



**Seneca County EMA Situation Report #86**  
**COVID-19 Response**  
**September 17th, 2020**  
**County EOC Status: Monitoring**  
**State EOC: 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: 131,235 (+2,766 in the last 72 hours)**  
**Probable: 7,584**  
**Confirmed Deaths: 4,282**  
**Probable Deaths: 298**

**Seneca County: LEVEL 1 PUBLIC EMERGENCY [Ohio's Public Health Advisory System](#) NEW**

**Metrics (as of 9/17)**

**Total Cases: 449 (+25)**  
**Active Cases: 51 (+22)**  
**Deaths: 15 (+1)**  
**Recovered: 383 (+2)**  
**Hospitalized: 4 (+/-0)**

**Resources:**

**Ohio ODH: [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov)**

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

**Seneca County General Health District: [senecahealthdistrict.org](https://senecahealthdistrict.org)**

**Executive Summary**

**GOVERNOR: DeWine** today announced that the retroactive \$300 per week unemployment payments that was approved by the federal government last month is now starting to be distributed to Ohioans who have been on unemployment August 1 – September 5.

The latest Public Safety Alert System Map was released today in which Summit County has been reduced from red to yellow, however Portage County has increased to red. Previously at the red level last week, Preble County has been downgraded to orange.

DeWine also announced today that the dashboard showing school districts' positivity numbers is now live on the ODH Coronavirus portal. Please find both the Public Safety Alert Map and the School Districts' positivity map attached to the email.

Halloween was also a topic of discussion during today's press conference as many parents have inquired about what restrictions will be in place for this year's celebrations. DeWine said his office will

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be publishing recommendations, however he warned that events like hayrides and haunted houses could be more problematic than trick-or-treat.

**Seneca County Commissioners:** [www.senecacountyohio.gov](http://www.senecacountyohio.gov)

The Seneca County Board of Commissioners heard from Richland County Building Department Director Kara Russell Thursday morning about the commercial permitting process. The building department handles commercial permitting in Seneca County.

The discussion was brought about after the commissioners had received some feedback from builders and contractors in the county that the department sometimes had lengthy delays during the permitting process.

Russell said she was also disappointed with the delays but attributed it to the lack of having another certified plan examiner on staff. She said her previous plan examiner died in January. She said she has been trying to add a new examiner, but said it was difficult because there is a small number of people with that certification in the area.

Russell said when the office was fully staffed, plan review times were about 7-14 days. Right now, these reviews can take as long as the 30-day state-required timeline. She said she is not happy with the slowdowns and is working to improve.

Lenny Clouse, owner of Clouse Construction, expressed his disappointment with the delays, citing a financial cost to businesses as well as a difficult situation for employees. The commissioners plan to seek feedback from other contractors who work in Seneca County and will consider their options in terms of commercial permitting.

In other business, County Administrator Stacy Wilson said the county's sales tax report for September, which reflects some of June and most of July, was the highest month on record at \$997,208.42. The figure is a 22.8-percent increase from the amount collected in September 2019. The August and September reports were very positive, after the county saw 16- and 9-percent decreases in June and July compared to 2019. The commissioners are cautiously optimistic about the numbers, but some officials believe there could still be a downturn to future sales tax numbers, as the additional \$600 in federal unemployment assistance expired July 31. The unemployment figure for the county was still at 8.1 percent in July, compared to 4.6 percent in July 2019.

The board also approved \$923.31 of CARES Act funds for county projects brought about by the COVID-19 health crisis. The county has now spent about \$384,927.14 of the money. Wilson said there is about \$300,000 more within the auditor's system that has not yet been formalized. She also said some larger requests are being held to see if they are funded through other grants.

In other business, the commissioners voted 2-1 to support of Ohio House Bill 6. HB 6, which was signed into law in July 2019, included funding to help continue operations at Davis Besse and Perry, two nuclear plants in Ohio.

Commissioner Shayne Thomas, who voted against continued support of HB 6 in its current form, said he was concerned with the alleged corruption that occurred during the process of passing HB 6. Former Ohio House Speaker Larry Householder was arrested in July in connection with a \$60 million racketeering conspiracy involving HB 6. Allegedly, Householder helped pass the legislation in exchange for payments.



Commissioner Mike Kerschner and Commissioner Tony Paradiso also denounced the corruption in Columbus but stressed the importance of the bill for the economy in Ottawa County and the surrounding area. The board agreed to add its support to a letter signed by the Ottawa and Lake County Commissioners. You can view that letter [here](#).

That letter states, “While we detest any illegal or unethical activity that may have occurred before, during or after enactment of the legislation, we certainly believed the policy outcomes were of benefit not only to Lake and Ottawa counties, but also to all Ohioans.”

The official stance of the Seneca County Commissioners after today’s 2-1 vote conveys support of HB 6. Kerschner said the only way the board would support an effort to repeal the bill would be if there is an immediate replacement bill that would still protect the nuclear plants.

During new business, the commissioners approved:

- \* A \$15,405.03 supplemental appropriation to the Bulletproof Vest Fund.
- \* A \$1,620 supplemental appropriation to the Victims of Crime Act Expansion Fund.
- \* A \$21,178.82 supplemental appropriation to the Ditch Maintenance Fund.
- \* A \$30,000 supplemental appropriation to the Workforce Investment Act Fund.
- \* A \$48,600 supplemental appropriation to the Victims of Crime Act Expansion Fund.
- \* Authorizing Commissioner Tony Paradiso to participate in the Ohio Public Works Commission State Capital Improvement and/or Local Transportation Improvement Programs and to execute contracts as required for Issue 1 Round 35 Fiscal Year 2022 for Seneca County.
- \* The disposal of unneeded, obsolete or unfit county-owned property, a 2000 GMC Savana, on behalf of CROSSWAEH.
- \* A \$461,000.00 supplemental appropriation to the Coronavirus Relief Fund.

**Seneca County General Health District:** [www.senecahealthdept.org](http://www.senecahealthdept.org)

Seneca County Health Commissioner will produce Facebook Live videos with updates from the Health District. This will occur at 10:30 on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month. Videos will be archived on Facebook and can be viewed live on the Health Department’s and Commissioner’s FB pages.

### **Emergency Management Agency**

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](mailto:jspahr@senecacountyohio.gov).

**Seneca County Regional Planning:** [senecarpc.org](http://senecarpc.org)

**Blood Collection:** [www.redcross.org](http://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](http://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

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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](http://www.redcross.org/volunteer)

For more information or questions, please contact Melanie Collins at [Melanie.Collins4@redcross.org](mailto:Melanie.Collins4@redcross.org) or 330-204-6615.

**Mental Health and Recovery Board of Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot Counties:** [www.mhrsbsw.org](http://www.mhrsbsw.org)

**City of Tiffin:** [www.tiffinohio.gov](http://www.tiffinohio.gov)

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

Ohioans filed 16,294 claims for unemployment compensation last week, according to the Department of Job and Family Services. The total represented a decline of 1,689, or about 9%, from the previous week.

ODJFS reported residents filed 320,532 continued jobless claims last week, which was down 455,770 from the state's peak earlier this year. The agency said it has sent more than \$6.3 billion in unemployment payments to more than 804,000 Ohioans over the last 26 weeks.

The U.S. Department of Labor reported 860,000 new claims were filed nationwide last week, down 33,000 from the previous week.

**Education:** <http://www.ncoesc.org/>

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

**OSS Solid Waste District:** <https://recycleoss.org/>

**Economic Recovery (Seneca County):** <https://www.tiffinchamber.com/coronavirus-resources>

**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](mailto:jspahr@senecacountyohio.gov) by 2:30 p.m. each publishing day.**