FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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COVID-19 Update: Safety Checks, Twin Valley Update, Veterans Home Update

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

BAR/RESTAURANT SAFETY CHECKS:

Governor DeWine announced today that he is assembling an enforcement team to ensure that bars and restaurants are operating safely under the Responsible RestartOhio plan.

Bars and restaurants reopened to patrons for outdoor dining on Friday. Dine-in service is scheduled to resume on May 21.

"We know that many Ohio bars and restaurants are working very hard to comply with the safety guidelines, and I want to commend them for doing that," said Governor DeWine. "We did, however, receive several very troubling reports this weekend of bars and restaurants that were not complying with proper social distancing guidelines. We cannot allow the few bad actors to threaten the potential closure of other restaurants and bars."

The enforcement team will operate as part of the Ohio Department of Safety's Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) and will conduct safety compliance checks in crowded bars and restaurants. Businesses found violating the Stay Safe Ohio order will receive administrative citations that could result in the revocation of liquor licenses. The OIU team will also work with municipal prosecutors to take potential criminal actions against business owners who do not follow the order, which includes the requirement that patrons remain seated while eating/drinking and that parties stay six feet apart.

TWIN VALLEY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH HOSPITAL UPDATE:

Three patients at Twin Valley Behavioral Health Hospital in Columbus have tested positive for COVID-19. In response, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services is working with The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center to test all patients in the 25-person unit.

Patients in the unit are currently quarantined, and those who test positive are being isolated to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In addition, all patients in the hospital are screened multiple times a day and staff members are screened at the beginning of their shifts.

All impacted staff have been notified, are actively being monitored for symptoms, and are urged to be tested. Staff working in this unit are now using full PPE, including masks, gowns, gloves, shoe covers, and face shields.

The hospital has stopped taking new civil admissions and is working with Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Boards in impacted counties and local psychiatric hospitals in Franklin County to divert those patients there.

Updates on the status of COVID-19 at the state's behavioral health hospitals are available at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

OHIO VETERANS HOMES UPDATE:

Governor DeWine announced today that he ordered mass testing to take place at Ohio's two state nursing home facilities for veterans.

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services (OVS) operates nursing homes in Sandusky and Georgetown. Last week, several residents at the Sandusky facility were confirmed positive for COVID-19 which led to the facility-wide testing.

Nearly everyone in both facilities - more than 700 staff members and 500 nursing home residents - were tested last week and over the weekend. Testing at Sandusky's independent living facility was completed today.

As of today, 24 nursing home residents and three staff members in the Sandusky home have tested positive. An additional staff member tested positive in mid-April. The Georgetown location has had zero positive test results. A total of 508 staff and residents have tested negative and the remaining test results are pending.

Data on the status of COVID-19 in the OVS nursing homes is updated at approximately 4:00 p.m. each day at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

CURRENT OHIO DATA:

There are 28,454 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 1,657 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 4,998 people have been hospitalized, including 1,328 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 closed captioning, 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.

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