

March 25, 2020 – 9:45 AM

*Please note resources and updates are evolving rapidly.*

### **Resources**

- Ohio’s “stay-at-home” order is in effect. It is GCP’s recommendation that you review the recent [ODH order](#) and [FAQs](#) with your legal counsel and/or go to [coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov) for additional information.
- GCP/COSE brings you the following WEBINAR:
  - Coronavirus (COVID-19): Small Business Guidance & Loan Resources  
Thursday, March 26 | 10 to 11 a.m.

Health and government officials are working together to maintain the safety, security, and health of the American people. Small businesses are encouraged to do their part to keep their employees, customers, and themselves healthy.

Join Raymond Graves, Lead Lender Relations Specialist of the U.S. Small Business Administration's Cleveland District Office as he offers guidance to small businesses and shares loan resources they can use in this uncertain time.

For more information, please email [events@cose.org](mailto:events@cose.org) or call 216-592-2390.

- Join a Web Event with SBA Administrator Jovita Carranza on COVID-19:
  - The live web event will be held Friday, March 27 at 2 PM ET. To register, please click [here](#). Please note that internet access is required to join. Registration is limited to the first 3,000 attendees. If you are unable to join, a recording will be made available.
- The U.S. Treasury Department, Internal Revenue Service, and the U.S. Department of Labor recently announced in a news release that soon small and midsize employers can begin taking advantage of two new refundable payroll tax credits, designed to immediately and fully reimburse them, dollar-for-dollar, for the cost of providing coronavirus-related leave to their employees. This relief to employees and small and midsize businesses is provided under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, signed by President Trump on March 18, 2020. View the [complete March 20 IRS news release](#).
- DOL to Host Online Dialogue on Compliance Materials Needed for Expanded Paid Family and Medical Leave Requirements:
  - The U.S. Department of Labor will be hosting a national online dialogue to provide employers and employees with an innovative opportunity to offer their perspective as the Department develops compliance assistance materials and outreach strategies related to the implementation of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). The ideas and comments gathered from this dialogue will inform compliance assistance guidance, resources, and tools, as well as outreach approaches, that assist employers and employees in understanding their responsibilities and rights under the FFCRA. DOL needs your input by March 29, 2020. Those interested can participate online at <https://ffcra.ideascale.com> from

March 23 through March 29, 2020 or can join a Twitter chat hosted by [@ePolicyWorks](#) on March 25, 2020 at 2 p.m. using the hashtag #EPWChat. For more information on the requirements of FFCRA, please visit: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic>.

### **State Updates**

- The Ohio Department of Health reported 564 confirmed cases of coronavirus – a 27 percent increase over Monday – and eight deaths as of Tuesday afternoon, with cases reaching 49 counties and resulting in 145 hospitalizations.
- The entire shipment of personal protective equipment (PPE) Ohio received from the Strategic National Stockpile has been distributed to counties based on the prioritization of need.
- GCP is represented on what the state is calling the “COVID-19 Economic Strike Force” group. These leaders are geared towards providing policy solutions during the crisis around regulatory reform, tax reform, and direct financial assistance.
- [Cleveland.com](#): Lt. Gov. Jon Husted said Tuesday that businesses should interpret the state’s order closing nonessential businesses themselves instead of overloading law enforcement and local health departments asking for guidance. Businesses should have a justification ready if they intend to stay open, Husted said. Husted did instruct employees who might see violations to report them to either local law enforcement or the health department.
- Governor DeWine may tap the state’s rainy-day fund to fill in budget shortages. The Columbus Dispatch reported that forty-six percent of the general revenue fund is covered by sales taxes and 39% by income taxes. “With businesses such as dine-in restaurants closed and workers laid off, collections of both taxes are dwindling,” says the report.
- The state legislature will meet today “to pass a number of coronavirus-related items. The Senate is slated to meet in the morning with the House to meet at 3:00 p.m. The Senate and House are believed to have similar priority lists. [Here is a full list of items that may be found in the House Omnibus.](#)
- State Senator Matt Huffman introduced [legislation](#) to extend absent voting by mail for the March 17, 2020, primary election to April 28, 2020.
- Statewide banks and credit unions are offering loan payment deferrals, fee waivers or refunds, and extending credit lines to both businesses and individuals. Many financial institutions are also suspending foreclosures where possible. If individuals need help, they should reach out to their local banker for assistance. [Here is a link to a joint statement from the Ohio Credit Union League and the Ohio Bankers League.](#)

### **Federal Updates**

- The President and U.S. Senate reached an agreement early Wednesday on a roughly \$2 trillion stimulus measure to send direct payments and jobless benefits to individuals as well as money to states and businesses devastated by the coronavirus pandemic. The legislation, which is expected to be enacted within days, is the biggest fiscal stimulus package in modern American history. The indication is that the U.S. House of Representatives is expected to

approve the measure by unanimous consent following a U.S. Senate vote. Bill language is expected to be circulated soon.

- The AP reports: “The unprecedented economic rescue package would give direct payments to most Americans, expand unemployment benefits and provide a \$367 billion program for small businesses to keep making payroll while workers are forced to stay home. One of the last issues to close concerned \$500 billion for guaranteed, subsidized loans to larger industries, including a fight over how generous to be with the airlines. Hospitals would get significant help as well.”
- GCP, and our partners, have been advocating for the relief package to include – among other priorities – support for Section 501(c)(6) organizations such as trade, professional and membership associations.
- The Department of Health and Human Services announced it would provide \$100 million to 1,381 community health centers to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The money comes from a supplemental funding measure, the first congressional response to the pandemic.
  - To increase telehealth services and acquire medical supplies, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded \$3,247,249 yesterday to assist Ohio community health centers during the coronavirus pandemic.
- The Trump administration is advising those leaving New York to self-quarantine for 14 days to avoid potentially spreading the coronavirus.
- The Vice President relayed that the federal government was providing guidelines to states and was encouraged by the actions of Governors around the country but have not considered a national lockdown or "stay at home" order. That would be left up to the states.
- Additional White House / COVID-19 Updates:
  - White House Announces New Partnership to Unleash U.S. Supercomputing Resources to Fight COVID-19 ([HERE](#))
  - President Trump Committed to Supporting Small Businesses Impacted by the Coronavirus ([HERE](#))
  - Vice President Pence Holds Video Teleconference with Governors on the Partnership to Prepare, Mitigate and Respond to COVID-19 ([READOUT](#), [REMARKS](#))
  - Vice President Pence Remarks with Press Gaggle ([HERE](#))
  - Memorandum on Providing Federal Support for Governors' Use of the National Guard to Respond to COVID-19 ([HERE](#))

### Local Updates

- In addition to GCP's work on this front, the Cuyahoga County Department of Development is reaching out to businesses to learn the key challenges and needs from the COVID-19 situation. Businesses are asked to please take a few moments to answer the survey. Responses and input are crucial to Cuyahoga County and its partners working to quickly provide support to small businesses. [Click here to take the survey.](#)
- The City of Cleveland's \$670 million proposal for the city's general fund operating budget for 2020 was approved with funding increases and amendments.
- Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson signed a plan where payments on economic development loans from the city may be deferred for six months. This will become effective on April 1. The

city is in the process of sending letters to companies that it has loans with, and they will be working with borrowers as needed to adjust their payments. The initiative may allow the city's development director to aid businesses seeking deferments on loans issued by other lenders. "Basically, we're taking a rest for six months. Then we'll try to move on," Economic Development Director David Ebersole told City Council Monday during a committee hearing.

- The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) is installing signs that encourage riders to maintain a physical distance of six feet when riding public transportation. Guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are used to disinfect trains, buses, paratransit vehicles and stations daily. Riders are urged to maintain coronavirus safety guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For information and updates on RTA [click here](#).

**March 23, 2020**

*A MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS*

Dear Greater Cleveland Partnership members –

With unpredictable speed, the COVID-19 outbreak has dramatically changed the way we operate our businesses and nonprofits. We are all focused on the health and safety of our community as our highest priority. This pandemic has changed your businesses and our lives.

We know many of you have questions about the stay-at-home order, which goes into effect tonight at 11:59 p.m. until April 6. Our **website** and social media accounts serve as the quickest means of obtaining official information, and you are encouraged to **contact members of our team by phone.**

We are actively **surveying our business community** to identify and implement public policy changes that could help companies address supply chain and cash flow issues. A few examples include our research, advocacy and dissemination of information to your business including, but not limited to **emergency funding**, an order that will give employers a two-month grace period to pay insurance premiums to their insurance providers, the **Ohio Department of Transportation**'s issuance of waivers for haulers, and the **Bureau of Workers' Compensation**'s delay in premiums until June 1 for all public and private employers.

The team at Greater Cleveland Partnership and I look forward to working with and in support of you over the next several weeks and months to advocate for what you need most to continue business operations, while complying with the latest health guidelines. Please let us know how we can help.

As we watch this situation unfold, we are sobered by what we see happening in Europe and New York City. We stand in support of Governor Mike DeWine and Dr. Amy Acton, and we are working with their teams daily, as they focus on protecting Ohioans. Our responsibility as business and nonprofit leaders is to follow their guidelines, adapt to our "new normal," and end this crisis as quickly as we can.

In health and partnership,  
Joe Roman, President and CEO