



1 EAST MAIN STREET – COURTHOUSE – LOGAN, OHIO 43138

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## EMERGENCY RESOLUTION OF HOCKING COUNTY

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### REGARDING COVID-19

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death, is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which is a new strain of Coronavirus that had not been previously identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person. The virus is spread between individuals who are in close contact with each other (within about six feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It may be possible that individuals can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes.

**WHEREAS**, on January 23, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Journal Entry making COVID-19 a Class A reportable disease in Ohio.

**WHEREAS**, on January 28, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health hosted the first statewide call with local health departments and healthcare providers regarding COVID-19.

**WHEREAS**, on 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.

**WHEREAS**, on January 31, 2020, the Health and Human Services Secretary declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19.

**WHEREAS**, on 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.

**WHEREAS**, on 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.

**WHEREAS**, on February 7, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency met to conduct advance planning for COVID-19.

**WHEREAS**, on 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.

**WHEREAS,** on 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.

**WHEREAS,** on March 6, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health opened a call center to answer questions from the public regarding COVID-19.

**WHEREAS,** on March 9, 2020, testing by the Department of Health confirmed that three (3) patients were positive for COVID-19 in the State of Ohio. This confirms the presence of potentially dangerous condition which may affect the health, safety and welfare of citizens of Ohio.

**WHEREAS,** on March 9, 2020, the Ohio Emergency Management Agency activated the Emergency Operations Center.

**WHEREAS,** on March 9, 2020, the Governor declared a State of Emergency in Executive Order 2020-01D.

**WHEREAS,** on March 11, 2020 the head of the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

**WHEREAS,** on March 11, 2020, testing by the Ohio Department of Health confirmed an additional patient was positive for COVID-19 in the State of Ohio.

**WHEREAS,** on March 12, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order to prohibit mass gatherings in the State of Ohio.

**WHEREAS,** on March 12, 2020, testing by the Ohio Department of Health confirmed one more patient was positive for COVID-19 in the State of Ohio.

**WHEREAS,** on March 13, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued an Amended Director's Order to Limit Access to Ohio's Nursing Homes and Similar Facilities.

**WHEREAS,** on March 13, 2020, the Hocking County Court of Common Pleas journalized orders addressing a citizen's right to have access to the courts during these emergency times in conjunction with the letter distributed by Paul E. Pfeifer, Executive Director, Ohio Judicial Conference.

**WHEREAS,** on March 14, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order to close all K-12 schools in the State of Ohio.

**WHEREAS,** on March 15, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order to limit access to Ohio's jails and detention facilities.

**WHEREAS,** on March 15, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order to limit the sale of food and beverages, liquor, beer and wine to carry-out and delivery only.

**WHEREAS,** on March 15, 2020, the CDC issued Interim Guidance for mass gatherings or large community events, stating that such events that consist of 50 or more people should be cancelled or postponed.

**WHEREAS**, on March 15, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director’s Order closing polling stations.

**WHEREAS**, on March 16, 2020, Ohio has confirmed 50 cases of COVID-19 in 13 counties throughout the state and the reported numbers by the Ohio Department of Health continue to rise daily.

**WHEREAS**, on March 17, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director’s order for the Management of Non-essential Surgeries and Procedures throughout Ohio.

**WHEREAS**, multiple areas of the United States and Ohio are experiencing “community spread” of the virus that causes COVID-19. Community spread, defined as the transmission of all illness for which source is unknown, means that isolation of known areas of infection is no longer enough to control spread.

**WHEREAS**, the CDC reports that people are most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest) however some spread might be possible before people show symptoms although that is not the main way the virus spreads.

**WHEREAS**, previously studied human coronaviruses can survive on paper, wood, glass, plastic for up to 4-5 days. Director of Health Executive Order dated March 15, 2020.

**WHEREAS**, gatherings increase the risk of community transmission of the virus COVID-19.

**WHEREAS**, many offices in the Hocking County Courthouse, Hall of Justice and Annex that are open to the public are contained in small spaces.

**WHEREAS**, in the event of continued community spread, each office in Hocking County including the court offices, have very few staff persons to meet the needs of the public.

**WHEREAS**, it has been urged by the Ohio Director of Health that congregating in public spaces is discouraged.

**WHEREAS**, accordingly, the Hocking County Board of Commissioners desire to minimize the risk of community spread to public employees and the public while at the same time maximizing the ability of elected officials to complete their statutory duties and allow the public to have access to government functions including the courts.

**WHEREAS**, accordingly, the Hocking County Board of Commissioners desire to take immediate emergency action to promote the health and safety of public employees and the public in general.

**WHEREAS**, accordingly, the Hocking County Board of Commissioners have heard input from office holders, the Courts, the Department of Health, legal counsel related to the foregoing matters and the public regarding the operations of the Hocking County Courthouse.

**WHEREAS**, accordingly, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Sections 305.16, 307.01(A), 311.07(A); Ohio Attorney General Opinion 2015-027 issued August 25, 2015; Hocking County Board of Commissioners have a duty to provide and maintain a courthouse and to keep a courthouse safe.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners is issuing the following mandates:

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners is asking each elected official to establish rules for their own offices regarding social distancing, sanitizing practices, etc. in light of the directives that have been provided by the Hocking County Health Department regarding precautionary measures as each office is unique in its size and layout.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners is recommending, based on a joint recommendation from the Hocking County Sheriff and Hocking County Health Commissioner, that each office holder to limit the **maximum members of the public to one (1) individual at a time**, and that members of the public be allowed admittance to the office **by appointment only**.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners urges each member of the public to contact a department by telephone or electronic means **prior** to coming to the office as many offices have the ability to provide services online, by telephone or mail or other means, and, to the extent possible, for the foreseeable future, to limit in-person transactions to those **only** that are necessary.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners is directing that the only person to enter the building is the person in need of a particular service. This would exclude guests of the person doing business including their family members and children.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners is asking each elected official to implement practices for its employees and visitors regarding the practice of social distancing, sanitizing procedures, etc.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners support the right of the Sheriff and his deputies to deny access to the building of any person who does not meet the screening criteria i.e. having a fever or presenting with symptoms, etc.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners do not intend by these rules to restrict the ability of an office holder to further limit their hours, traffic to their office, etc. The Hocking County Board of Commissioners only requests that if an office holder does limit their office hours further or close entirely that they would notify the Commissioners' Office so that they may advise the Courthouse Security Deputy Sheriff and further restrict access to that office and provide notice to the public as they enter the building.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners encourages each office holder to comply with any precautionary measures provided by the Hocking County Department of Health.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners urges any visiting member of the public to go directly to the office that is the subject of their business and not to linger in offices or other common spaces so that the public can continue to access the building to the extent possible.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners desires to promote the health and safety of public employees while acknowledging that auditing standards, rules regarding use of public dollars, etc. continue to exist. Therefore, the Board hereby grants each office holder the authority to determine how their employees will be paid until further resolution of the Commissioners. The Commissioners desire each office holder to be able to promote the health and safety and continuity of the office holders' offices and therefore find it necessary, within set budgets, to make decisions about an employee's use of vacation, sick time, etc. If the office holder makes such decisions, the Commissioners hereby request that they adopt a written policy and provide a copy of said policy to the Auditor with their payroll documents.


**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hocking County Board of Commissioners continues to monitor this situation daily and to receive information daily and therefore advises each office holder and the public that access may need to be further restricted in the coming days.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its execution and is implemented as an emergency resolution pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code.

**RESOLVED** this 19<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
HOCKING COUNTY, OHIO**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary Waugh, President

  
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Jeff Dickerson, Vice President

  
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Sandra Ogle, Commissioner