



MIKE DEWINE

GOVERNOR OF OHIO

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March 28, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Through: James K. Joseph, Regional Administrator
FEMA Region V
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR §206.36, I request that you declare a major disaster for the State of Ohio as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic from January 20, 2020 and ongoing. The attached OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13 and this letter, demonstrate that the events of Coronavirus Pandemic have resulted in a disaster of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capability of the State of Ohio and affected local governments, and that federal assistance under the Stafford Act is necessary to supplement the efforts and available resources of the state, local governments, disaster relief organizations, and compensation by insurance for disaster-related losses.

In late January 2020, the Butler County Emergency Operations Center activated due to possible Coronavirus cases at the University of Miami in Oxford Ohio. The Ohio Department of Health and other organizations had already been monitoring the worldwide impacts of the virus. Also, in late January 2020, the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA) Watch Office issued its first steady state advisory in order to keep partners advised of the worldwide activities and impacts of the virus.

In early February, the first cases of the coronavirus were confirmed in the United States. Ohio confirmed its first case on March 9, 2020. Below are actions taken thus far by me and other state officials to mitigate the spread of the virus throughout Ohio's population.

- January 23, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Journal Entry making COVID-19 a Class A reportable disease in Ohio,
- January 28, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health hosted the first statewide call with local health departments and healthcare providers regarding COVID-19,
- January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern,
- January 31, 2020, Health and Human Services Secretary, Alex M. Azar II, declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19,

- February 1, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a statewide Health Alert Network to provide local health departments and healthcare providers with updated guidance for COVID-19 and revised Person Under Investigation (PUI) criteria,
- February 3, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health trained- over 140 personnel to staff a call center for COVID-19, in the event it was needed,
- February 5, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health began updating and notifying the media of the number of PUIs in Ohio every Tuesday and Thursday,
- February 6, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health updated all agency assistant directors and chiefs of staff on COVID-19 preparedness and status during the Governor's cabinet meeting,
- February 7, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency met to conduct advance planning for COVID-19,
- February 13, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health conducted a Pandemic Tabletop Exercise with State agencies to review responsive actions should there be a pandemic in Ohio,
- February 14, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health held a conference call with health professionals across the state. The purpose of the call was to inform and engage the healthcare community in Ohio. Presentations were provided by the Department of Health, Hamilton County Public Health, and the Ohio State University,
- February 27, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency briefed the directors of State agencies during the Governor's cabinet meeting regarding preparedness and the potential activation of the Emergency Operations Center,
- February 28, 2020, the "Governor DeWine, Health Director Update COVID-19 Prevention and Preparedness Plan" was sent to a broad range of associations representing healthcare, dental, long-term care, K-12 schools, colleges and universities, business, public transit, faith-based organizations, non-profit organizations, and local governments,
- Late February 2020, in conjunction with the City of Columbus, the Director of the Ohio Department of Health cancelled a significant portion of the Arnold Classic,
- March 2, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health activated a Joint Information Center to coordinate COVID-19 communications,
- March 5, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health hosted the Governor's Summit on COVID-19 Preparedness, a meeting with the Governor, cabinet agency directors, local health department commissioners, and their staff,
- March 6, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health opened a call center to answer questions from the public regarding COVID-19,
- March 9, 2020, testing by the Department of Health confirmed that three (3) patients were positive for COVID-19 in the State of Ohio, creating a potentially dangerous condition which may affect the health, safety and welfare of citizens of Ohio, and
- March 9, 2020, the Ohio Emergency Management Agency activated the Emergency Operations Center,
- March 10, 2020, I recommended during my daily press conference that large indoor gatherings should be limited,
- March 12, 2020, the Director of the Ohio Department of Health ordered all K-12 schools to close by Monday March 16, 2020,
- March 12, 2020, the Director of the Ohio Department of Health banned mass gatherings of 100 or more,

- March 15, 2020, the Director of the Ohio Department of Health ordered bars and restaurants to close with the exception of drive-thrus and delivery,
- March 16, 2020, the Director of the Ohio Department of Health ordered the primary election polls closed as a health emergency,
- March 17, 2020, elective surgeries were postponed at Ohio's hospitals,
- March 18, 2020, additional temporary business closures were announced,
- March 19, 2020, I activated 300 members of the Ohio National Guard to assist in transporting, packaging, and distributing food in coordination with the Department of Job and Family Services and the Ohio Association of Foodbanks, and
- March 22, 2020, the Director of Health issued a stay at home order, effective until April 6, 2020.

On March 9, 2020, I issued an emergency proclamation for all 88 counties in Ohio. With this proclamation, I requested that the Department of Administrative Services and other departments and agencies of the state to suspend purchasing and contracting requirements contained in Chapters 125 and 153 of the Ohio Revised Code. I also ordered the Department of Health to create and require the use of diagnostic and treatment guidelines and provide those guidelines to health care providers, institutions and providers. I also ordered the Department of Health to issue guidelines for private businesses regarding appropriate work and travel restrictions, if necessary. Finally, state agencies were directed to develop and implement procedures, including suspending or adopting temporary rules with an agency's authority, consistent with recommendations from the Department of Health designed to prevent or alleviate the public health threat. This emergency proclamation remains in effect as state agencies continue to respond to this event.

There is widespread local response in the state. As of this request, 70 local emergency operations centers are open, and 37 counties have issued local declarations. Over 200 missions have been submitted to the State Emergency Operations Center, most of those focused on logistical needs like PPE, sanitizers, etc. Due to short supplies, a significant number of these missions are pending assignment to emergency support function partners.

In response to this incident, state agencies have worked within their authorities to try to address the economic impacts of the pandemic. For example, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) has relaxed requirements for receiving unemployment. However, Disaster Unemployment Assistance provided by ODJFS does not provide coverage to those that are self-employed, so there is a gap that DUA could fill. Also, the Crisis Counseling program could supplement the local and state resources being provided in response to this incident that cannot be triggered without a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration.

Voluntary Organizations

Emergency Support Function 6 (Mass Care) is actively working with stakeholders on a Quarantine Workgroup and a Homeless Workgroup. Both groups are conducting advanced planning activities as the impacts of the virus spread throughout the state. The traditional roles of voluntary organizations to provide congregate shelter and feeding has instead become a role of getting needed supplies to those needing food, medical provisions, etc. to home bound care. These efforts, required as a result of the need for social distancing, will quickly diminish local and voluntary resources.

Economics

On March 16, 2020, I requested a declaration for the Economic Disaster Loan Program from the Small Business Administration. The declaration was issued on March 19, 2020 and is providing much needed support to small business and non-profit organizations. However, a major disaster declaration would also provide assistance to agricultural business through the Farm Services Agency.

Health and Social Services

A major disaster designation could also trigger assistance from other sources such as Disaster Assistance for State Units on Aging in Natural Disasters Declared by the President from the U.S Administration for Community Living, and Disaster Food Assistance which could be available even if residents are not eligible for “regular” Food Assistance benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Additionally, through their financial emergency preparedness and recovery division HOPE Coalition America (HCA), provides individuals, families and businesses the advice and tools needed to prepare for disasters, as well as free financial information and guidance to those included in a Presidential disaster declaration. HCA provides free services such as insurance claims assistance; support with applying for home loan modifications; assistance with working with creditors; emergency budget and credit management; and financial case management.

Finally, special tax law provisions may help taxpayers and businesses recover financially from the impact of a disaster. With a Presidential disaster declaration, the Internal Revenue Service may grant additional time to file returns and pay taxes, and individuals and businesses can get a faster refund by claiming disaster-related losses on the previous year’s tax return, usually by filing an amended return.

Percentage of the population:	<i>for whom poverty status is determined</i>	<i>already receiving governmental assistance</i>		<i>Pre-disaster unemployment rate</i>	<i>65 years and older</i>	<i>18 years and younger</i>	<i>with a disability</i>	<i>who speak a language other than English</i>
		<i>SNAP</i>	<i>SSI</i>					
National Average	14	12.6	5.4	3.6	14.5	23.1	12.6	8.5
State Average	14.5	14.2	5.7	4.3	15.5	22.8	13.8	7
Adams	23	27	11	10	17	24	21	2
Allen	15	15	6	5	16	23	15	3
Ashland	13	11	4	5	18	23	14	6
Ashtabula	20	20	8	7	18	23	16	7
Athens	31	19	7	7	12	15	16	6
Auglaize	9	8	5	4	17	24	11	2
Belmont	14	14	6	9	19	19	17	2
Brown	16	16	5	7	17	23	17	2

Butler	13	11	4	5	14	24	12	8
Carroll	13	11	6	7	19	21	13	4
Champaign	11	12	6	5	17	23	16	2
Clark	16	19	6	6	18	23	16	4
Clermont	10	9	4	5	15	24	13	3
Clinton	13	15	5	6	16	24	15	2
Columbiana	15	16	6	6	19	21	16	2
Coshocton	16	17	7	7	18	24	15	9
Crawford	15	16	5	6	20	22	17	2
Cuyahoga	18	18	7	5	17	21	15	12
Darke	10	9	6	5	19	24	14	2
Defiance	11	11	5	5	17	23	13	4
Delaware	5	4	2	4	12	27	8	8
Erie	12	14	5	7	20	21	15	3
Fairfield	9	14	5	5	15	24	13	4
Fayette	17	18	8	5	17	24	16	3
Franklin	16	14	5	4	11	24	12	13
Fulton	9	10	4	6	16	24	13	5
Gallia	23	22	8	8	18	23	20	3
Geauga	6	5	3	4	19	24	10	12
Greene	12	9	4	4	16	21	13	6
Guernsey	20	19	8	8	19	23	18	4
Hamilton	16	14	6	4	15	23	13	7
Hancock	12	10	5	4	16	22	8	5
Hardin	17	14	6	5	15	23	14	5
Harrison	17	14	7	8	20	21	17	3
Henry	10	8	4	7	17	24	13	4
Highland	21	20	8	7	17	24	19	2
Hocking	14	21	9	6	18	23	18	1
Holmes	11	6	3	4	13	33	8	47
Huron	14	15	5	9	16	25	13	6
Jackson	20	20	9	9	16	23	19	2
Jefferson	14	19	9	8	20	20	18	2
Knox	14	13	6	5	17	23	13	5
Lake	8	8	4	5	18	21	13	7
Lawrence	19	22	10	7	18	22	22	2
Licking	11	13	5	5	15	24	15	3
Logan	13	13	5	5	17	24	14	5
Lorain	14	13	6	5	17	23	15	8
Lucas	19	20	7	6	15	23	15	7
Madison	10	14	4	4	15	21	16	4
Mahoning	18	19	7	7	20	20	16	6
Marion	16	19	7	5	17	21	20	4
Medina	6	6	3	4	16	23	11	5

Meigs	22	25	10	10	18	22	23	1
Mercer	7	7	5	3	17	26	10	2
Miami	9	9	5	5	18	23	14	3
Monroe	17	14	6	12	22	21	20	3
Montgomery	17	16	7	5	17	22	15	6
Morgan	19	20	9	10	20	22	22	2
Morrow	10	12	5	6	16	25	14	3
Muskingum	16	21	7	7	17	23	16	2
Noble	15	11	9	10	25	18	17	3
Ottawa	10	10	4	9	23	19	16	3
Paulding	10	12	6	5	17	24	17	3
Perry	19	22	9	7	16	24	18	2
Pickaway	12	14	6	5	15	22	15	2
Pike	19	24	12	8	17	24	23	3
Portage	13	12	4	5	15	19	13	5
Preble	12	12	6	5	18	23	7	2
Putnam	8	7	4	4	16	25	11	4
Richland	14	17	6	6	19	22	18	4
Ross	18	21	8	6	15	22	20	2
Sandusky	14	12	6	6	17	23	15	6
Scioto	24	27	12	8	17	22	21	1
Seneca	15	14	5	5	17	22	14	4
Shelby	9	9	5	5	15	26	12	3
Stark	14	14	6	6	18	22	13	4
Summit	13	14	6	5	17	22	13	6
Trumbull	18	14	6	8	20	21	15	5
Tuscarawas	13	13	5	6	18	23	14	7
Union	7	7	4	4	11	25	11	5
Van Wert	11	13	6	4	18	24	15	2
Vinton	21	27	10	9	16	23	20	3
Warren	5	5	3	4	13	26	10	8
Washington	15	14	7	7	20	20	20	2
Wayne	12	11	4	4	17	25	12	11
Williams	14	13	4	4	18	23	14	3
Wood	14	8	4	5	14	21	11	5
Wyandot	10	9	3	4	18	24	14	3

The economic impacts of this incident will be felt for years. However, currently, there are high levels of unemployment due to closed businesses, high rates of loss of revenue to tourism, food services, sporting goods and entertainment. The indefinite closure of businesses proves difficult for owners and employees to gauge the true impacts.

In addition to responding to this event, Ohio is still heavily involved in project formulation for our two 2019 federal disaster declarations and program administration for our 2018 federal declaration. We are also administering eleven state funded grants. Ohio is contributing over \$56 million to these prior disasters, which lessens our ability to respond.

The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in a disaster of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capability of the State of Ohio, affected local governments and voluntary organizations. Therefore, I am requesting all 88 counties in Ohio be included in a major disaster declaration for the Disaster Unemployment Assistance and Crisis Counseling Programs and programs through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Very respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike DeWine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" and last name "DeWine" clearly legible.

Mike DeWine
Governor

Enclosures

OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13

C: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs