissioner Don Dixon said they might have to dip into the general fund again to see the Care Facility through this unique rough patch.

Medicaid and Medicare are federal programs, but money is funneled through the state.

If the reimbursements are late, Dixon said, the county will “have to step in and advance it.”

Of the facility’s patients, about 35 use Medicaid, about 7 percent use Medicare and the rest use managed care and other forms of insurance, Care Facility Administrator Chamika Poole told the Journal-News previously.

She could not be reached for comment on the current situation regarding reimbursements or staffing numbers.

Commissioners authorized payments totaling $450,000 in 2018. The facility needed $425,000 from the general fund the prior year, and in 2016 the commissioners had to loan it $225,000 so payroll could be met through the end of the year. At one time, the county nursing home owed the general fund $1.1 million, a debt the home partially repaid.

Staffing continues to be an issue locally and in the industry in general. At the beginning of April, the home was short about 18 employees, according to Poole.
Boyko said she asked Poole to closely monitor the census versus staffing ratios.

“We wanted to reduce perhaps the number of residents that reside over at the Care Facility, we’re trying to do that in the most strategic way,” Boyko said.

There are currently 74 residents at the 109-bed nursing home. Dixon, who is in the senior living business, said patients come and go on a fairly regular basis, so reducing the population there can be done through attrition rather than asking residents to leave. One wing was already cleared out to prepare in case residents needed to be quarantined.

There haven’t been any positive COVID-19 cases.

He said the staff is stretched thin, but the situation isn’t dangerous.

Staffing has been an issue for a year because the home experienced some upheaval last year. Former administrator Jennifer Strickland left last spring, and a consulting firm ran operations before Poole was hired in September. The home was without a director of nursing for more than a year and a business office manager for about six months.

Poole said previously even with the unemployment skyrocketing daily she has had a hard time finding help.

“I think it could be fear,”

Poole said. “They don’t want to put themselves in any more increased risk of catching COVID and bringing it home to their families and loved ones.”
DEWINE UNVEILS PLAN TO REOPEN OHIO BUSINESSES

Dentists, factories, retail among first sites to reopen

April 28, 2020

OPENING MAY 1: The first closed businesses to start back will be dentists and veterinarians. Also, medical procedures that don’t require an overnight stay in a hospital can resume.

By Laura A. Bischoff
Columbus Bureau

CORONAVIRUS: THE LATEST

COLUMBUS — Gov. Mike DeWine announced plans Monday to begin
opening medical, manufacturing, offices and retail shops on a rolling basis in May but mandate social distancing, hand hygiene, daily health assessments and masks for workers and customers.

“We will be criticized by those who think we shouldn’t open up.

We’ll be criticized by those who think we didn’t open up enough.

I understand both arguments, but I think we found the sweet spot,” DeWine said.

Here are the key dates announced Monday: ■ May 1: dental, veterinarian and medical offices will reopen and procedures that don’t require an overnight hospital stay will be allowed.

■ May 4: manufacturing, distribution, construction and general office businesses will reopen.

■ May 12: consumer and retail services will reopen.

“My heart aches for business men and women who have not been able to work, who are looking at savings going down everyday, people who work in those business, people who are unemployed.

One cannot overstate the tragedy of this,” DeWine said.

A ban on mass gatherings of more than 10 remains in place.

DeWine opted not to require Ohioans to wear masks in public, but employees and customers who go inside businesses will be required to wear masks.

“No mask, no work, no service, no exception,” is the summary of the new regulations, he said.

Companies will be required to provide sixfeet of distancing between
employees, or install barriers, and allow for at least six-feet of distancing for customers.

Daily disinfection of work spaces, establishment of maximum capacities for physical spaces and placement of hand sanitizers in high traffic areas will be required. Prohibited will be self-serve food stations, food courts, serving of product samples, employee buffets in workplace cafeterias and reusable tableware.

Grocery stores and other stores that have remained open will be required to follow the new protocols.

Employees who can work from home should continue to do so, he said.

“We need to see how this works. We need to monitor the numbers,” DeWine said.

The Ohio Mayors Alliance, a bipartisan group, issued a statement supporting DeWine’s plan, calling it thoughtful and measured.

The following businesses are not slated to be reopened in May: day care centers, bars, restaurants, gyms, all pools except single household pools, barbers, hair salons, summer camps, amusement venues, theme parks, casinos, stadiums, country clubs, playgrounds, movie theaters, zoos, recreational sports tournaments and leagues and campgrounds.

DeWine said mass gatherings such as concerts or ball games will be the last events to return.

“We know there is a great desire to get restaurants fully open and to get hair salons and daycares open — but we must first start down the pathway of opening things up where we thought there was less risk and a more controllable risk,” he said.

The Ohio Restaurant Association issued a statement Monday asking DeWine to allow restaurants to reopen beginning May 15 with social
distancing measures in place.

The restaurant and bar industry in Ohio employs 585,000 and generates $25.6 billion in sales each year.

The shutdown has hit the industry hard in Ohio: more than 100,000 jobs lost, $698 million in sales lost, 40% of restaurants are closed, according to the Ohio Restaurant Association. When Ohio restaurants reopen, dine-in revenues are expected to run at barely half of the pre-pandemic levels, according to the association.

“None of this is going to last forever. We are going to get through this,” DeWine said.

In previous briefings, DeWine has said reopening hinges on adequate testing and personal protective equipment for health care workers as well as careful analysis of case and hospitalization numbers.

On Monday, the Ohio Department of Health reported 15,699 confirmed cases, plus 626 suspected cases; 3,232 hospitalizations; 712 deaths, plus 41 deaths attributed to probable cases.

DeWine said Ohio is building toward 1,750 workers and volunteers who are trained by June 1 to conduct contact tracing and struck deals with two companies to provide crucial elements for coronavirus tests that have been in short supply. He acknowledged that personal protective equipment supplies are still low in Ohio.
How disease detectives work to trace virus

Contact tracing is go-to tool when trying to contain an outbreak.

Local disease detectives have been working to track and trace the spread of the virus and warn people if they had close contact with a person known to be sick with COVID-19.

In normal times, a team of two public health workers in Montgomery County trace contacts for more typical diseases, such as sexually transmitted diseases.

With this outbreak, Public Health - Dayton Montgomery County as of Tuesday reported there had been 235 cases in Montgomery County with 344 close contacts, 54 travelers who had needed monitoring and 30 people working in shifts to do the contact tracing.

Health students, school nurses and sanitarians who normally do restaurant inspections have all been chipping on the intensive local effort to keep people safe.

Contact tracing is a foundational, go-to tool when trying to contain an outbreak. Because people who get sick have to get sick from someone, so you can slow the spread of an outbreak if sick people isolate, if the rest of the household quarantines, and if their recent contacts know they had been exposed to a sick person and need to quarantine.

“Isolation of active cases and quarantine of possible people that have the virus, it’s a system to separate where the virus might be from the people in the community,” said Dr. Michael Dohn, medical director Public
Health - Dayton Montgomery County.

While the process isn’t new, the volume is and the stakes are crucial. Epidemics gain momentum when the number of people in an area sick from the outbreak get an even greater number of additional people sick, while outbreaks lose momentum if that chain of transmission can be disrupted by tracing and isolating the sick.

“If the number of people they pass it onto is greater than the number of cases we started with, then we’re going to have an increase in cases ... what we would like is the number of cases that we know about to infect and transmit the disease to a fewer number of people,” Dohn said.

A challenge to the disease containment strategy is there haven’t been enough tests for the novel coronavirus to see if close contacts are positive for the virus. If a public health contact tracer lets a person know he or she was exposed to HIV or tuberculosis, for example, the exposed person would be able to get tested. This leaves data gaps in crafting the right response to the outbreak, and leaves people uncertain about their own health and what risk they pose to others when they can’t be sure if they are infectious.

Right now, with the limits of testing and data, public health officials like Dohn can’t truly tell if that reproduction ratio of the coronavirus is going down in the area.

“Nobody knows,” Dohn said.

Gov. Mike DeWine announced Friday that the state would be amping up both testing, which will lead to more confirmed people needing contacts traced, and a corresponding partnership with Partners in Health, a global health nonprofit that has resources and experience in contact tracing and DeWine said will be helping the state’s scaling of efforts.

A sample form outlining how a COVID-19 case interview goes showed
how health officials take detailed and confidential information and walk through possible contacts, from dates and places of any recent medical care received, travel outside the county, places where children go to school or day care, household contacts, and more.

Health officials look at what kind of home situation a person has for isolating in, such as whether they have their own bedroom or own bathroom, which helps with keeping germs from other household members.

In one case, health workers worked with the Foodbank and others to arrange for 14 days of groceries for a person who needed help in order to isolate.

Some experts have called for governments to make living facilities, like unused dorms or hotels, available for people with mild cases struggling to isolate at home from household members.

"It's hard. Especially we're telling people to isolate at home and the close contacts in the home have to self-quarantine.

That's OK if you've got a house with a couple of bedrooms and three baths,"

Dohn said. "It's a little more difficult if everyone is living in an apartment and you've got a couple of kids sharing a room and one bathroom for everyone. The whole socio-economic divide we see in terms of cases and deaths, which also parallels to the racial inequities as well, it has something to do with resources. It's just easier for people with more resources to comply with isolation at home."

In typical times, public health departments have disease investigation specialists who are certified and completed a CDC training course to do this, Dohn said.

With COVID-19, the response is large enough that others who are
qualified have been called into the tracing effort.

Dohn said the local public health department also has eight Ohio Medical Reserve Corp volunteers working on contact tracing.

Local counties also have mutual aid agreements to help each other.

Dohn said one of the helpers is a MPH/MD student who was arranging to do a rotation her senior year the next academic year in public health.

“When the classes were canceled, I just called and said ‘hey why don’t you come on down now,’” Dohn said.
Butler company now makes hand sanitizer

Switch has let Calvary Industries of Fairfield keep 150 workers on payroll.

Calvary Industries has started making hand sanitizer rub and hand cleaner gel in its facility on Seward Road in Fairfield. They are making mostly cleaner and sanitizer now instead of their normal industrial products while companies need it during the coronavirus pandemic. NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

By Eric Schwartzberg
Staff Writer

CORONAVIRUS: THE LATEST

FAIRFIELD — A Butler County company is adapting its business model to help others as the coronavirus pandemic spreads and adjusting its outlook in a rapidly shifting revenue landscape.
Calvary Industries, which manufactures industrial cleaners, metal working fluids and waste treatment chemicals, recently started producing sanitizers, something business manager Austin Morelock said was never in the company’s core output.

“It’s a very easy product to make,” Morelock said. “The FDA listed the formula on their website and they lifted the red tape that disallowed people to sell it without proper permits and licenses, so because of that we were able to rise to the occasion.”

Located at 9233 Seward Road in Fairfield, the company purchased “truckloads and truckloads” of ethanol and other ingredients. It repurposed much of its equipment to accommodate to the blending process.

Morelock, whose father started Calvary Industries, said once the company ensured all 150 employees received enough sanitizer to stay healthy in their homes, it donated truckloads of the solution to fire departments, police departments and locations that care for children throughout the Greater Cincinnati area.

The company also commercialized the making of the product.

“We gained more new customers in the past three weeks than we have in the past 10 years combined, probably,” he said. “It’s been crazy.”

The move has also meant no layoffs at a time when many other businesses are forced to furlough some or all of their employees, Morelock said.

“(Sales of hand sanitizer) in combination with the government PPP funding, which helped us with payroll, has allowed us to keep everyone on board,” he said.

That booming revenue source comes at a time when the volume of sales
has spiraled downward for the company’s existing products, which are sold to 1,300 manufacturers nationwide, including food manufacturing plants and large companies like Procter & Gamble.

That downward spiral is something Morelock said was to be expected as many manufacturers are making products that are not deemed “essential.”

“We are defined as an essential business, and now that we’re making hand sanitizer, I guess we’re all that more essential,” he said.

Quickly shifting gears to manufacturing hand sanitizer presented a series of challenges for the company, including the time-consuming fireproofing and explosion proofing of storage areas for highly flammable ethanol.

There also was difficulty in getting raw materials, he said.

“Now the FDA is allowing anyone and everyone to make and sell hand sanitizer, all these manufacturers who have lost a lot of business are trying to find ways to make up that loss and everyone is looking for ethanol,”

Morelock said. “Fortunately, we have good relationships with raw material suppliers that have been able to come through and give us a continuous supply, thus far, but it’s really day-by-day.”

Fairfield Mayor Steve Miller said Calvary Industries has been a longtime business partner in the community, one with which the city enjoys a good working relationship.

“They do an outstanding job in their business and we are very happy and grateful they have been able to switch gears to address the needs of our community in this time of crisis,” Miller said. “Again, just a great company and we are very thankful for their commitment to the health and safety of the staff and residents of Fairfield along with their regional commitment to all.”
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Butler official: ‘Floodgates’ won’t open May 1
Health commissioner says reopening will be slow, measured effort.

BY DENISE G. CALLAHAN
STAFF WRITER

BUTLER COUNTY — Butler County Health Commissioner Jennifer Bailer is warning residents the “floodgates” won’t just open on the economy May 1, but there will be a slow, measured approach in coordination with state officials.

Bailer said the state is working hard on a plan to gradually relax restrictions that have kept all but essential businesses shuttered and many people sequestered at home.

“I sense that there is an impression out there that on May 1 we’re just going to open the floodgates and we’re all going to go back to normal and do everything we’ve been doing,”
She said she doubts restaurants will be one of the first types of businesses to reopen for in-person service, but as an example, an eatery with a capacity of 100 may be instructed to only allow 50 diners. As each sector reopens, she said officials will gauge the impact on the number of positive COVID-19 cases and move on to the next wave of re-openings.

She said local health commissioners have some “leeway” in how the reopening will unfold, but she added that, in Butler County, “we will stay in line with the Ohio Department of Public Health as best we can and work with them lockstep.”

In the past week the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Butler County increased by 64, from 124 to 188. The death toll remains at three. She said people can expect numbers to continue to rise as the economy comes back, but for a different reason.

“We’ve been testing only the sickest people and that will change here as we get more capacity in our testing systems,” Bailar said. “We’ll be testing folks who might not have been tested a couple of weeks ago, so we do expect our numbers to increase somewhat just because of that testing.”

Bailer and Jones have been holding twice weekly livestreams on Facebook Live but will reduce the meetings to one a week. Bailar’s office also was issuing more detailed epidemiology reports twice weekly, and those reports will also be issued once a week on Thursdays. The latest one from April 13 showed the highest number of cases, 27, in the 45044 ZIP code that encompasses parts of Liberty Twp., Middletown and Monroe with a population of 58,057.

Middletown Health Director Jackie Phillips reported 25 cases as of Monday. Seven people have been hospitalized due to the virus and two are still there.

The report showed 23 confirmed cases in the 45011 ZIP code with 75,578 residents living in parts of Fairfield, Hamilton, and parts of Fairfield, Liberty and West Chester townships.

Jones reported there is still one jail inmate quarantined because of a positive COVID-19 test. Most police agencies have been doing some of their work via the phone rather than in person.

Jones was asked how things will change with his operation on May 1.

“We’re gonna see what happens when the governor comes out with what he’s doing,” Jones said. “We’re still fighting crime, we’re still arresting people and our employees, we have two that are stay-at-home today because of an incident they were involved in. We’re overprecautious to protect our employees.”

He said none of his staff, including those two employees, have tested positive.

Contact this reporter at 513-755-5074 or email Denise.Callahan@coxinc.com.
Butler official: ‘Floodgates’ won’t open May 1

Health commissioner says reopening will be slow, measured effort.

April 22, 2020

By Denise G. Callahan
Staff Writer

BUTLER COUNTY — Butler County Health Commissioner Jennifer Bailer is warning residents the “floodgates” won’t just open on the economy May 1, but there will be a slow, measured approach in coordination with state officials.

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“I sense that there is an impression out there that on May 1 we’re just going to open the floodgates and we’re all going to go back to normal and do everything we’ve been doing,”

Bailer said. “That could not be further from the truth. On May 1 we’ll start rolling out slow and gradual re-openings of things and we’ll be measuring ourselves as we do that.”

She said she doubts restaurants will be one of the first types of businesses to reopen for in-person service, but as an example, an eatery with a capacity of 100 may be instructed to only allow 50 diners. As each sector reopens, she said officials will gauge the impact on the number of positive COVID-19 cases and move on to the next wave of re-openings.

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Contact this reporter at 513-755-5074 or email Denise.Callahan@coxinc.com.
Rest of the school year at home? ‘It’s necessary’

Area districts expected decision, but worry about impact on kids.

Gov. Mike DeWine’s order this week keeping schools closed through the remainder of the school year didn’t surprise area school leaders. STEPHEN DEPP / STAFF

April 22, 2020

By Michael D. Clark
Staff Writer

BUTLER, WARREN COUNTY — Area school leaders are scrambling in the wake of Ohio’s governor new orders to keep school buildings closed for the rest of the school calendar out of concern for the coronavirus.

They said they weren’t surprised by Gov. Mike DeWine’s decision Monday – most were anticipating the close down order – and that having already shuttered their schools since mid-March helps them in developing strategies to end a school year like no other.

But it’s far from easy, and they worry about the impact on their students who are already undergoing historic stress due to the remote learning.
Matt Miller, the Lakota Schools superintendent, said in a video posted on social media that “we thought it was a decision that would be coming at any time and we thought it was the right decision.”

“We know it’s pretty hard on many students and many families (and) this is hard for our senior class. It’s not what any of us want to be going on but it’s necessary.”

Miller said the district will be developing plans on how students and staff can safely enter their schools to reclaim possessions once allowed.

Remote learning and free students meals provided for pick up at area schools will continue. The student meal program will transition into Lakota’s traditional summer lunch program, but details are still to be worked out.

Lakota, like other districts, is also working to determine what to do for summer school offerings.

Officials at Mason Schools told school families they expected the extended order, but it didn’t do much to relieve the disappointment.

“We know hearing the official word that school isn’t reopening this school year is difficult for a lot of us,” said Mason Schools Superintendent Jonathan Cooper in a statement sent out to parents.

“We are grappling with the loss of special moments, and normalcy. While our school buildings are closed, our staff are working hard to ensure students are supported and learning continues.”

Talawanda Schools officials applauded DeWine’s decision.

“Keeping people well, and keeping a focus on safety is very important to us and we are grateful that leaders in Ohio are doing what needs to be done to achieve this,” said Talawanda Spokeswoman Holli Morrish.
“Although we understand that isolating ourselves with our families, and not being able to get out in the community more is hard on some folks, we understand and respect the Governor and Dr. Amy Acton’s (Ohio Department of Health Director) actions to keep students and their families, and our own staff members safe.”

Hamilton Schools officials urged students to stay focused on completing their remote learning assignments through the end of the school year on May 20.

“We know the governor’s order to close school for the rest of the school year presents a challenge to our families,” said Hamilton spokeswoman Joni Copas.

“Although our school buildings are to remain closed, remote learning will continue through the remainder of the school year, it is critical that all students continue to engage in remote learning until the end of this school year.”

Scott Gates, superintendent of Ross Schools, sent out a notice to school families a few hours after the governor’s announcement.

He said the memo to parents and students “one of the hardest letters I’ve had to write.”

“Our district leadership team will be meeting soon to discuss a whole host of items including distance learning, meal distribution, time for students to pick up items left in the buildings, and rescheduling activities such as prom, graduation, and other student recognition events,” he said.

But he added, “I’m already anticipating the sunrise on the first day students are able to come back to school at Ross.

I’m already anticipating hearing the Ross Band of Class practicing and
playing on a cool Friday evening. I'm already anticipating watching the students at Elda and Morgan (elementary schools) leap off the bus so excited for school."

"I'm already anticipating the future," he said.

"Let's stay positive and forward-thinking as we meet this challenge head-on."
FDA’s OK will increase Ohio’s testing capacity
April 22, 2020
DeWine also taps two ex-governors to lead testing strike team.

COLUMBUS — Gov. Mike DeWine on Tuesday said the Food and Drug Administration approved the manufacture of a new a chemical required for coronavirus testing — a crucial step that will dramatically increase Ohio’s capacity to test people for coronavirus infections by mid-May.

Massachusetts-based Thermo Fisher Scientific received the go-ahead Monday to produce a second version of its Mag MAX reagent and manufacture more of the instruments needed to process samples, Thermo Fisher spokesman Ron O’Brien said.

DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton have said a rationing of reagents has held Ohio and other states back from being able to test more people.

DeWine also announced that he asked former governors Bob Taft and Richard Celeste to head a testing strike team that will try to alleviate bottlenecks in the supply chain for testing kits and other issues.

Increased testing is a key element to Ohio’s plan to gradually reopen businesses. DeWine cautioned that coronavirus cases may increase once people start back to work.

“Once you start opening things up, the contact increases. The key is to do it in a way that minimizes as much as humanly possible the risk,”
DeWine said at his daily press briefing. “This is a balance. This is a high-wire act. This isn’t easy.”

The Ohio Department of Health announced 13,725 confirmed cases, plus 475 probable COVID19 cases; 2,779 hospitalizations; 557 deaths and another 19 deaths attributed to probable cases.

The governor said he’ll have more announcements in the coming days on reopening functions at Ohio hospitals.

He also noted that he’s exploring with a regulatory board when and how to reopen barber shops and hair salons.

“As you can see, I’m past due for a haircut ... The nature of it is is close work,” he said. “You cannot stay 6 feet away and do that.”

Retail workers with underlying health concerns are worried about returning to their jobs and possibly being exposed to the virus.

“I don’t have a great answer for that,” DeWine said. He added that he hopes employers are flexible with work assignments for those with health conditions.

Conditions that put people at higher risk for complications include obesity, tobacco use, lung disease, heart disease and diabetes — conditions that are common among large segments of Ohioans.

As the DeWine administration maps out what will open when and under what conditions, state officials will be relying again on modeling forecasts from the Ohio State University Infectious Diseases Institute.

Models make predictions based on current data and a host of assumptions, such as how people interact, where they live and work.

“At some point we can’t continue the complete stay at home orders that we have right now. So the question becomes how can we relax these
distancing measures in a really graded manner so that as future outbreaks occur we can contain them,” said Michael Oglesbee, director of the OSU IDI.

Oglesbee said he expects Ohio will discourage large events, such as concerts, sporting events or festivals, though the end of July; retailers will continue to limit shoppers, wipe down carts, use masks and mandate social distancing; and restaurants offering dine-in meals may have to adapt.

“We’ve always had seating capacities as defined by fire codes and we may see seating capacities redefined based on infectious disease considerations. It’s hard for me to imagine we’re going to be in this take-out only mode until we have a vaccine,” Oglesbee said.

Ohio is building its capacity to conduct robust contact tracing — reaching people who have been in contact with those who test positive for the virus, he said.

A big increase in testing would give the state the true number of infections, Oglesbee said.

Ohio is conducting comprehensive testing in three state prisons and is finding a high rate of infections, including asymptomatic patients who do not realize they are carrying the virus. Currently one in four confirmed cases in Ohio is linked to the state prison system workers and inmates.

Acton said her department is awaiting testing supplies to conduct a survey of 1,000 randomly selected Ohioans to determine the prevalence of the virus spread.

Contact this reporter at 614-224-1624 or email Laura.Bischoff@coxinc.com.
To-go drinks boost ailing restaurants

Revenue stream is keeping doors open at some area businesses.

Monica Nenni holds a tray of rum buckets to-go at West Central Wine on Thursday in Middletown. Gov. Mike DeWine announced April 7 that restaurants with a liquor license for on-premises consumption will now be allowed to sell pre-packaged cocktails to go with meals. NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

By Eric Schwartzberg
Staff Writer

April 22, 2020

CORONAVIRUS: THE LATEST
Restaurants and bars that lost a powerful source of revenue when all dine-in service was shut down more than a month ago recently gained some back, albeit in a different form than usual.

Businesses that have a liquor license for on-premises consumption are able to sell two pre-packaged alcoholic drinks, including high-proof liquor, to go with a carryout meal, following an announcement made April 7 by Gov. Mike DeWine.

Getting permission to do so has made an immediate difference at West Central Wine in downtown Middletown, which started offering its popular Cruzan Rum Buckets as a to-go option starting last Thursday along with already available signature food options like homemade hummus, pasta salad and Italian sandwiches, according to co-owner Monica Nenni.

“I ordered 100 pouches online just to give it a try and, in the three hours we were open after I posted it, sold 50 of them,” Nenni said.

Business was similarly brisk on Saturday.

“I was just really overwhelmed (and) pleasantly surprised at the response,” she said.

West Central Wine has also found that the increased business generated by the cocktail-to-go option has allowed new and existing customers to become acquainted with the store’s retail options, which have been put on display more prominently via a newly modified layout.

Many restaurants make a higher profit margin on cocktails, wine and beer than they do on the meals they serve.

Even those restaurants that were selling carryout and delivery meals saw revenues plunge without the ability to serve alcohol, although some could sell beer and wine and carryout.

El Mariachi Mexican Restaurante & Cantina in Hamilton, which opened
18 years ago, typically sells many margaritas, and because the ample supply of the ingredients it had on hand made it easy to put together a to-go option in “just minutes,” according to co-owner Jorge Rodriguez.

Customers take home an elongated plastic drinking cup in which the ingredients can be mixed, Rodriguez said.

“It helped us a lot,” he said. “Once we started offering (to-go) drinks, we’ve been a little busier. That gives more money to pay bills and our employees.”

Tano Bistro in Hamilton launched a new “Take & Shake” option Tuesday for customers with any carryout meal purchase. That includes an a Ginger Pear Martini (pear vodka, Canton ginger, triple sec, lime and crystalized ginger), White Sangria (white wine, Canton ginger, basil, strawberry, orange and cherry) and an Old Fashioned (bourbon, IPA simple syrup, cherry and toasted orange).

“We just sold our first two about an hour ago, so we’ll see how it goes,” Tano Bistro general manager Tyler McCleary said Tuesday.

The “food-forward” restaurant had discussed the to-go option even before the coronavirus pandemic as a way of capitalizing on demand for its cocktails and “mostly as a way to do something different,” he said.

The restaurant can offer other mixed drinks on its menu, but chose those four options because they are the most popular.

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DeWine says virus still presents risk

Ohio's K-12 students to finish academic year via distance learning.

April 21, 2020

COLUMBUS — Ohio's 1.7 million K-12 students will finish the current academic year online and through distance learning and no decisions have been made about resuming in the fall, Gov. Mike DeWine announced Monday.

The governor said the coronavirus still presents a risk to students, teachers and the community.

"We know from our children and grandchildren that the end of the school year, particularly for seniors, is particularly important. The prom, sporting events, recognitions and so we're not telling the schools how to do this but the gathering of a significant number of people is a dangerous situation," DeWine said.

Schools can find new ways to recognize student achievement, he said. “It certainly is not going to be easy and it’s a real shame.”

When children return to school, they may be required to wear masks and practice some level of social distancing.

School district leaders are already thinking about how students will return to the class
rooms, including the possibility of “blended learning” that involves a combination of in-class and online instruction, he said.

“It’s a work in progress. I wish I could signal to every parent out there that we know exactly what’s going to happen and when all the kids will go back to school, but we don’t. We’re working on it and it’s not just me; it’s all the schools working on it,” DeWine said.

Ohio Federation of Teachers President Melissa Cropper said in a written statement: “Distance learning, even when perfectly executed, is not a replacement for classroom instruction.

However, this is the right call. It protects the health and safety not just for students, staff and teachers, but for everyone in Ohio. We must remain focused on flattening the curve and slowing the spread of COVID-19 in Ohio.”

DeWine said it’s too early to predict what will happen with college classes for the autumn term that typically begins in late August.

Ohio has 648,000 students enrolled in two-year and four-year institutions.

The Ohio Department of Health on Monday announced 12,516 confirmed coronavirus cases, plus an additional 403 probable coronavirus cases; 2,653 hospitalizations; 491 deaths, plus 18 deaths probably attributed to COVID-19.

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction is testing all inmates and staff at three prisons experiencing outbreaks — Franklin Medical Center, Marion Correctional Institution and Pickaway Correctional Institution. So far, one in four confirmed cases of coronavirus infections in Ohio are linked to DRC inmates or staff.

DRC said Ohio is the only state in the nation to conduct comprehensive testing on inmates. As the virus continues to spread inside Ohio’s
prisons, DeWine said the Ohio National Guard is building out capacity to give more space within the prisons. The National Guard added tents and portable showers to outdoor areas at Pickaway Correctional Institution, the wife of one inmate said.

DeWine announced that the state would begin posting more data to show confirmed cases in nursing homes among residents and staff; confirmed cases among health care staff at hospitals; and nursing home deaths by county.

DeWine said the backlog on processing coronavirus tests has been cleared so Ohio hospitals may now return to using private labs, if they choose.

Dozens of protesters demonstrated at the Ohio Statehouse and over the weekend, calling on DeWine to rapidly reopen the state for business and remove Acton as state health director.

Protesters drove around the Statehouse, displaying signs such as “My inherent rights don’t end where your fear begins,” and “DeWine is a globalist puppet.” A passenger in a silver minivan carried an anti-Semitic sign over the weekend.

On Monday, DeWine and Acton delivered their press briefing from the Ohio Department of Public Safety headquarters about four miles from the Statehouse.

The change was done for security reasons, a DeWine spokesman said.

DeWine said protesters have a constitutional right to assemble; he just asks that they do so in a safe manner.

Contact this reporter at 614-224-1624 or email Laura. Bischoff@coxin.com.

‘It certainly is not going to be easy and it’s a real shame.’ Gov. Mike
DeWine

CORONAVIRUS RESOURCES

- Ohio Department of Health hotline: 1-833-4-ASK- ODH (staffed from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day)
- ODH updates: coronavirus.ohio.gov
- Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services helpline: 1-877-275-6364
- Ohio crisis text line: Text keyword “4HOPE” to 741 741
Sheriff offers jail for homeless quarantine

Minimum security jail would only restrict interaction with others.

Butler County Sheriff Richard Jones has offered the Resolutions minimum security jail on S. Second Street in Hamilton to house homeless people who must be quarantined after contracting the coronavirus.
NICK GRAHAM PHOTOS / STAFF

April 21, 2020
By Denise G. Callahan
Staff Writer

CORONAVIRUS: THE LATEST

BUTLER COUNTY — Butler County Sheriff Richard Jones has offered the use of his Resolutions minimum security jail for homeless who have contracted the coronavirus and must be quarantined.
The number of confirmed cases in Butler County stood at 183 on Monday with two probable infections and three deaths, up from 159 confirmed cases on Friday.

Sheriff’s Chief Deputy Anthony Dwyer said the Resolutions facility is used to house inmates but wouldn’t have a jail-like atmosphere for this purpose.

“It would be a different environment,” Dwyer said. “Obviously it wouldn’t be a correctional environment. These people are not incarcerated, these people would be there through quarantine so their movement would be restricted by way of interaction with others, but there is an outside area where they can step outside, if some of them smoked or anything like that, they would have the ability to still maintain a semblance of not being incarcerated.”

Jones made the offer on Friday, Butler County Health Commissioner Jennifer Bailer issued a press release over the weekend saying officials will employ a “tiered” approach to finding suitable quarantine housing for the homeless.

“In Butler County, no final decision has been made as to any particular option for temporary housing for recovery from COVID-19,” Bailer said. “Indeed, having a tiered approach with a number of options on the table is the best course of action. One option may be best for 1-2 sick people, while another option may be better for larger numbers should that occur.”

Bailer said health districts all over the state are considering options such as hotels, churches, camps, cabins, schools, and jails.

“All of these options have pros and cons, none are 100 percent ideal,” she noted in the release. “We appreciate the many, many partners who have been open to discussing options and solutions for housing. As we move forward, we will see how this evolves.”
Bailer spoke to the commissioners last week about acquiring as much as $181,000 to possibly rent the Oxford Comfort Inn.

“This is for people that are walking and talking, able to take care of themselves but who are experiencing symptoms or they may be waiting to see if they experience symptoms,” Bailer said. “This is not an infirmary, this is not a step-down hospital in any way.”

The initial estimate was $42,000 to rent 20 rooms for four weeks, according to records obtained by the Journal-News. The lodging cost went up to $73,000 for 65 rooms because the hotel required her to rent the whole place. The rest of the cost, $108,000 was for the county to provide staffing, security, cleaning, food and other incidentals.

She told commissioners she was seeking other options.

Dwyer said if she chooses Resolutions the facility is large enough to fit her needs and the sheriff’s office will help however it can.

“We told them if you wanted us to staff it, it would probably be the simplest way to staff it, our staff is familiar with the building itself, the security measures around the building and they are also familiar with proper PPE (personal protective equipment) etiquette when it comes to dealing with people that are contagious,”

Dwyer said.

“But Jenny may want medical people to do it, it might just be one person for key access. I don’t have those answers, it would be a discussion if and when that happens, it would not be very difficult to assess what the needs were.”

Last year the total number of homeless residents was 298 countywide. The total “point-in-time” count for this year won’t be available until this summer.
The commissioners allocated $75,000 in unused 2019 Community Development Block Grant money to get more people out of the close quarters in shelters and off the streets last week. They also put another $100,000 into the line item to pay for coronavirus expenses.

Mindy Muller with the Butler County Housing and Homeless Coalition said last week they had rehoused 17 families over the past few weeks. Now there are 21 families living with friends and family and 31 have their own units.

She told the commissioners Monday that officials in the statewide homeless system “are really impressed with how quickly Butler County has moved.”

“The state from the homeless coalition perspective is looking at what Butler County is doing,” she said.

“You’re leading in ways that you don’t even recognize, it’s being seen and noticed throughout the state and really across the country.”
Officials: Distribution centers are ‘essential’
Workers note health issues at Kohl’s, which says it’s in compliance with order.

The health district is investigating complaints related to COVID-19 issues at the Kohl’s E-Commerce Fulfillment Center in Monroe.
ED RICHTER / STAFF

By Ed Richter
Staff Writer
April 20, 2020

BUTLER COUNTY — The Butler County General Health District has determined that distribution centers are “essential businesses” under the Ohio Department of Health’s stay-at-home order.

After getting calls, emails, questions and complaints about these businesses operating, the county health department issued a statement last week explaining why distribution centers are considered an essential business.
Carrie Yeager, the health department’s environmental health director said, “Under section 9 of the Essential Infrastructure clause in the stay-at-home order, distribution or fulfillment centers are considered essential businesses. Essential businesses may stay open but must still operate with caution and follow social distancing requirements, like staying 6 feet away from coworkers if they must be on site.”

These businesses are required to follow basic minimum operations to be in compliance with the state order. Those requirements include:

- Maintain 6 foot social distancing from other individuals.
- Separate employees who appear to have acute repository illness symptoms from other employees and send them home immediately.
- Allow employees to wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer.
- Encourage sick employees to stay at home until they are fever free for 72 hours without medication, symptoms have improved for at least 72 hours, and seven days have passed since symptoms began.
- Frequently perform enhanced cleaning of the facility, including cleaning all door handles, railings, counter tops and work stations.

Be prepared to change business practices if needed or even temporarily suspend business operations.

- Do not require a health care provider’s note for either illness or return to work.
- Sick leave policies must be up to date, flexible and nonpunitive to allow sick employees to stay at home.
- Reinforce key messages of stay at home when sick, cover coughs and sneezes, and practice good hand washing.
“If an essential business cannot comply with the stay-at-home order requirements, they should not be operating at this time,” Yeager said.

The order gave local health departments the authority within their jurisdictions to make decisions and interpretations about businesses that were not specifically listed in the order.

Local health districts will not always be in complete agreement and that is allowable.

When the health department receives a complaint on any business, a staff member contacts the business in question. The business is asked about their operations, and requests details regarding their social distancing and cleaning practices.

A thorough and factual investigation may take several days before next steps are taken.

The health department received a number of complaints and questions about the operations at the Kohl’s E-commerce Fulfillment Center at 3500 Salzman Road.

When contacted by the health department, a Kohl’s representative, Shawn Karasarides, sent health inspector Ryan Peltier an email outlining the precautions the facility was taking.

Those precautions included designating 6 foot distances and marking them with tape; providing additional hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes throughout the building; following comprehensive cleaning and sanitizing protocols and putting added focus on frequently touched areas; encouraging frequent hand washing; encouraging sick employees to stay home; and keeping entry doors open to avoid touching door handles.

Peltier inspected the facility on April 2 and found it in full compliance with
the state orders, according to his report.

The Monroe distribution center typically employs between 850 and 1,000 people.

Kohl’s e-commerce fulfillment centers remain open to support customer demand for orders placed on Kohls.com and the Kohl’s app.

Weston Banker, senior coordinator, Kohl’s corporate public relations, said, “The health and safety of our associates and customers remains our top priority.”

Banker said work attendance at this time is strictly voluntary, and anyone preferring additional time away from work may use sick time or paid time off, as applicable.

He also said Kohl’s is providing temporary bonus pay.

Contact this reporter at 513-755-5067 or email Ed.Richter@coxinc.com.
Food pantries make changes as need rises

Officials have seen record numbers of people seeking help.

*Family Service of Middletown has changed the way it distributes food to its clients. People now drive through, stay in their vehicles and are given food by staff or volunteers. RICK MCCRABB/STAFF*

By Rick McCrabb
Staff Writer

April 20, 2020

CORONAVIRUS: THE LATEST

BUTLER COUNTY — Butler County food pantries are facing extra challenges during the coronavirus.
They're having to change their operational procedures at a time when need for services is rising, directors said.

Instead of allowing their clients inside to select their food items, pantries are offering drive-thru services to reduce the amount of contact they have with staff and volunteers. The changes were made last month after Gov. Mike DeWine encouraged residents to stay at least six feet away from each other to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

The coronavirus also has created a shortage of workers and volunteers at Family Service of Middletown, said Executive Director Maurice Maxwell.

Because of the coronavirus shutdown, some of the people who typically help pass out food inside the pantry are unavailable. That has left Maxwell seeking about 10 volunteers.

Food is distributed at the pantry, 555 N. Verity Parkway, from 9:30-11:30 a.m. every Monday and Thursday. No registration is required and recipients are not asked to show proof of their residence or income.

They will receive a box that contains all the food groups, including meat, Maxwell said.

Once cars pull into the parking lot, volunteers load the boxes that weigh about 40 pounds into the vehicles, he said. There is minimum contact.

Maxwell said between 130 to 150 boxes are distributed twice a week and the need for services continues to rise.

"The need in the community is very high," said Maxwell, who added Family Service receives daily calls from those who need assistance.

The same is true at the Fairfield Food Pantry, said Judy Dietsen, who co-founded the organization 23 years ago with her husband. She said
more than 12,000 Fairfield residents received assistance in 2019, setting an alltime record.

That record is on pace to be broken this year, she said.

In January, the pantry served about 1,300 clients, followed by 1,100 in February and 1,300 in March.

“We are filling a real need,”

Dietsen said.

Before the coronavirus, clients came inside, showed proof of residence and were given a bag to fill with food off a table. Some of the items included fruits, vegetables, meat, and hygiene projects.

But now clients drive into the parking lot at 78 Donald Drive, open their trunk and a volunteer loads the groceries.

The bag holds enough food for three days.

The pantry is open from noon to 3 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Shared Harvest Foodbank, the organization that supplies local food pantries, distributed the same amount of food during a recent twoweek period that it historically would pass out in two months, said Executive Director Terry Perdue.

In their past few distributions, officials have seen record numbers of people seeking food, even before the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, he said.

Perdue said officials are seeing people at these distribution events that never before needed food assistance.

Contact this reporter at 513-483-5216 or email
MORE DETAILS

FAMILY SERVICE OF MIDDLETOWN WHERE: 555 N. Verity Parkway
DISTRIBUTION TIMES: 9:30-11:30 a.m. Monday and Thursday CALL:
513-423-4637 WEB SITE: fsmiddletown.org Fairfield Food Pantry
WHERE: 78 Donald Drive DISTRIBUTION TIMES: noon to 3 p.m.
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday CALL: 513-829-9407 WEB SITE: www.
fairfieldfoodpantry.org
How local departments are stretching the use of critical masks amid coronavirus concerns

Local News
April 09, 2020
By

Ed Richter, Staff Writer

Some Butler and Warren county communities are working out arrangements with local hospitals and Battelle to sanitize N-95 protective masks if needed.

Franklin Fire & EMS Chief Jonathan Westendorf said that the agency and the Joint Emergency Medical Services district has an agreement with Columbus-based Battelle to sanitize the N-95 masks if necessary, as the coronavirus has created a high demand for the personal protective equipment.

Westendorf told Franklin City Council that the city’s agreement will cost $3.25 a mask to sanitize and would have a 24-hour turnaround time. He said his department has about 500 masks in stock and would utilize the service once it was halfway through their inventory.

“You can wear the mask five times before it needs sanitizing and a mask could be sanitized up to 20 times which gives each mask to be used up to 100 times,” Westendorf said. “That’s why it’s a huge big deal.

“Hopefully we won’t have to do that. We’re preparing for the worst and hoping for the best.”

At Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine’s daily news conference Wednesday, he urged first responders and hospitals to recycle their personal protective equipment to the best of their ability. He said there were not enough masks in Ohio and communities and hospitals should take advantage of Battelle’s technology to clean and sanitize masks.
“Every mask is precious,” DeWine said. “Do not throw them away.”

He also said that Apple CEO Tim Cook donated 100,000 N-95 masks to the state in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Matt Haverkos, Butler County Emergency Management Services director, said his group is working as a liaison between the state and local agencies for creating accounts with Battelle.

Middletown Assistant Fire Chief Tom Snivelcy said the masks are not used on all calls. He said they do not have an agreement, adding that “it’s something on our radar.”

“We are not currently sanitizing any PPE,” said Fairfield Deputy Fire Chief Thomas Wagner. “We just received word this morning (Wednesday morning) from the Ohio Division of EMS that Battelle will begin offering its services statewide. We would have to label and ship the PPE to them in Columbus and they would ship it back.

“The fire department’s main supplier of the majority of all EMS disposable goods, including N-95 masks, gowns, gloves, etc. is a company called Boundtree Medical. Our current request for additional N-95’s is back-ordered and we are looking into other vendors, but have an adequate supply for now. We have received N-95’s and surgical masks through Butler County EMA and private donations from local companies.”

Liberty Twp. Fire Chief Ethan Klussman said his agency is working on an agreement with Battelle and other logistical details.

“We’ll be watching to see how these agreements work with other agencies,” he said.

Hamilton Fire Chief Mark Mercer said his department intends to work out a relationship with a local hospital if there is a need to clean N-95 masks.

“We were fortunate enough to capitalize on early opportunities and we have adequate resources now,” he said.
Butler County and Middletown jails sanitizing, adjusting for coronavirus precautions

Local News
April 09, 2020
By
Rick McCrabb, Staff Writer

BUTLER COUNTY —

Butler County jails are taking steps to reduce the risk of their employees and inmates spreading the coronavirus.

Maj. Mike Creft from the Butler County Sheriff's Office said officials have worked closely with Butler County judges in asking them to help reduce the jail population through their sentences. He said there are 752 inmates in the jail, down about 200 from the average.

When new inmates are incarcerated, they spend 14 days in an isolation cell to ensure they are negative for the virus, he said. Craft compared the proximity of inmates to residents in nursing homes. He said the coronavirus would spread quickly in a jail setting. He said no inmates in the Butler County Jail have the virus.

The jail uses trusted inmates to disinfect the sheriff's office, especially the door handles and heavily trafficked areas, Craft said. He said the areas are cleaned daily because the sheriff's office can't afford to have any employees get the COVID-19.

"They have to answer the bell," he said.

In Middletown, a professional cleaning company from Carlisle disinfected its 10 police cruisers, the 36 cells in the Middletown City Jail, dispatch center, detective section and booking area on Sunday, officials said.
Ryan Grubbs, environmental specialist for DryPatrol, said four employees used a chemical called SteraMist to disinfect the police department and jail. He called the chemical, first used by the military to fight the anthrax, “more than effective” way and the most advanced product to clean the department.

“It’s the big hitter,” he said.

He said employees wore protective gear, masks and gloves while cleaning the police department.

On Saturday, DryPatrol is hosting a First Responder Day, when the company will provide complimentary cleaning to any emergency vehicle used by a department in Butler, Warren or Montgomery counties, Grubbs said.

“We want to protect those who protect us,” he said.

He said the company is offering a free SteraMist treatment for all emergency vehicles used in the three counties to reduce the potential spread of the coronavirus, Grubbs said.

From 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday a drive through will be set up at DryPatrol headquarters, 711 Business Parkway, Carlisle.

Those interested in the service are asked to RVSP on DryPatrol’s Facebook page.
Middletown restaurant offering free food to first responders

Business
April 09, 2020
By

Rick McCrabb, Staff Writer

MIDDLETOWN —

A Middletown restaurant is offering a free meal to local first responders from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday.

Firefighters, EMS and police officers in uniform will receive a free pulled pork sandwich, chips and drink from Combs BBQ, 222 S Central Ave.

Manager Chris Combs said this is the restaurant’s First Responder Friday and it’s his way of rewarding those on the front lines.

If possible, call ahead orders are preferred, but not necessary, he said. Curbside service is available. The number is 513-849-2110.
Coronavirus cases rise in Butler County, Middletown, but no more deaths

Local News
April 14, 2020
By

Ed Richter, Staff Writer

MIDDLETOWN —

The number of coronavirus cases in Butler County rose by six to 130 on Tuesday, and one more case was reported in the city of Middletown.

Butler County reported no more deaths on Tuesday, as that total remains at three.

Middletown spokeswoman Shelby Quinlivan said today the latest confirmed cases of COVID-19 was a 21-year-old female who was not hospitalized. This raises the number of confirmed cases in the city to 20.

As of 2 p.m. today, the Ohio Department of Health has reported 7,153 confirmed cases in Ohio with 2,156 hospitalizations that includes 654 admissions to Intensive Care Units across the state. The median age of people confirmed with COVID-19 is 54 and the age range is from under 1 year of age to age 101. There have been 309 Ohioans confirmed deaths from COVID-19 statewide.

Warren County has reported 78 confirmed cases, 14 hospitalizations, and three deaths.
Middletown reports one more confirmed cases of COVID-19, total now 16

Local News
April 09, 2020
By
Ed Richter, Staff Writer

MIDDLETOWN —

Another confirmed case of coronavirus was reported Friday in Middletown.

Middletown spokeswoman Shelby Quinlivan said the latest confirmed cases of COVID-19 is a 37-year-old woman who was hospitalized.

These cases raise the total to 16 confirmed in the city.

As of today, the Ohio Department of Health has reported 5,836 confirmed cases in Ohio with 1,755 hospitalizations that includes 548 admissions to Intensive Care Units across the state. The median age of people confirmed with COVID-19 is 54 and the age range is from under 1 year of age to age 101. There have been 231 Ohioans who died from COVID-19 statewide.

The Butler County Health District reported 112 confirmed cases of COVID-19, 41 hospitalizations, and two deaths; Warren County has reported 72 confirmed cases, 10 hospitalizations, and no deaths.
Middletown bakery serving up masked cookies during pandemic

Crime
April 16, 2020
By
Lauren Pack, Staff Writer

MIDDLETOWN —

Central Pastry has been serving treats on Middletown’s main drag for decades, and the coronavirus pandemic isn’t stopping that.

In fact, the bakery’s signature cookie is bringing plenty of extra smiles.

The smiley face butter cookies that are already a favorite of many added a mask last week, just like the ones urged by Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, and they were an instant hit.

“At first I didn’t want to do it last week, because they would compete with Easter,” said owner Vera Slamka. “But we put them out on Thursday and everyone wanted them. We sold so many it was ridiculous, all of them, they were gone.”

The idea came from a friend of Slamka’s daughter, Elizabeth, who sent a picture of a similar offering from a German bakery and asked Central Pastry to make two dozen.

Slamka said the cookies help to remind everyone to do their part by wearing a mask when they go out to stop the spread of the virus.

“There is no reason to panic, to be upset about it or depressed because I think this is time for the people to really get together and be with family. Family is so important,” Slamka said.
The store at 1518 Central Ave. is selling out of the masked cookies daily. They are favorites for doctors, nurses and first responders. Dozens have been shipped.

The bakery remains open during the stay-at-home order and precautions have been taken. Shields have been installed at the counters, markings are on the floor to keep customers six feet a part and all the staff wear masks, just like their smiling cookies.
3 more coronavirus cases confirmed in Middletown, total now at 13

Local News
April 08, 2020
By

Ed Richter, Staff Writer

MIDDLETOWN —

The number of confirmed coronavirus cases rose in the city of Middletown, according to the latest data released today.

The city of Middletown reported three more cases.

Middletown spokeswoman Shelby Quinlivan said today the latest confirmed cases of COVID-19 include a 57-year-old woman, an 80-year-old man, and a 64-year-old woman. She said none of the new cases required hospitalization.

These cases raise the total to 13 confirmed in the city.
First day of customer limits: How Butler County businesses adjusted

Local News
April 08, 2020
By
Michael D. Clark, Staff Writer

BUTLER COUNTY —

For the first time, Ohio shoppers were limited by a state order Tuesday to strict numbers of customers allowed inside stores.

Some retail outlet managers and customers reported the new restrictions imposed to impede the spread of the coronavirus were largely working.

State-designated essential businesses such as grocery stores and retail hardware outlets employed everything from pedestrian line tape to control the number of customers entering to infrared detectors to monitor their spacing and flow.

Ohio’s newest and more stringent restrictions on customer volumes, exceeding previous minimums required by fire safety laws, kicked in midnight Monday, impacting millions of state residents and thousands of stores.

Kroger officials said they had no reports of problems Tuesday.

“I was in a store all morning today and didn’t see us reaching the limit or need to begin queuing people. Everything seemed to be running quite smoothly,” said Kroger Company Spokeswoman Erin Rolfes.
“At every store, we have posted the number of people allowed inside on each entrance. As this number is based on square footage in the store, it’s different for each location. We also have queue lines set up and ready to go if they are needed.”

In Middletown’s Needler’s Fresh Market, Laura Schurman, one of the location’s managers, said that “every half hour we are doing a count through the store counting all our employees, customers and vendors, making sure we stay under that 117 (limit).”

“Every hour we sanitize the carts and sanitize the registers after each customer. We have tape (on the floor) to make sure everyone stays six feet apart. We’re trying our best.”

Customers appeared to be adjusting to the new standards, she said, and overall they were acting less anxious than when the first coronavirus restrictions were announced last month.

“Now it’s a little more calm and everybody is more collected. But when it first came out it was hard keeping everybody separate,” she said.

Todd Davis, a shopper in the store, said that he hoped “they (stores) take the right measures that are needed.”

But Davis had concerns about the new store capacity limitations set by the state order.

“I don’t know how well that is going to go because that is just going to create another line (outside) for more (social) distancing and that could create more problems,” he said.

As Davis visited other area stores, he said there is a mix of customer responses to the distance restrictions.

“Most people in general try but our brains aren’t wired that way. It takes awhile to get used to it and sometimes you forget. I think most people are trying but some people just don’t think it’s a big deal,” he said.

At Middletown’s Meijer store, signage at the main entrance announced to shoppers the new state law limits total capacity in the building - including employees - to 1,025. As of early Tuesday afternoon there were no lines outside of customers waiting to enter.

Nearby in the city’s Walmart, similar signage noted store capacity was now limited to 1,068. There was no line outside but a taped off area was ready should customers have to begin to wait to enter.

Major national chains of essential businesses allowed by Ohio law to operate are posting their COVID-19 information and precautions on their websites so customers know what their shopping will entail.
Lowes stores locally and nationally have taken a number of safety measures, according to online statements from company officials. These include “temporarily closing all stores at 7 p.m. daily to provide additional time for essential product replenishment and to thoroughly clean and sanitize our stores.”

And installing “enhanced social distancing protocols by adding dedicated social distancing ambassadors responsible for monitoring customer flow in garden centers and front-end areas and to enforce customer limits to allow proper social distancing.”

Kroger is using infrared heat detection technology to monitor and advise store managers if too many customers are congregating in one area of their stores or if the store is close to exceeding the new capacity limits.

The standard building capacity for a grocery store is 1 person per 60 square feet, said company officials. Under Kroger’s new reduced capacity limits, the number will be one person per 120 square feet. Kroger will begin to monitor the number of customers per square foot in its stores using its technology, which already provides a count of the customers entering and exiting stores.

“Our system called QueVision – which we usually use to monitor traffic on the front end and see how long it’s taking for customers to get through the line – can count the number of people in the store. We have monitors throughout the front end of the store that will alert our teams if we are approaching the limit,” said Rolfes.
Coronavirus: What happens to Butler County people under quarantine?

Those waiting for the government's coronavirus stimulus checks may be getting the payments sooner rather than later.

BREAKING NEWS
Coronavirus: 7,628 confirmed cases, 346 deaths in Ohio | WATCH for updates from DeWine state leaders:

LOCAL NEWS | 6 hours ago

By Denise G. Callahan, Staff Writer

BUTLER COUNTY — Butler County’s three health departments use a mix of staffers and volunteers to monitor those who have been officially quarantined because of the coronavirus, which have numbered in the dozens.

The Butler County General Health District reported 130 coronavirus cases on Tuesday, which increased six from Monday. Three people have died — one in Hamilton and two in Oxford — and 42 people had recovered, according to a county report from April 9.

“Part of the health commissioner’s responsibility and powers, I don’t have very many, but one that I do have is to require people to stay in their homes or a designated place until they are better so they don’t spread a disease,” Butler County Health Commissioner Jenny Bailer said Monday.

“Part of the health commissioner’s responsibility and powers, I don’t have very many, but one that: I do have is to require people to stay in their homes or a designated place until they are better so they don’t spread a disease,” Butler County Health Commissioner Jenny Bailer said Monday.
She told the county commissioners her staff and volunteers are monitoring and staying in contact with those who need to be quarantined.

"My staff makes calls at least once a day to everyone we've quarantined or isolated. It's telephonic but they are required to check their temperature every morning and record their symptoms," Bailer said. "Our capacity has been exceeded so we have volunteer school nurses who make those calls and check in on people. Then if they need things we are responsible for providing them."

State laws say health departments and districts must provide "food, fuel, and all other necessaries of life, including medical attendance, medicine, and nurses when necessary."

She said her department tries to call everyone daily, but not everyone needs constant monitoring.

Middletown Health Director Jackie Phillips told the Journal-News that of 20 confirmed cases in the city, most have come off the two-week quarantine. The last residents currently quarantined will be released next Thursday. She said they have been "blessed" because there has been an outpouring of community support.

"Part of our script here is to let us know if you need anything," Phillips said. "But everybody we've talked to either has church members, family members, they have a house full of food that they can stay in for months, they say. They have pretty much everything they need so far."

"If they're nurses, they're educated, if they're completely secure and have resources, or if other people are kind of scared, it just depends," Phillips said. "It depends, if they're still symptomatic and very fragile, we call them just to see how their symptoms are doing and making sure they're not getting worse."

Brandon Saurber, public information officer for the city of Hamilton, said the city has about 40 people quarantined, including two Butler County Jail inmates, one who tested positive for the coronavirus and that man's cellmate. The city has had 17 confirmed cases, four recoveries and one death.

"All in all, it's estimated we've had around 70 under ordered quarantine since this began," he said.
When asked via email, Bailor would not tell the Journal-News how many people have been quarantined so far or are isolated now. She issued a press release on March 19 announcing she would not grant media interviews while she deals with the pandemic but would answer questions during Facebook Live events she holds twice weekly with Butler County Sheriff Richard Jones and on Fridays with the Butler County commissioners.

During Tuesday’s Facebook Live, she did not respond to the quarantine question or about whether she is still receiving food assistance from food pantries for isolated residents.

Her office also issues more detailed epidemiology reports twice weekly. The report used to list positive cases by cities, townships and villages. The report now uses ZIP codes, which officials said matches how the state collects and reports data.

There were 22 cases listed on the April 9 report in the 45044 zip code which has a population 52,822 and includes parts of Liberty Twp., Middletown, Lemon Twp. and other pockets of areas.

Butler County Prosecutor Michael Gmoser, who is technically Bailor’s attorney, said he wishes Bailor would go back to her original reporting method of using cities, townships and villages.

“I understand Jen Bailor’s concern for HIPPA and its implications with the identity of affected individuals and I will always follow her requirements,” he said. “However, I would prefer a much more localized geographic identification than a mere ZIP code, so our citizens have more certainty in avoiding those areas.”
Residents in quarantine monitored

Butler County health departments keeping track with call checks.

April 15, 2020

By Denise G. Callahan
Staff Writer

BUTLER COUNTY — Butler County’s three health departments use a mix of staffers and volunteers to monitor those who have been officially quarantined because of the coronavirus, which have numbered in the dozens.

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Contact this reporter at 513- 755-5074 or email Denise.

Callahan@coxinc.com.
Tourism 'decimated' by virus precautions

Chamber of Commerce: Any recovery will take a while to begin.

Like the AMC Classic Hamilton 8 movie theater on Main Street in Hamilton, many entertainment, recreation and leisure businesses have been staggered by the coronavirus pandemic. NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

April 15, 2020
By Michael D. Pitman
Staff Writer

CORONAVIRUS: THE LATEST

BUTLER COUNTY — The tourism industry, which relies on travelers around the region and beyond, has been “decimated” by the novel
coronavirus pandemic, according to a local official.

Entertainment, recreation and leisure businesses have mostly shut down after the state-issued stay-at-home order designed to slow the spread of the virus, known as COVID-19. Parks and golf courses are virtually the only recreation options away from home for Ohioans, as non-essential businesses continue to be shuttered.

Restaurants have been restricted to carry-out and delivery options only.

“The whole industry has come to a stop, so to speak,” said Butler County Visitors Bureau Executive Director Mark Hecquet. “The whole industry, from restaurants to hotels to attractions, are seeing tremendous layoffs, furloughs of employees. The hotel industry was having a record year before this all happened.”

In Butler County, Hecquet said hotels have a 20 percent average occupancy rate, but before the state orders, hotels were seeing around a 70 percent rate. He said more urban areas than Butler County are seeing a harder negative impact.

Greater Hamilton Chamber of Commerce President Dan Bates said it would likely take a while for the tourism and leisure-based businesses to begin to recover from the “screeching halt” due to the COVID-19 crisis. Next to local restaurants, the hotel industry may be one of the first to see an economic spike by those who travel for work, he said. But for the rest of the tourism and visitor industry, “it’s going to take a while.”

“I think the first few trips people will start to take will be a little closer to home until they feel more comfortable,” Bates said.

He said people would likely want to look for entertainment options, but it will be more low-key, such as drinks and dinner.

Some types of businesses, such as gyms or recreation facilities, will recover faster because, in his opinion, they are easier to control and
disinfect.

As of now, the end of the expanded stay-at-home order issued by Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton earlier this month ends at 11:59 p.m. May 1.

Hecquet said as the population looks forward to returning to some semblance of normal life, outdoor facilities, such as Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park, will be one of the first types of recreation businesses to reopen.

“It is a big, open space where you can get the right physical distancing from people,” Hecquet said. “As restrictions are going to be lifted and people are going to get back out and about, they’re going to be looking for those kinds of entertainment options — parks and things like that. I definitely think in the short term, we’ll see a spike.”

Parks and golf courses are now being used by people escaping cabin fever as they’re required to stay at home as much as possible, including working from home.

Pyramid Hill Executive Director Sean FitzGibbons said it is a “difficult” time as the sculpture park, which is reliant on visitors to and residents of Butler County.

“It’s the same as the restaurants and small businesses all throughout our community,” he said.

FitzGibbons is planning for the park to open next month but had to cancel the annual Arts and Earth Day at the park scheduled for later this month. However, he said the Arts and Earth Day experience will be placed online as his team “has been able to come up with some great and innovating ideas for a digital experience.”

When businesses start to reopen, FitzGibbons believes social distancing guidelines will still be in effect “we’ll still be able to provide the service
that some others won’t be able to.”

While businesses across the board have seen declining revenues due to the virus outbreak, Bates believes the economic damage won’t be

WHAT TO KNOW

BUTLER COUNTY CASES RISE, NO MORE DEATHS REPORTED

The number of coronavirus cases in Butler County rose by six to 130 on Tuesday, and the number of deaths remained at three.

One more case was also reported in Middletown on Tuesday, bringing the city’s total to 20.

BAKERY SELLING OUT OF MASKED COOKIES

The owner of Central Pastry in Middletown made a few face cookies wearing masks for a family friend, and before long the demand grew. Now, they can barely keep them in stock.

Owner Vera Slamka said she wants the cookies to be a reminder that people should wear masks when in public to prevent spread of the coronavirus.

KINGS ISLAND EXTENDING SEASON PASSES

Kings Island announced on Tuesday that season passes purchased for 2020 will also be valid for 2021, given the uncertainty about how much the park will be open this year because of coronavirus precautions.

The park said it suspended monthly billing for those passes while the park is closed.

It will also work with those who purchased single-day tickets for a resolution, officials said.
Butler approves $175K additional virus funds

County commissioners look to secure hotel rooms to aid homeless.

By Denise G. Callahan
Staff Writer

April 14, 2020

BUTLER COUNTY — The Butler County commissioners have authorized an additional $175,000 to fight the coronavirus pandemic, this time specifically to address the homeless population.

When the commissioners issued a public health emergency order a month ago, it included setting up a $100,000 fund to handle pandemic expenses. Health Commissioner Jennifer Bailer told the commissioners on Monday that the county might need about $181,000 to secure hotel rooms for homeless residents she might have to quarantine for two weeks because they are infected.

She said she has studied many options for these people and identified a hotel that could house these people on a temporary basis, but the price has gone up since she first introduced the idea.

"It was originally 20 rooms for 28 days, and now they have requested that we reserve the entire hotel, they're not comfortable with just a portion of it," she said, adding a phone call to the hotel's corporate office changed the game plan. "They were agreeing to close the rest of the hotel, but now they would like us to pay for the rest of the hotel. That's a pretty significant change so we will continue to look at our options."

The initial estimate from the Oxford Comfort Inn was $42,000, according to records obtained by the Journal-News. The lodging cost is now $73,000 for 65 rooms for 28 days. The rest of the cost is for the county
to provide staffing, cleaning, food and other incidentals.

Hotel owner Neil Vashasiya said he is a franchisee and was instructed he could not rent out part of the hotel for this purpose. He said he dropped the daily rate to help the county.

“They (Comfort Inn) have been renting hotels in the Northern Kentucky area and that’s what they suggested me to do because I cannot keep half open and half closed,” Vashasiya said.

“Because of this I offered them (the county) another independent hotel and it’s better for county because they don’t have to rent all the rooms.”

He said his brother owns a hotel the county could consider.

Bailer said the hotel quote was “a starting point to look at possible costs in the event we would need to house COVID-19 vulnerable populations who do not have a place to stay. We continue to look at additional options of many sorts to find the best, most cost effective, and safest place to quarantine someone who does not have an appropriate space in which to do so.”

The total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases is now 124, and three people have died.

When the coronavirus fund was initiated Commissioner Cindy Carpenter wanted to give the health commissioner $200,000 outright to deal with the problem. Instead the commissioners authorized a general pool of $100,000 and authorized County Administrator Judi Boyko to spend up to that amount without their prior approval. Carpenter repeated her request Monday.

“If we put this $100,000 in there how do we guarantee that money is going to go to the board of health?”

Carpenter said. “There are other ways to fund our other departments.”
Dixon said the county can’t just dole out money before actual expenses are incurred.

“I don’t think it’s lawful, the prosecutor has always stepped in and said you can’t do that,” he said. “We have to have contracts, POs (purchase orders) they can do all those, get them to us, Judi’s going to approve them, turn them around quickly,” Dixon said. “We don’t pay for anything before we get it, like we won’t write a check to that hotel for $180,000 first and not have used the services.

If they won’t agree to those terms then we’re gonna have to go to the next one up, even if it costs more money.”

Bailer said the hotel housing will be for those who have been released from hospital emergency rooms or other health care providers.

“This is for people that are walking and talking, able to take care of themselves but who are experiencing systems or they may be waiting to see if they experience symptoms,” Bailer said. “This is not an infirmary, this is not a step-down hospital in any way.”

In addition to pumping more money into the general pool of coronavirus money the commissioners also agreed to redirect $75,000 in 2019 Community Development Block Grant funding to help the Butler County Housing and Homeless Coalition get more people out of shelters, where social distancing is difficult.

Mindy Muller with the Coalition said officials hope to “rehouse” 30 families with the money the commissioners approved.

“We have rehoused about 17 homeless households in the last couple of weeks into private apartments using private funds,” Muller said.

“As we rehouse them we provide them a start-up kit (kitchen supply, bedding, food) to ensure they can shelter in place appropriately.
The application presented to the county was to continue this rehousing effort across the county.”

The commissioners approved funding for the Oxford Food Pantry parking lot last year, but Development Director David Fehr said the project has stalled.

“They were just way behind on their fundraising, we were going to be the last dollars in, we were going to do the parking lot at the Food Pantry,” Fehr said. “They just simply won’t be ready by the time we are required by HUD to spend those dollars.”

Boyko told the commissioners there is federal funding that can help with these efforts. The county is slated to receive an additional $739,290 in CDBG funds this year from Department of Housing and Human Services, specifically for coronavirus response.
Guard to give medical aid to state jail

DeWine recommended release of just over 200 prisoners amid virus.

By Laura A. Bischoff
Columbus Bureau

April 14, 2020

COLUMBUS — Gov. Mike DeWine on Monday reported first death of a state inmate due to the coronavirus and said he is sending an Ohio National Guard medical team to Pickaway Correctional Institution to help care for inmates.

As the virus gains a foothold behind bars, 12 prisons with nearly 17,000 inmates are on lock down to try to keep it in check. So far, 269 inmates have been tested, with 67 positives.

Inmate Charles Viney Jr., 66, was serving time for murder, felonious assault and burglary in Clark County. His expected release date was January 2021.

DeWine said his team continues to examine who should be released from prison early. He has recommended a little more than 200 prisoners for release.

ACLU of Ohio lobbyist Gary Daniels said the coronavirus inside Ohio prisons is a “human rights disaster in the making” and recommended that the state release at least 10,000 inmates to cut overcrowding.

The Ohio Department of Health reported 6,881 confirmed cases, plus an additional 94 probable cases.
The state has had 274 deaths, including six probable cases of COVID-19.

While ODH reports 2,033 hospitalizations, that number is cumulative. ODH Director Dr. Amy Acton reported there are currently 898 patients hospitalized with coronavirus infections across Ohio.

Still, she maintained extra hospital beds may still be needed in convention centers across Ohio over the course of a year. Some beds may be needed for patients needed less acute care but unable to return home because of the risk of infecting family members, she said.

For the second time, dozens of protesters shouted outside the Ohio Statehouse during the daily press briefing.

They carried signs that said “the cure is worse than the virus,” “Open Ohio,” and “economic suicide is not acceptable.” They pounded on windows, rang bells and shouted through bullhorns.

Ohio’s projected number of new coronavirus infections has dropped from up to 10,000 a day at its peak to 1,600. Over the past five days, new cases have climbed on average 347 a day.

Michael Oglesbee, director of the Ohio State University Infectious Diseases Institute, said on Monday: “We are not likely to hit 1,600 new cases at peak. It is clear that more recent modeling results are not influenced by a backlog of test results. The peak is looking like it will be much less. A major goal of the predictions was to ensure that hospitals were prepared, and in this context, better to have an initial overestimation than under.”

The rosier projections and lower case counts have added pressure on the DeWine administration to begin lifting restrictions that have slowed the economy and put 700,000 Ohioans out of work.

President Donald Trump asserted Monday he is the ultimate decision-
maker for determining how and when to relax the nation's social distancing guidelines.

Trump said on Twitter on Monday some are “saying that it is the Governors decision to open up the states, not that of the President of the United States & the Federal Government. Let it be fully understood that this is incorrect...it is the decision of the President, and for many good reasons.”

He added, “With that being said, the Administration and I are working closely with the Governors, and this will continue.”

DeWine played down any conflict between governors and the White House and noted daily calls are collegial.

DeWine promised an Ohio exit plan based on the best available science.

“We’re not going to flip on switch some day and the world will go back to where it was. It’s not going to be totally back where it was until we have a vaccine...12 to 18 months. So things are going to be different for that period of time,” he said.

Information from the Associated Press is included in this report.

CORONAVIRUS RESOURCES

- Ohio Department of Health hotline: 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (staffed from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day)

- ODH updates: coronavirus. ohio.gov

- Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services helpline: 1-877-275-6364

- Ohio crisis text line: Text keyword “4HOPE” to 741 741
By Michael D. Pitman
Staff Writer

Life will look a lot different whenever the country comes out of the novel coronavirus pandemic, said Middletown's top health official.

And Middletown Health Commissioner Jackie Phillips doesn't see life going back to the so-called normal way of life the public once lived when the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, eventually wanes.

"I think everybody should be mindful that we cannot go back to the way it used to be," she said. "I am certain that this virus will probably stay around for a while, if not going into the fall. If you look at some of the modeling, they're suppressing the virus, but the virus never goes away."

Gov. Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Amy Acton have taken unprecedented measures to blunt the impact the virus may have all at once on the health care system. Measures were similar to what other states have implemented, from moving the presidential primary to shutting down schools and forcing several types of businesses to close or limit services temporarily.

But the disease is expected to continue to spread, if only more slowly.

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**WHAT TO KNOW**

**MIDDLETOWN REPORTS 16TH CASE OF VIRUS**

The city of Middletown reported one more case of COVID-19 Friday, pushing the total to 16.

Middletown spokeswoman Shelby Quinnivan said a 37-year-old woman has been hospitalized with a case of COVID-19.

As of Saturday, the Ohio Department of Health has reported 6,187 cases in Ohio, a 6% increase over Friday's numbers. The number of confirmed deaths rose from 227 to 242.

The statistics show 1,859 hospitalizations in the state for COVID-19, with 572 of those people admitted to intensive care units. The median age of those infected is 54.

The Butler County Health District reported 112 cases of COVID-19, 41 hospitalizations and two deaths; Warren County has reported 72 cases, 10 hospitalizations and no deaths.

**COMMUNITIES FINDING NEW WAYS TO CELEBRATE**

Since there are no traditional Easter egg hunts in the area, some communities are celebrating the holiday by placing drawings of Easter eggs in the windows of their businesses and residences.

**WEDDING POSTPONED, GROOM LOSES HIS JOB**

A Warren County couple was hit three times by the coronavirus. Their destination wedding in South Carolina was postponed, they missed a first birthday party and the groom-to-be lost his job.

Still, the bride-to-be finds time to wear a bunny outfit around the neighborhood.

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"What we have tried to do each and every day is to try to tell you what we do, what we know and when we know it, and to get that information out to you as quickly as we can," said DeWine on Thursday during his daily coronavirus press conference.

*Modeling continued on A11*
He said the initial projections, which showed a dire situation if next-to-nothing was done, are much different because Ohioans are doing what’s been asked of them.

“Ohioans have made a difference, we’ve made a huge difference,” said DeWine. “Ultimately, it’s about what each and every one of you does and does not do. And by and large, Ohioans have done a bang-up job.”

But the work Ohioans have put into flattening the curve needs to continue, Phillips said, including continually disinfecting high-touch surfaces and handwashing, and social distancing even when health officials declare the pandemic over.

“I’m not saying not to go to large gatherings, but we’re going to be more mindful that large crowds give us more of a means of being infected by anything,” she said. “I think our hygiene practices, and our gathering practices should look a little different.”

The Cleveland Clinic – one of the medical facilities providing COVID-19 infection predictive modeling – advocates following the Ohio health department’s stay-at-home order and safety guidelines outlined by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

“There is evidence that these actions have started to make a real impact on the spread of the infection,” according to a statement from the Clinic.

Cleveland Clinic Medical Director of Enterprise Analytics Dr. James Simon said since this is the first time the world has seen the COVID-19 virus, “We do not have a lot of data to go by.”

He compares the modeling done by several organizations, including the Ohio State University, to a hurricane tracker that would show the storm taking different paths, “but as time goes by, and as they gather more information, oftentimes the models will come closer together and agree, and that's exactly what's happening here.”

“Each of those models is taking the information that we learn day by day and incorporating that back into the model to improve its forecasting,” he said.

The Ohio State University Response Modeling Team released a paper on its modeling approach, saying, “Just as in any computational modeling effort, there are many approaches and methods to choose from to model emerging epidemics. Different methods are suited to different situations in terms of data, scenarios, conditions and urgency.”

A Washington University model predicts Ohio's day-to-day increases in hospitalizations and deaths are at its peak now, and the state should see numbers decline in the days and weeks to come. DeWine said models showed statistical projections that forecast much higher tolls because they were created assuming Ohio and the country did nothing or very little to slow the spread.

“The modelers didn’t think we were going to do as good a job as we did,” the governor said. “They didn’t think Ohioans would do this.”

Phillips said public health diligence is needed, which she said will be the new normal. But her worry is when flu season comes back in the fall later this year.

“If you look at some of the modelings, they're suppressing the virus, but the virus never goes away,” she said.
PANDEMIC LEADS TO $1.27B MONTHLY HIT

80% of losses are due to suspending nonessential hospital procedures.

The Ohio Hospital Association said the COVID-19 pandemic has had an estimated $1.27 billion negative impact on hospitals, including at Premier Health Network’s Atrium Medical Center in Middletown. CONTRIBUTED

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By Kaitlin Schroeder
Staff Writer

CORONAVIRUS: THE LATEST

Ohio Hospital Association said the coronavirus outbreak is having an estimated $1.27 billion negative impact on hospitals monthly, mostly from putting off procedures that can be delayed.
Ohio hospitals in mid-March said they were delaying procedures that were elective and could be delayed. The goal was to clear out the capacity to make room for coronavirus outbreak cases and to also conserve personal protective equipment such as masks and gowns, given a national shortage of the supplies fueled by the pandemic.

The hospital trade group’s spokesman John Palmer said the association surveyed the majority of its membership and estimates that 80% of the $1.27 billion is attributed to the suspension of nonessential surgeries and procedures.

Locally, these losses have contributed to furloughs at Premier Health and Kettering Health Network hospitals amid the pandemic, stemming from the reduction in services provided (and staff needed to provide those services) and from the loss in revenue.

Atrium Medical Center in Middletown is a part of the Premier Health Network and Fort Hamilton Hospital and Kettering Middletown are part of Kettering Health.

"Gov. (Mike) DeWine’s insight to require hospitals to delay nonessential or elective surgeries has allowed hospitals to conserve muchneeded personal protective equipment (gowns, masks, gloves, and face shields) that will be needed to protect healthcare workers during COVID-19," said Sarah Hackenbract, president and CEO of Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association.

"As those nonessential surgeries have been delayed due to COVID-19, several hospitals have needed to enact temporary furloughs. Hospitals continue to adjust staffing based on the care needed today, in preparation for an increase in COVID-19 patients, and as we look toward resuming nonessential surgeries.”

Kettering Health previously said they “made the difficult decision to place some employees on furlough to allow them to access government
benefits with waived waiting times. People who have been furloughed are still employees of Kettering Health Network and they are still receiving benefits. We look forward to welcoming them back to work once our patient volumes pick up.”

Kettering Health said where possible, employees who don’t have work in their own department are being redirected to other jobs. The health network also said its employee assistance fund helps cover expenses for furloughed employees like utilities, rent and other monthly bills. Some employees took paid time off, or in some cases used paid time off bank of more than 1,200 hours, some of it donated by other employees.

This is not just an Ohio problem. In a late March survey taking the pulse of 323 American hospitals during the pandemic, the U.S. Health and Human Services Inspector General said hospitals surveyed described increasing costs and decreasing revenues as a threat to their financial viability.

Hospitals reported that ceasing elective procedures and other services decreased revenues, and many reported their cash reserves were quickly depleting, which could disrupt ongoing hospital operations.

Meanwhile, hospitals explained that their costs have increased as they prepare for a potential surge of patients by purchasing extra equipment (such as personal protective equipment and ventilators), remodeling rooms for negative pressure, or setting up drive-through clinics and tents.

Smaller, independent hospitals, such as rural hospitals and critical access hospitals, reported that they were at greater financial risk than those in larger systems and that they could face more financial uncertainty. As one hospital administrator observed, “There is no mothership to save us.”

Further, hospitals reported difficulty in getting reimbursed for treating patients in nontraditional spaces, because there were no qualifying
billing codes when treating patients in these locations.

For example, to mitigate COVID-19 spread, one hospital relocated speech, occupational, and physical therapy services off-site. However, the hospital said it was unable to bill for these services, because it does not own the building housing the relocated services, or meet billing requirements.

The $2.2 trillion federal coronavirus response bill included $100 billion for hospitals to help ease some of these financial problems.

The $100 billion earmarked for hospitals in the stimulus package will help quickly re-purpose operating rooms into intensive care units, subsidize hospitals losing revenue due to canceled procedures, and hire additional staff to replace infected workers, said Ashley Thompson, the American Hospital Association’s senior vice president for policy, told the Associated Press in March.

Hospitals will also receive an additional 20% Medicare reimbursement for COVID-19 patients.

Associated Press contributed to this report.

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WHAT TO KNOW AT

LEAST 117 CASES IN BUTLER COUNTY Butler County had at least 117 confirmed coronavirus cases as of Sunday, the latest data released by the Ohio Department of Health.

There were two deaths in the county.
Across Ohio, there were 6,604 confirmed cases, 1,948 hospitalizations, 595 intensive-care-unit admissions and 248 confirmed deaths, with cases ranging from an infant to somebody 101 years old, and a median age of 54, with 52% of patients female.

FOOD TRUCKS ALLOWED AT REST STOPS

Gov. Mike DeWine has announced the Ohio Department of Transportation will allow food trucks to sell their products to truck drivers and other essential personnel at the state’s 86 rest areas.

The permits will be free and applications are on ODOT’s website, www.transportation.ohio.gov.

Vendors must display it at all times while operating, and must abide by state and local food service regulations, as well as social distancing guidelines. The Ohio State Highway Patrol will regularly monitor rest areas to enforce compliance with laws.

The regular vending machine service, which is provided by Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, will continue to be available.

OHIO HOSPITALS BY THE NUMBERS

$1.27 billion

Estimate monthly loss COVID-19 impact

$31.4 billion

2017 statewide hospital economic impact

255,000 2017

Ohioans directly employed SOURCE: OHIO HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION