

Dear ODJFS Employees,

As I stated in my prior email, Governor DeWine announced that there are three positive coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in Ohio. He also signed [Executive Order 2020-01D](#), declaring a state of emergency to protect the well-being of Ohioans. In accordance with the Governor's directives to all cabinet agencies, we will undertake reasonable social distancing measures for the next several weeks while continuing our day-to-day work. Please see more detailed information and guidance below for large group meetings, travel, and fieldwork. The ODJFS Executive Team is monitoring this situation as it evolves, and I appreciate your cooperation.

MEETINGS

Large in-person meetings should be postponed, and employees should instead maximize use of phone conferences, video conferences, webinars and email to conduct business as much as possible. Deputy Directors will be communicating with their teams to understand the schedule of upcoming meetings and determine the best course of action. Considering the goal of limiting in-person interactions with large groups, we want to ensure ODJFS employees are aware of the various options available to meet virtually, including video capabilities. The Office of Information Services will work with Deputy Directors to ensure each Office is aware of the current solutions available for use. Additionally, if you have questions or need technical support, please contact your Business Relationship Manager or the OIS Service Desk.

TRAVEL

The Governor's Office has issued notice of significant travel restrictions for all agencies. In-state travel is only permitted for mission-critical activities that are approved by an agency director. All out-of-state travel must be postponed or canceled.

FIELDWORK

Deputy Directors will engage with their teams in a fieldwork prioritization process over the next 30 days. Necessary work will not be stopped, but it may be scaled down for a period of time, including the number of team members deployed to perform fieldwork.

Because of today's declaration of emergency, we may have more flexibility with procurement guidelines and mitigating circumstances that could impact certain regulatory requirements. Our Legal and Contracts and Acquisitions liaisons will stay in contact with you about those matters.

In closing, please continue preventative measures such as washing your hands often with soap and water; avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands; avoiding close contact with people who are sick; staying home when you are sick; and covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue then throwing the tissue in the trash.

Please note that the Ohio Department of Health has opened a call center to answer questions regarding coronavirus. The call center is open 7 days a week from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and can be reached at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634). Call center staff includes licensed nurses and infectious disease experts. They will be available to answer questions and provide accurate information about COVID-19, the risk to the public, and the state's response. Additional information and guidance on COVID-19 is available at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Kind regards,

Kimberly Hall, Director
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services