

Distributed by: The City of Middletown Health Department

COVID-19 Update: Liquor Sale and On-Premises Consumption Limits, Mass Gathering Order, Updated Risk Levels

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine today provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

UPDATED COUNTY RISK LEVELS

Governor DeWine released this week's new [Ohio Public Health Advisory System](#) map.

"The good news is that more people are wearing masks in our urban counties and we are seeing the spread slow because of that," said Governor DeWine. "The bad news is that Ohio's more rural counties are turning orange with significantly more spread taking place. I will again urge those who live in rural counties to wear masks while in public."

Remaining at Level 3:

- Allen
- Cuyahoga
- Erie
- Fairfield
- Franklin
- Hamilton
- Licking
- Lucas
- Henry
- Lawrence
- Marion
- Medina
- Montgomery

Downgraded from
Level 3 to Level 2:

- Clark
- Defiance
- Hardin
- Athens
- Clermont
- Delaware
- Pickaway
- Scioto
- Union

Downgraded to from
Level 3 to Level 1:

- Richland

There are no counties on Ohio's Watch List.

Detailed data on all 88 counties are now available on the [Ohio Public Health Advisory System's website](#). The system was developed to provide local health departments, community leaders, and the public with data and information on the severity of the COVID-19 spread in the counties in which they live. The system consists of four levels with specific [risk-level guidelines](#). Each level is calculated with data gathered on [seven public health indicators](#).

ALCOHOL SALE AND ON-PREMISES CONSUMPTION LIMITS

Governor DeWine announced today that he has asked the Ohio Liquor Control Commission to call an emergency meeting to consider enacting a statewide emergency rule to limit liquor sales at establishments that serve alcohol for on-site consumption.

The rule would prevent the sale of alcohol at these liquor-permitted establishments beginning at 10:00 p.m. each night. On-premises consumption must end by 11:00 p.m. Businesses may stay open, and establishments that sell food can continue serving meals until closing.

Governor DeWine requested the new administrative rule after seeing outbreaks associated with bars across Ohio including Toledo, Cleveland, and Columbus.

"The problem is, bars, by their nature, lend themselves to a revolving door of people in close contact, oftentimes indoors, with interactions between many different people," said Governor DeWine. "While this may have been fine during normal times, these are not normal times. We must make a change to curb the social behaviors that will cause this virus to continue to spread."

Separately, Governor DeWine is also asking the commission to raise the number of liquor and mixed drinks permitted to be purchased for carryout with a meal from two drinks to three drinks.

The Ohio Liquor Control Commission will hold its emergency meeting tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. If the emergency administrative rule is approved, Governor DeWine will sign an executive order making it effective tomorrow night.

MASS GATHERING ORDER

Governor DeWine announced that Ohio will separate its mass gathering guidance into its own order. Mass gathering guidance was most recently referenced as part of other orders and combining this information into a stand-alone order will allow citizens to easily find guidance on holding gatherings in a safe manner.

Mass gatherings in Ohio remain limited to 10 people.

"We have seen cases in recent weeks where outbreaks have been connected to informal social gatherings like birthday parties, neighborhood gatherings, graduation parties, weddings, funerals, and gatherings at people's homes," said Governor DeWine. "The fact remains that this virus spreads when someone with the virus comes in contact with others who don't yet have it. When we gather together with people outside our households, we increase the likelihood this virus can spread."

The order will still permit Ohioans to go to work, worship, go to school, and acquire goods and services, however, this order will offer clear recommendations on safely holding gatherings.

- Gatherings at a household or family residence should be limited to close friends and family and are recommended to be 10 visitors or less.

- Residents in a red or purple county, as designated by the Ohio Public Health Advisory System, should limit hosting or attending gatherings of any size.
- Wear a mask at all times at gatherings and maintain physical distance.
- Use take out, outdoor dining, or indoor dining only when strict social distancing can be maintained.
- Take extra precautions if you go to bars or nightclubs, where use of masks typically is inconsistent and drinking alcohol can lead to less social distancing.
- Protect anyone with serious medical conditions at home by social distancing at home, wearing a mask, and using high levels of personal hygiene.
- High-risk individuals should take extra precautions to limit the number of people they interact with.
- Make the group of people you interact with most often as small as possible and make sure that they are taking appropriate COVID-19 precautions – even if you are just gathering with family friends or neighbors at your home.

CURRENT COVID-19 DATA

There are 89,626 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 3,442 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 10,678 people have been hospitalized, including 2,534 admissions to intensive care units. In-depth data can be accessed by visiting coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Video of today's full update, including versions with foreign language translation, can be viewed on the [Ohio Channel's YouTube page](#).

For more information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.