Ohio House of Representatives COVID-19 Resource Guide
April 2, 2020

<u>Individuals and Families</u>

<u>Unemployment Compensation</u>
Questions and answers regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19) and the impact on unemployment benefits can be found here: http://jfs.ohio.gov/ouio/CoronavirusAndUI.stm

Filing for Unemployment
- File online unemployment.ohio.gov 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Note that the agency is experiencing slow processing times due to high claims activity.
  Call toll-free 1-877-644-6562 or TTY 1-614-387-8408. Call center hours have been extended to Monday through Friday 7 a.m. - 7 p.m., and Saturdays 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Once your application has been filed
- You will receive further information by mail or e-mail. E-mail will be sent from OJI@odjfs.state.oh.us.
- Your claim will be assigned to a Processing Center, based on the last four digits of your Social Security number. For a list of processing centers by social security number, visit http://jfs.ohio.gov/ouio/claims-processing-center-locations.stm
- If filing online and you need your Personal Identification Number (PIN) reset, please call toll-free 1-866-962-4064.

Helpful Tips
- File online, ideally during off-peak hours.
- If you apply online, and it seems like the little circle is spinning for a long time, please resist the urge to click again. Let it process.
- If you get error messages, try clearing your history/cache.
- Take advantage of the FAQ sheets available at unemployment.ohio.gov. ODJFS also frequently post tips and updates on Facebook and Twitter.
- Visit OhioMeansJobs.com and click on the "Click Here for JOBS" link in the COVID banner. You'll be taken to postings for essential jobs that employers need filled now.
- If you are unemployed because of the pandemic, please enter mass-layoff number 2000180.

- Answer "No" to the question "Have you worked for any other employers in the last 6 weeks besides the one who provided you with this "ID number?"
- If you receive automated notices about any of the following, please ignore them:
  - Work search
  - Training
  - School employment
  - RESEA/UCRS programs
  - Union Verification
  - OhioMeansJobs

• For fastest processing, choose to receive correspondence by email.

• For fastest payment, choose to receive payments via direct deposit.

SNAP/TANF

- To ensure county agencies can address local needs, on March 20th, ODJFS redirected the $10 million that had originally been allocated for TANF Summer Youth Employment and is allowing county JFS agencies to use it for a broadened scope of services. For example, county agencies could provide special pandemic payments to eligible families who are struggling with specific needs.
- Curbside Pickup: Grocery stores and other retailers can now offer online "click and collect" grocery shopping and curbside pickup for families. If grocery stores have wireless mobile point-of-sale (POS) devices, they can swipe recipients' EBT cards at curbside. If they do not have mobile POS devices, recipients still can order food in advance and go into the store to pay and pick up their groceries. Retailers also have the option to process manual vouchers at curbside. Grocers cannot accept the EBT card number over the phone.
- The Families First Act also provides supplemental funding and/or flexibilities for several food assistance programs, including funding for foodbanks and emergency SNAP assistance for households with children who are missing free or reduced-price meals at school because of coronavirus-related school closings.

Child and Adult Protective Services

- With schools and child care closed, many of our most vulnerable children don't have the same safety nets in place to observe and report suspected abuse and neglect.
- If you suspect child abuse, please contact your county public children's services agency, or you can call 855-OH-CHILD.
- We're also working hard to protect our caseworkers o JFS published an FAQ on how county agencies can take steps to protect their front-line workers.
  - For example, caseworkers can now use videoconferencing technology to conduct their monthly safety checks.

- o   In some situations, caseworkers may still need to do a home check, and JFS is exploring ways to help provide county agencies with needed PPE to protect workers.
- We've also ensured that our caseworkers have access to child care
- **APS:** If you believe that an adult age 60 or older has suffered abuse, neglect, or exploitation, call 1-855-OHIO-APS (1-855-644-6277) toll-free 24/7.

Federal Unemployment Compensation Expansion (CARES ACT)

Generally, the CARES Act included provisions that not only expand who is eligible to receive unemployment (self-employed, independent contractors, those with limited work history, and others) but it also included additional money to recipients, and extended the period of time for which an individual could be eligible to receive unemployment compensation.

Please note - ODJFS is still waiting on more guidance from the Federal government on interpretation of several of these provisions, which will directly impact how they will ultimately build and operate these new programs in Ohio - ODJFS recently provided a high-level overview of some of the provisions – the high level overview is below:

<u>Broader Unemployment Eligibility – 1099 and Self-Employed Individuals</u>

The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Program
- Targeted for 1099 tax filers/self-employed workers and individuals ineligible for state unemployment benefits.
- Program is effective from Jan. 27 through Dec. 31.
- Unemployment compensation benefits for eligible individuals under this program are available for no more than 39 weeks.
- The PUA benefit amount will be similar to what traditional Ohioans eligible for unemployment can receive, plus $600 a week**.**

Ohio, just like every other state in the nation, is working to stand up this new program. The exact details of how this program will be implemented and the process for eligible Ohioans to apply and claim benefits is still in the planning stages. We [ODJFS] are awaiting many of the implementation details from the US Dept. of Labor. Once the process is finalized, we [ODJFS] will communicate details with all 1099 filers in Ohio, as well as publicly post.

Increased Payment Amounts for New and Existing Eligible Unemployment Claimants

The Emergency Increase in Unemployment Compensation Benefits Program

- Adds $600 a week to the amount unemployed Ohioans are receiving in unemployment compensation benefits (average benefit in Ohio is around $380 a week).
- This income is disregarded for purposes of the Medicaid and CHIP programs.
- Increased payments (regular unemployment benefit amount plus $600 per week) apply to weeks beginning on the date Ohio signed its agreement with the federal government and ending on or before July 31, 2020.

Extended Unemployment Assistance for Claimants

The Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) program

- Adds up to 13 weeks for those Ohioans who exhaust their unemployment benefits.
- Claimants must be able to work, available for work, and actively seeking work (unless individuals are unable to search for work due to COVID-19).
- The weekly benefit amount is the amount of regular unemployment compensation plus $600 a week. "

The provisions in the CARES Act authorize federal funding/reimbursement for each of the provisions

Federal Funding
- The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Program, the emergency increase in unemployment compensation, and the Pandemic Unemployment Compensation Program (extended benefits) authorizes 100% of federal assistance provided pursuant to agreement with states**.**

Temporary Financing of Short-Time Compensation Payments

States with short-time compensation (STC) programs in law (Ohio's STC program is "SharedWork Ohio") are eligible to receive 100% federal reimbursement beginning as of the date of agreement and ending on or before December 31st.

Emergency Unemployment Relief for Governmental Entities and Nonprofit Organizations

Details of payments and applicability to governmental and nonprofit entities ("reimbursing employers") is forthcoming.

- Section 2103 authorizes funding to reimburse non-contributory governmental agencies and non-profit organizations one-half (50%) of the amounts of unemployment compensation paid between 3/13/2020 and 12/31/2020

Federal Direct Payments to Individuals
Provides for recovery rebates of up to $1200 for US taxpayers, payable through an advance refundable tax credit. Amounts are increased by $500 for each child. Amounts are phased out for taxpayers making greater than $75,000 ($150,000 for joint filers)
- $75,000 income - $1200 rebate
- $80,000 income - $950 rebate
- $85,000 income - $700 rebate
- $90,000 income - $450 rebate
- $95,000 income - $200 rebate
- $99,000 income - $0 rebate

Family Leave Benefits
- Expands Family and Medical Leave Act to provide 12 weeks of job-protected leave for employees who must care for a child due to school closing, for quarantine or to take care of a family member in quarantine.
- The first 10 days are unpaid and after 10 days the employee would receive payments of at least 2/3 of average pay up to a maximum of $200 per day and $10,000 in total.
- This would apply to businesses with fewer than 500 employees and government employers. The businesses are eligible for a refundable tax credit of 100 percent of family leave wages paid against the employer portion of social security taxes.

Paid Sick Leave
Requires government employers and employers with 500 or fewer employees to provide paid sick leave to employees who are:
- Subject to federal, state or local quarantine or isolation orders
- Who are self-quarantining because of symptoms or recommendation from a health care provider
- Taking care of family who has symptoms or has to quarantine
- Caring for a child whose school or day care has closed.

Full-time employees are entitled to 80 hours and part-time employees are entitled to average hours over a two-week period. The businesses are eligible for a refundable tax credit equal to 100 percent of qualified paid sick leave taken against the employer portion of Social Security taxes.

Waiver of Penalty for Early Retirement Plan Withdrawals

 The 10 percent tax for premature distributions of up to $100,000 from retirement plans is waived for withdrawals related to coronavirus.

Charitable Contributions

Relaxes limitations on charitable contributions by allowing up to $300 of cash contributions, whether or not taxpayer itemizes.

State Action and Responses

BMV

Effective March 19, the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) closed 181 BMV deputy registrar locations. Five locations will remain open to provide the following services ONLY:

- Issuance of commercial driver licenses (CDLs)
- Renewal of CDLs
- All other services will be discontinued

For more information on what locations are open, please visit:

https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/resources/bmv-closures

What Happens If My Driver's License Expires? On March 27, 2020, Governor Mike DeWine signed House Bill 197, which states that Ohio licenses (including driver license, CDLs, and registrations) expiring during the declared State of Emergency shall remain valid until either 90 days after the declared emergency ends, or December 1, 2020, whichever comes sooner. The State of Emergency was declared on March 9, 2020.

Can I Fly If My Driver License Is Expired? The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) states: "Travelers with a state driver's license that expired beginning on March 1, 2020, and who are not able to renew at their state driver's license agency may still use it as acceptable identification at the checkpoint. TSA will accept expired driver's licenses a year after the expiration date, plus 60 days after the duration of the COVID-19 national emergency." Ohio has joined other states in requesting a formal extension of the federally compliant driver license deadline. Please see TSA's website for further information.
Questions? Please visit www.bmv.ohio.gov or call the BMV at 844-644-6268. Or see the BMV's FAQ list at https://www.bmv.ohio.gov/links/FAQsCOVID19.pdf

Primary Election

The primary election has been extended to April 28, 2020 by vote-by-mail process. Ohioans who were eligible to vote on March 17, 2020, and have not already voted, will be able to cast their ballot by mail. Mail ballots must be postmarked on or before April 27, 2020, and received by May 8. Ballots that are not returned by mail must be received by the county elections board by 7:30 p.m. on April 28. In-person voting will only occur on April 28 and will only be available for individuals with disabilities who require in-person voting assistance and those who do not have a home mailing address. The Ohio Secretary of State will mail all voters a postcard informing them on how they will be able to request their ballot by mail from their local county Board of Elections. The board will send them their ballot and a postage paid return envelope.

A directory of all boards can be found at https://www.ohiosos.gov/elections/elections-officials/county-boards-of-elections-directory/
For FAQs from the Secretary of State's office, please visit:
https://www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/2020-primary-frequently-asked-questions/

Education

Under House Bill 197, the following changes were made:
Testing & Accountability – Eliminates state-mandated K-12 student assessments for the 2019-20 school year. It eliminates Ohio's school district and school building report cards for the 2019-20 school year, prohibits ODE from assigning letter grades to buildings or districts, prohibits rankings based on report card data and creates "safe harbor" for schools and districts to ensure data from the 2019-20 school year will have no effect in determining sanctions or penalties. The proposal directs ODE to seek a waiver from federal testing requirements. This applies to public, nonpublic, community and home schooled students.

Jon Peterson Special Needs/Autism Scholarships – Allows for services to be provided to students by electronic delivery method or telehealth.

EdChoice Scholarship – Freezes the 2019-20 performance-based EdChoice building eligibility list at 517 buildings for the 2020-21 school year. This allows siblings of current voucher students to participate. Under continuing law, the EdChoice application portal will open for 60 days beginning April 1, 2020, to process income-based EdChoice vouchers, renewals of existing performance-based vouchers, and new students attending the 517 buildings already on the list. The legislation expressly prohibits expansion of the building list to 1,227 buildings.

Student Meals – For school districts that are providing meals to students who are home while schools are closed, this language gives the director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture the authority to provide an exemption from "food processing" requirements so those entities can focus on providing food to children that depend on these services.

Distance Learning – For the 2019-20 school year, permits districts and schools to make up through distance learning any number of days or hours necessary due to COVID-19-related closures. They may amend an existing plan or adopt one to make up those days or hours. Current law limits make up through distance learning to not more than three days.

Teacher Evaluations and Licenses – Provides flexibility for teacher evaluations that were due to be completed during the 2019-20 school year and removes the value-added component from the evaluation. For new teachers unable to take the final licensure test due to testing center closures, the bill provides them with a provisional teaching license for the 2020-21 school year if they have graduated from college, and have successfully completed student teaching and a background check.

On March 30th, Governor DeWine announced the closing of schools will continue through Friday, May 1st.
For a full FAQ list from the Ohio Department of Education, please visit:
http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/Coronavirus

Taxes

Under House Bill 197, the following changes were made:
- Ohio's tax filing deadline will be the same as the federal filing deadline, July 15.
- Incorporates into Ohio law recent changes to the Internal Revenue Code or other federal law taking effect after March 30, 2018.
- Other changes include Work From Home-related issues. As more of the workforce begins to Work from Home, questions have arisen regarding which municipal corporations may tax an employee's income. This addresses concerns of businesses regarding the "20-day rule" in municipal income tax by not requiring employers to withhold for employees' home municipalities for the duration of an employee working remotely, but rather to continue to withhold for the employee's traditional workplace.

Ohio Businesses & Employers

Employer FAQs: http://jfs.ohio.gov/employers/

Employers can file their quarterly wage reports and pay taxes at the Ohio Business Gateway at gateway.ohio.gov or the Employer Resource Information Center (ERIC) at eric.ohio.gov.

Resources for economic support, visit https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/Resources-for-Economic-Support/

Is my business considered essential? Please see the Director's "Stay at Home" order to see what businesses are considered essential during this time: (begins on page 5) https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/DirectorsOrderStayAtHome.pdf
For more detailed information regarding essential businesses, please use this link and under the "Essential Business and Operations Details" tab, you will find detailed outlines https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/Stay-at-Home-Information/

Small Business Administration (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program
Who is eligible? Small business owners and nonprofits
What can it be used for? To help pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact.
What is the interest rate? The interest rate is 3.75 percent for small businesses and 2.75 percent for non-profits.
Where can I apply? https://covid19relief.sba.gov/#/

For more information regarding the program please visit the SBA site:
https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources

Assistance for Small Business
The Paycheck Protection Program prioritizes millions of Americans employed by small businesses by authorizing up to $349 billion toward job retention and certain other expenses.

Small businesses and eligible nonprofit organizations, Veterans organizations, and Tribal businesses described in the Small Business Act, as well as individuals who are self-employed or are independent contractors, are eligible if they also meet program size standards.
https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/top-priorities/cares-act/assistance-for-small-businesses
· For a top-line overview of the program CLICK HERE

- · <u>If you're a lender, more information can be found HERE</u>
- · <u>If you're a borrower, more information can be found HERE</u>
- · <u>PPP Borrower Application Form (Updated 4/2/20)</u>
- · <u>PPP Lender Application Form</u>
- · <u>PPP New Lender Application Form (Federally Insured Depository Institutions, Federally Insured Credit Unions, Farm Credit System Institutions)</u>
- · <u>Paycheck Protection Program – Interim Final Rule</u>
- · <u>Find an eligible lender</u>

Other Resources

- ● To stay updated on COVID-19 in Ohio, visit https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/. For questions, reach out to the Department of Health hotline, 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.
- ● To read the Public Health orders issued by Director Acton, visit https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/public-health-orders/public-health-orders.
- ● For financial resources made available through state or federal programs, visit https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/Resources-for-Economic-Support/econ.
- ● Visit OhioMeansjobs.com and click on the "Click Here for JOBS" link in the COVID banner. You'll be taken to postings for essential jobs that employers need filled now.
- ● For residents and businesses who wish to help donate PPE, or any other essential service or resource, to please email Together@Governor.Ohio.Gov and provide the following information:
  - ○ Name.
  - ○ Contact information.
  - ○ How you are interested in helping.
- ● The COVID-19 Dashboard displays the most recent preliminary data reported to the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) about cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in Ohio by selected demographics and county of residence. https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/dashboard
- ● State-by-state COVID-19 Projections: https://covid19.healthdata.org/
- ● Visit Support Local Ohio at https://ohio.org/supportlocalohio/ to find links to local restaurants and retailers you can support by ordering delivery or carryout, making online purchases, or buying gift cards.
- ● To learn more about the CDC guidelines, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/guidance-list.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc

- Resources for Local Health Districts, Local Governments, and Providers
  https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/Local-Health-Districts-and-Providers/
- For questions regarding the elderly, see Ohio Dept. of Aging website:
  https://aging.ohio.gov/coronavirus#1566595-get-the-facts
- For manufacturing companies that can repurpose operations to produce some of the most in-demand products in the fight against COVID-19, please visit,
  http://repurposingproject.com
- For other resources available, visit https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/resources/