



# COVID-19 Update: Eight Counties Increase to Red Alert Level Three, Importance of Self-Quarantines, Broadband Expansion

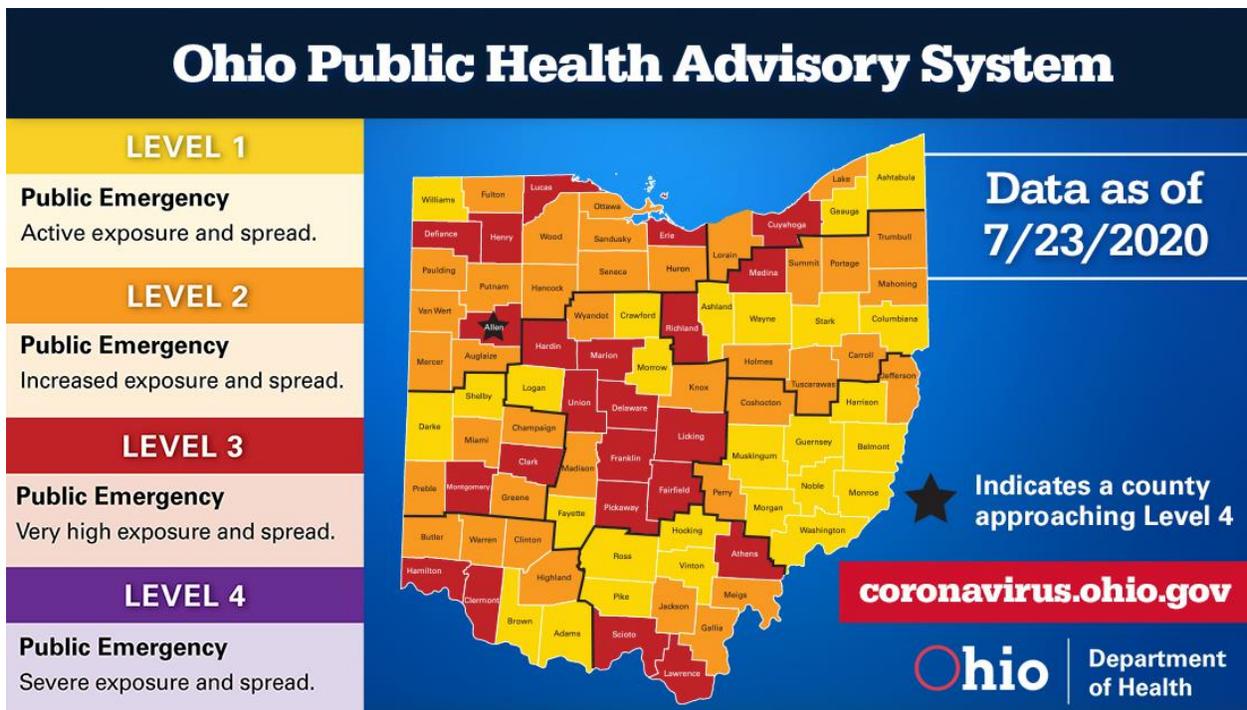
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
July 23, 2020

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

### UPDATED COUNTY RISK LEVELS

Governor DeWine announced today that new public health data has led the Ohio Department of Health to designate 23 counties as being in a Red Alert Level 3 Public Emergency as defined by the [Ohio Public Health Advisory System](#).



Upgraded to Level 3:	Continuing at Level 3:	Downgraded to Level 2:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark</li> <li>• Defiance</li> <li>• Erie</li> <li>• Hardin</li> <li>• Henry</li> <li>• Lawrence</li> <li>• Marion</li> <li>• Medina</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Athens</li> <li>• Allen*</li> <li>• Clermont</li> <li>• Cuyahoga</li> <li>• Delaware</li> <li>• Fairfield</li> <li>• Franklin</li> <li>• Hamilton</li> <li>• Licking</li> <li>• Lucas</li> <li>• Montgomery</li> <li>• Pickaway</li> <li>• Richland</li> <li>• Scioto</li> <li>• Union</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Butler</li> <li>• Lorain</li> <li>• Summit</li> <li>• Wood</li> </ul>

Allen County is also on Ohio's Watch List because it is closely nearing Purple Alert Level 4.

Franklin and Licking counties, despite meeting fewer indicators, remain at Red Alert Level 3 due to meeting the CDC guidelines for high incidence of COVID-19.

Butler, Lorain, Summit, and Wood counties were downgraded to Orange Alert Level 2, however, these counties remain at the CDC definition of moderately high incidence of COVID-19. Both Wood and Butler counties nearly meet the definition of high incidence.

"Overall, the downgrade in the risk levels in these four counties tells us that the measures to mitigate COVID-19 spread in red counties - including increased diligence in social distancing, wearing masks, washing hands frequently, and reducing interactions with others outside your household - may be helping to slow the spread in these counties," said Governor DeWine. "We are cautiously optimistic about this, but these are still high levels of spread, and citizens across Ohio must continue to be vigilant."

Detailed information on each Red Alert Level 3 county can be found 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](#).

Ohio's statewide mask order **goes into effect at 6:00 tonight**.

## **IMPORTANCE OF SELF-QUARANTINES**

Following an outbreak at an Ohio long-term care facility in which more than two dozen residents and staff tested positive for COVID-19, Governor DeWine continued to encourage Ohioans to self-quarantine for 14-days after traveling to [high-risk areas](#).

Contact tracing found that the long-term care facility's outbreak occurred due to a group of people who traveled to a high-risk area outside of Ohio and became sick upon return. Members of the group did not isolate and spread the virus into the nursing facility.

"When we look at the way this virus is progressing, we have to do everything we can to stop it in its tracks, and that may mean deferring a vacation so you're not putting yourself or your friends and family at risk," said Governor DeWine. "This may mean that you need to stay home from work, but these are critical sacrifices that we are calling on all Ohioans to make when necessary."

## **BROADBAND EXPANSION**

Lt. Governor Jon Husted today announced the next steps in OhioBroadband's plans to expand broadband access across the state.

In an effort to provide schools with the ability to search, review and compare prices for purchasing hotspots and equipment, a [Request for Information \(RFI\)](#) will be issued to internet providers for everything from hotspots to laptops to tablets.

Respondents to the RFI will need to provide the specific equipment they have available, number of units available, price, and amount of time it would take to implement an order. This RFI will be specific to K-12 plans and will be housed in a single location, giving every school district a chance to compare what is available and make the best decision for their district and their students.

Additionally, pending upcoming Controlling Board approval, schools can apply for a dollar to dollar matching grant program with the state for hotspots, in-home internet, and internet-enabled devices to students. This funding will be facilitated through the federal CARES Act and will total \$50 million. Schools will have the flexibility to use the funding through a connectivity plan that makes the most sense for their student population and district.

The Lt. Governor also announced the launch of a new [E-Permitting system](#) through InnovateOhio and the Ohio Department of Transportation. The new system fulfills a goal outlined in the December 2019, [Ohio Broadband Strategy](#), and replaces a paper-only right-of-way permitting system with an online process that is more convenient for permit requesters and is expected to reallocate 24,000 hours of labor per year.

## **CURRENT COVID-19 DATA**

There are 80,186 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 3,256 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 9,968 people have been hospitalized, including 2,403 admissions to intensive care units. In-depth data can be accessed by visiting [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://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](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov) or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.