



## Promoting wellness and recovery

Mike DeWine, Governor • Lori Criss, Director • 30 E. Broad St. • Columbus, OH 43215 • (614) 466-2596 • mha.ohio.gov

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Dear Housing Partners,

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) is committed to doing everything we can to address concerns about and the potential prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). We are grateful for the leadership of Governor DeWine and Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Dr. Acton in guiding Ohio's response to COVID-19. Their efforts are ensuring coordination of state and local strategies to manage this international crisis' potential impact on Ohio. The Department is working to ensure continuity of care for Ohioans with mental illness and addiction, many of whom have co-occurring health conditions that may make contracting a virus more dangerous for them. OhioMHAS recognizes the role housing operators – in addition to local providers -- can take in the effort to reduce and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

In collaboration with state and local health departments, housing operators can provide critical information and prepare to take additional steps to prevent the spread of the virus, should the need arise. This communication is intended to provide specific information for all housing environments supported by OhioMHAS.

Current housing owners/operators should refer to your disaster plans and emergency operations and ensure these are up to date. Also, be sure to have a plan in place for staff absences and maintain a current list of emergency contacts for all residents.

Please take a moment to review these housing-specific prevention and response resources:

- The [HUD Exchange Disease Risks and Homelessness Page](#) provides relevant information for individuals who are homeless and/or at-risk .
- This [CDC link](#) provides guidance to larger facilities (transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, emergency shelters, SUD treatment centers, etc.), in preparation for, and in the event of, an occurrence of Coronavirus.
- This [CDC link](#) provides guidance to recovery housing operators and residential care facility operators; smaller homes both in preparation for, and in the event of, an outbreak.

CDC Recommendations to Help Stop the Spread of Germs:

1. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
2. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
4. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
5. Stay home when you are sick except to get medical care.
6. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Ohio Department of Health offer the most up-to-date information on Coronavirus. For updates from CDC, please visit the Coronavirus [website](#). Please visit the Ohio Department of Health webpage <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/> for the latest information specific to Ohio and from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

OhioMHAS has created [a designated web page](#) with information for providers. An email box for behavioral health-specific questions related to the outbreak is: [COVID19BH@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:COVID19BH@mha.ohio.gov). This email will be monitored throughout the day to help shape our planning and communication for continuity of care issues related to addiction and mental health treatment and recovery.

All non-behavioral health specific COVID-19 questions should be directed to ODH at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH or 1-833-427-5634).

Sincerely,

Lori Criss, Director