



Seneca County EMA Situation Report #133
COVID-19 Response
March 4th, 2021 (published March 5th)
County EOC Status: Monitoring
State EOC: Partially Activated

Distribution List: Villages, Townships, Seneca County Elected Officials, City of Tiffin Elected Officials, City of Fostoria Elected Officials, Fire Chiefs, Law Enforcement, Seneca County Education Contacts and LEPC/HS and Mental Health Recovery Services

Ohio

Confirmed Cases: 833,772 (+2,443 in the last 2 days)
Probable: 140,708
Confirmed Ohio Resident deaths: 16,750*
Deaths in Ohio: 17,189*

***Only verified mortality data is listed. This information is not available daily, and is updated approximately twice per week as data is received.**

Seneca County: LEVEL 3 (High Incidence) PUBLIC EMERGENCY [Ohio's Public Health Advisory System](#)
Metrics (as of 03/03)

Total Cases: 4,802 (+47)
Active Cases: 34 (-44)
Deaths: 128 (+/-0)
Recovered: 4,344 (+44)
Hospitalized: 2 (+/-0)

Resources:

Ohio ODH: coronavirus.ohio.gov

CDC: [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

Seneca County General Health District: senecahealthdistrict.org

Executive Summary

GOVERNOR: In a statewide address to Ohioans Thursday evening, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine urged Ohioans to remain committed to following COVID-19 safety practices as Ohio cases trend downward, and detailed the measurement needed to lift all Ohio Department of Health orders.

"This has been a very tough year for Ohioans, yet we did what Ohioans always do-- we rallied together to protect the most vulnerable," said Governor DeWine. "The end of our fight is now in view, but we must continue pressing forward. We can set realistic goals that we are within reach for lifting health orders."

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Governor DeWine announced that when Ohio reaches 50 cases per 100,000 people for two weeks, all health orders will be lifted. Cases per 100,000 people for a two-week period is a measurement that Governor DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health have utilized since early in the pandemic.

Governor DeWine also detailed the success that Ohio has seen recently in the COVID-19 pandemic. Ohio's stay-at-home order and curfew have been lifted, and restaurants, bars and gyms are open. In February, Ohio vaccinated over 200,000 educators for students to return to in-person learning. As of today, nearly 95 percent of Ohio's K-12 students have returned to school for in-person learning.

TRAVEL ADVISORY: There are five states on the latest Ohio travel advisory, which are the same five from last week. Ohio recommends against traveling to the following states: South Dakota; Kansas; Alabama; Iowa; and Idaho.

TESTING LOCATIONS: DeWine has started a walk-up/drive-up testing initiative with the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers and their affiliate members and the Ohio National Guard. These sites will also include other local community-based organizations i.e., faith-based organizations, community centers, food pantries, etc.

Testing for this initiative will be available for individuals with or without symptoms. The test has no out-of-pocket cost to the patient and individuals of any age are able to access the test. Minors will need signed consent of a parent/guardian.

For an exhaustive list of all the locations in the state that are offering testing, [click here](#).

Seneca County Commissioners: www.senecacountyohio.gov

The Seneca County Board of Commissioners presented a 2020 year in review report Thursday morning. The report focused on the board's major themes of the year, the "Three C's," which are continuity, collaboration and communication. Unfortunately, a fourth C emerged and became a defining factor ... COVID-19.

The commissioners admitted that 2020 was a challenging year, but each said they believe the county overcame adversity and celebrated many successes.

During the PowerPoint presentation, the commissioners provided examples of continuity, collaboration and communication, and also spoke about why these themes were important, especially during a global pandemic.

Continuity is important because there are talented, hard-working people in the right positions across the county. Examples of continuity included a focus by the board on fiscal responsibility and investment in vital county services. When the commissioners added \$125,000 to the Budget Stabilization Fund and approved a balanced budget at the end of the year, they felt they had continued to practice fiscal responsibility. Another example of continuity was the sustained focus on planning, including the approval of the Facilities Master Plan and the Countywide Comprehensive Plan last year.

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Collaboration was displayed through creating a business-friendly environment and by working with businesses, county agencies and community organizations. The board also practiced collaboration by working closely with state and federal legislators to find opportunities to improve Seneca County.

In February, the board approved local tax incentives to facilitate a \$38 million expansion project for Church and Dwight. The board also continued its work with Tiffin-Seneca Economic Partnership and Fostoria Economic Development Corp. to continue to incentivize economic growth.

In terms of legislative advocacy, close work with then-State Rep. Bill Reineke helped lead to \$200,000 in funding for the Opportunity Park Project, which will lead to improvements at the county's only park solely for those with developmental disabilities.

The commissioners also enjoyed countless successes by working with other county agencies, including with the Seneca County Auditor's Office and Seneca County Dog Warden's Office to run another successful dog picture coloring contest.

As for communication, the commissioners stressed the importance of using their platform to amplify the voices of residents in the community. One example was when the commissioners approved a resolution formalizing their support of the Second Amendment at the urging of a group from Ohio Stands United. The commissioners also celebrated the achievements of individuals and organizations and used all means necessary to be as transparent and accessible as possible.

The three major themes became even more critical in the times of COVID-19, as the board worked to make careful budgetary decisions and manage about \$3.5 million of federal CARES Act funding. The board partnered with five local agencies to distribute \$1.25 million to assist residents, small businesses and nonprofits. Nearly 200 small businesses and 493 households received assistance through the county program. For a more comprehensive 2020 review, visit the county's website:

<https://senecacountyohio.gov/2020-year-in-review-report/>

In other action, the commissioners heard from Seneca County Opportunity Center individuals and personnel and approved a proclamation recognizing March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

The Opportunity Center's motto for this year is "Seneca County Strong" as officials work through the challenges of COVID-19 to provide important services to Opportunity Center individuals.

Commissioner Mike Kerschner thanked everyone from the center for joining the meeting.

"We will be there to support you whenever we can," he said.

To learn more about upcoming Opportunity Center events, including a virtual scavenger hunt, visit the Seneca County Board of DD-Seneca County Opportunity Center page on Facebook, or this link to join the scavenger hunt: <https://www.senecadd.org/servicesquote>.

After an executive session, the commissioners agreed to hire Echo Unit paramedic Mary Zimmerman as a full-time medic and agreed to add 3 percent to the salary/wage lines of county employees. With the increase, the commissioners are recommending departments give 1 percent as a bonus, and 2 percent as a raise.

All new business from the agenda was approved.



Seneca County General Health District: www.senecahealthdept.org

Seneca County Health Commissioner Beth Schweitzer and Emergency Management Agency Director John Spahr updated the public Thursday afternoon during a press conference about COVID-19 and vaccination efforts.

Schweitzer said as of 6 p.m. Wednesday, the county has had 4827 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 55 of them being active. She said only three people are currently hospitalized and there have been a total of 128 deaths.

Schweitzer said that vaccination efforts continue, not only by the Seneca County General Health District, but by several other entities including Tiffin and Fostoria Kroger, Mercy Health – Tiffin Hospital and Community Health Services Tiffin and Fostoria.

As of Thursday, the health department had administered the vaccine to more than 3,600 people, with about 2,000 who received both shots and are fully vaccinated.

According to data from the Ohio Department of Health, as of Thursday, about 7,781 (14.1% of the population) had been vaccinated in Seneca County. According to the same source, about 4,185 (7.6%) had received both doses and are fully vaccinated.

Schweitzer said several community partners are working to contact people via text message to remind them that they are on the waiting list for the vaccine, and to ask them to respond if they have already received it from another source.

If you are not sure if you signed up yet or wish to join the waiting list, please use this [link](#) to register. Once on the website, you can select the eligible group you are in, and register again.

Schweitzer said the biggest news of the week is the arrival of a third approved vaccine, which is being produced by Johnson and Johnson.

“All providers now may be receiving any one of the three different vaccines and perhaps several of them at a time,” she said. “As production of all three of these increases, it means we will be able to get more vaccine doses out to a larger pool of people and that, of course, is our goal.”

Schweitzer stressed the effectiveness of all three vaccines and urged people to sign up to receive the vaccine if they are in an eligible group.

Schweitzer said the J&J vaccine requires just one shot, instead of two and it includes an 86% effectiveness rate in preventing severe illness and death from COVID-19.

Spahr reminded viewers that Thursday marked the opening of registration for those in Phase 1C and Phase 2 of the state’s plan. This includes those who are 60+, and those who work in law enforcement, funeral services, childcare services and individuals who are living with Type 1 Diabetes, are pregnant or are living with ALS.

Spahr said that just because registration was open, doesn’t mean that people will receive their vaccine this week, but it does ensure their place in line.

Schweitzer encouraged those who want to receive the vaccine to sign up in as many places as possible, and to get the vaccine as soon as they can.

“The most important message I can convey is that you simply get vaccinated at the first possible opportunity,” she said. “That is what is going to help us achieve the herd immunity that needs to happen for us to get back to a state of normalcy.”

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Spahr said Walmart in Tiffin had just announced that it would soon offer vaccination appointments, joining the health department, Tiffin and Fostoria Kroger, Tiffin and Fostoria Community Health Services and Mercy Health – Tiffin Hospital in providing the vaccine.

Schweitzer said because of a lack of vaccine supply in the past couple of months, the county is still working through the previous phases, vaccinating those who are in the 75+ and 65+ list.

County officials are still preaching patience to those who are on the waiting list.

“There are many different entities in our community working together to get more vaccine to our community in a timely manner,” Schweitzer said. “You must remember that this pandemic is new for almost everyone and although plans for mass vaccination have been in place, you can’t know all the different unexpected situations that arise that create the need to be flexible or to change plans to react in a more effective and efficient way. What I do know, is that it takes a community to make these vaccination processes occur and we can’t thank our partners and volunteers for all they are doing for us and for the community.”

You can view the press conference video [here](#).

Emergency Management Agency senecacountyema.org

Phase 1C (Law Enforcement, Fire fighters, Corrections officers, Funeral home personnel and Childcare services) as well as Phase 2 (Ohioans age 60+) can begin registration for the vaccine starting March 4th. The schedules by week are available at <https://senecacountyema.org/covid-19/vaccination-information> or you can see them in the attachments to the email.

Sign up for Vaccination Notifications on Seneca County WENS [here](#).

You can register online at senecahealthdept.org, senecacountyema.org, [Walmart](#) and [Kroger](#). You can call the Health department to register as well as Mercy Hospital in Tiffin or at Tiffin Community Health center or Community Health Fostoria.

What do you do if you have symptoms of COVID? Contact your doctor. If you don’t have a doctor, but have insurance, check to see if your insurance has tele-health and see a doctor. If your doctor does not recommend a COVID test but you need one, call the Tiffin Community Health Center, 419.455.8140 and make an appointment.

PCR swab tests may take 4-6 days to return results as they must be sent to a lab and be cultured to test for the virus. Rapid tests have a much shorter return time, but are in short supply. No test is 100% accurate. The test relies on, among other things, the amount of virus in your system at the time of the test. Tests are available at the following locations:

PCR (4-6 day return):

Mercy Health-Tiffin Hospital (with Drs. order)

ProMedica Hospital (with Drs. order)

Tiffin Community Health Center (Tele-health or Dr. on site)

Rapid Test (6-8 hour return):

Urgent Care (Tele-health or Dr. onsite)

CVS

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The Public Health Advisory System shows that Seneca County has met 5 of the 7 indicators needed to change the level. Wearing a mask, washing your hands and/or using hand sanitizer and not congregating with friends or family not living in your household is the best way to stem the tide of this virus. This is inconvenient and difficult, but necessary.

The EMA will continue to update our partners on the numbers twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays. Please continue to send your information to be shared with our partners to jspahr@senecacountyohio.gov.

Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio: hcno.org

Seneca County Regional Planning: senecarpc.org

Red Cross: www.redcross.org

For a limited time, your blood donation will include an antibody test with results returned to you through your Red Cross Donor App. Go to redcrossblood.org for more information.

Blood Collection Screeners Needed: COVID-19 has disrupted our daily lives, but the need for lifesaving blood hasn't changed. To help protect everyone's safety, we have a need for Donor Screener volunteers (ages 18+) to take the temperatures of blood donors entering American Red Cross blood drives or donation centers.

In this volunteer position you can volunteer just once or multiple times, the choice is yours!

Apply now at www.redcross.org/volunteer

For more information or questions, please contact Melanie Collins at Melanie.Collins4@redcross.org or 330-204-6615.

Mental Health and Recovery Board of Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot Counties: www.mhrsbssw.org

City of Tiffin: www.tiffinohio.gov

Job and Family Services: <https://djfs.co.seneca.oh.us/>

Tiffin-Seneca Public Library: <http://tiffinsenecalibrary.org>

Tiffin-Seneca Economic Partnership: <https://senecasuccess.wordpress.com/tag/tsep/>

This situational report will be sent around 4 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays and as needed on other weekdays and weekends.

If you wish to update or add information to this report, please send it to the EMA at jspahr@senecacountyohio.gov by 2:30 p.m. each publishing day.

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