



# News Now

Mike DeWine, Governor  
Lori Criss, Director

March 18, 2020

## >>> Update Memo From Director Criss Regarding Telehealth Services

Dear community providers,

You are an essential part of Ohio's healthcare system. Your work is critical to the health and wellness of Ohioans. With the COVID-19 crisis, we are seeing unprecedented attention to mental health. Our top priority is to ensure access to care for people living with mental illness and addiction, whether they are in service now or new to the system. We know that with social distancing, this is creating unique challenges for the behavioral health system.

We urge you to ensure that the people in your care have continued access to medications, counseling, case management, peer support, and other critical services that you provide. And we know that you have the responsibility to protect your workforce. At this time, there is no guidance specific to behavioral healthcare. Use the guidance found through [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov) which links to the CDC and the most up to date information on protecting healthcare workers.

**We expect that the ODM and OhioMHAS rules and the accompanying Executive Order will be issued imminently.** We urge you to begin using telehealth to reach out to the adults and families in your care. Please take the actions that you need to take to save lives and serve the patients in your community – these actions are related to COVID-19 and to the often life-threatening mental illness and addictions. Document the decisions you are making with your own policies and protocol, and we will continue to work together to implement the practice and emergency rules once filed.

We are impressed -- *though in no way surprised* -- with how providers, boards, recovery communities, families, and our many community partners are working to ensure that a full contingency of treatment and recovery supports are available to local citizens to the extent possible. There is so much creative and collaborative work underway. We are making every effort at the state to remove barriers and provide resources for you to continue in this work. **It is vital that you communicate to your community partners and the general public which programs and services remain open in your behavioral healthcare organization.** Publish your phone numbers and other contact information. Reach out to current clients through email or by phone. People need to know that behavioral health is open for business.

If you have specific questions, needs, or ideas to share with us, please email them to [COVID19BH@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:COVID19BH@mha.ohio.gov). We are monitoring this throughout each day.

With gratitude and respect,

Lori

## >>> Ohio PASRR Interim Process Change

Effectively immediately, in an effort to contribute to social distancing efforts throughout Ohio in response to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) concerns, Level II Preadmission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) assessments will no longer



be conducted face-to-face. Level II assessments will be performed by using a combination of desk-based evaluations and telephonic interviews of the individual, facility staff, legal guardians and any other applicable parties.

### **Process Reminder: Obtaining Supporting Documents**

Providing supporting documentation and taking the time to share information with the Ohio PASRR support team remains critical to our mutual support of at-risk populations across the state. We encourage you to remain proactive in obtaining supporting documents (H&P, MARS, etc.) for each referral, so that we can continue processing items as quickly as possible. This will also allow us to preview the information before contacting you, which can shorten the amount of time needed from providers.

### **Support: Ohio PASRR Help Desk Resources**

We remain committed to serving Ohioans, providing quality assessments, adhering to expected turnaround times, and overall business continuity. Ohio PASRR Help Desk continues to remain open seven days a week.

Support can be reached by:

**Phone: 833-91-PASRR (833-917-2777)**

**Email: [OHPASRR@maximus.com](mailto:OHPASRR@maximus.com)**

*\*Note: Any files uploaded to HENS must be in PDF format, rather than MS Word or other file types, to successfully upload to the Ascend MAXIMUS system.*

### **>>> OhioMHAS Strategic Planning Stakeholder Survey Suspended**

Due to the ongoing emergency response to the coronavirus situation, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) is suspending the strategic planning stakeholder survey process. With the state guidance to this crisis evolving day-by-day, we recognize that your efforts need to be focused on more important matters as this time. We value your partnership and your input, and we apologize for this unfortunate timing. We will re-release the survey in the near future.



### **>>> Application Deadline Extended for FY2020 Ohio Opiate Response Continuum Grant for Organizations Serving Members of the African American, Hispanic/Latino American, and Other Minority Communities**

As part of Ohio's State Opioid Response (SOR) grant program, OhioMHAS is seeking applicants for *FY2020 Ohio Opiate Response Continuum Grant for Organizations Serving Members of the African American, Hispanic/Latino American, and Other Minority Communities* ([MHA-FY20-21-OOR-CountyHealth-12](#)). **The application deadline has been extended to April 10.** Approximately \$15 million is available for programs and projects that will increase access to treatment and recovery supports for African American, Hispanic/Latino American, and other minority community members with a primary or secondary diagnosis of opioid use disorder or those with a documented history of opiate related overdose. Eligible applicants include: Ohio county or city health departments collaborating with their local community behavioral health authorities, or other county- or city-based organizations, such as metropolitan housing authorities, probation departments, etc.; minority community-based organizations (MCBOs) (such as UMADAOPs and Urban Leagues), and other community-based organizations including faith-based, primary care, federally qualified or school-based health centers, aging living communities, behavioral health organizations, and other non-profit organizations. The maximum award is \$500,000. An information webinar series will be scheduled and announced on the [OhioMHAS Funding Opportunities web page](#).

Responses to Frequently Asked Questions will be posted on the OhioMHAS [Funding Opportunities web page](#). **Applications must be submitted to [SORTreatment@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:SORTreatment@mha.ohio.gov) by 5:30 p.m. on April 10.**

[View RFA \(MHA-FY20-21-OOR-CountyHealth-12\)](#)

[Fiscal Budget Definition Guide](#)

[OhioMHAS Agreements and Assurances](#)

[SFY20 Grants Budget Form](#)

[Budget Checklist](#)

### >>> OSPF Tools for Coping During COVID-19

Many Ohioans are practicing social distancing in an effort to stay safe while the danger of COVID-19 passes. This new practice may lead to feelings of loneliness, fear, worry, nervousness, and uncertainty. These feelings may disrupt sleep patterns, worsen chronic health problems, and/or increase substance use. It is imperative that we all stay calm and cope with our stress as positively as we can.

The staff at the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation have created a [COVID-19 Media Tool-Kit](#) to promote mental and emotional health and safety during this period of uncertainty. Please feel free to use these images and edit the text to fit the needs of your community. When posting these images, please tag the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation. If you have any questions about this tool-kit, please contact [support@ohiospf.org](mailto:support@ohiospf.org).



For more information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov) or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634). For behavioral health-specific information, visit: <https://mha.ohio.gov/coronavirus>. For behavioral health-related questions, email [covid19BH@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:covid19BH@mha.ohio.gov). For COVID-19-related OTP questions, email [OTP\\_COVID19@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:OTP_COVID19@mha.ohio.gov), and for Housing questions, email [COVID19Housing@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:COVID19Housing@mha.ohio.gov).

#### In the News

- 3.18.20 | *Findlay Courier* [Tips for managing anxiety in a pandemic](#)
- 3.18.20 | *Bowling Green Sentinel-Tribune* [Mental health meetings available online](#)
- 3.17.20 | *WKTN 95.3* [Mental Health & Recovery Services Reminds Residents About Support Lines](#)
- 3.17.20 | *Gallipolis Daily Tribune* [ADAMH Announces COVID-19 Recommendations](#)
- 3.17.20 | *WHIZ-TV* [Muskingum Behavioral Health remains open, taking precautions](#)
- 3.16.20 | *Columbus Dispatch* [Kids put on porch concert for neighbor self-quarantining during coronavirus pandemic](#)

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