

Ohio Governor issues revised mask mandate, social gathering order and reemphasizes prevention protocols



Karina R. Conley | Friday, November 13, 2020

In light of the State of Ohio's significant surge in COVID-19 cases, Governor Mike DeWine spoke of new and potentially forthcoming public health orders in an address to constituents on November 11.

Revised Mask Order. In addition to reemphasizing personal prevention efforts such as social distancing and handwashing, DeWine reissued his July 23 mask mandate with three additional provisions:

- First, all retail businesses in Ohio are now required to post a Face Covering Requirement sign at all public entrances.
- Second, all retail businesses are required to ensure that employees and customers are wearing masks.
- Third, the reissued mandate creates a Retail Compliance Unit that will inspect businesses to ensure compliance with the mandate. If an agent determines that a business has violated the mandate, the business will receive a written warning and if the business violates the mandate again, the Retail Compliance Unit will close the business for 24 hours.

Social Gathering Order

DeWine also spoke to a forthcoming social gathering order. In addition to emphasizing that the state's April 2020 order limiting public events and private gatherings to 10 people was still in effect, DeWine indicated that the Ohio Department of Health would be issuing a new order putting certain restrictions on

social activities. Specifically, DeWine stated that the order would specifically prohibit open congregate areas, dancing and games and require all attendees at social gathering to remain seated and wear masks, unless actively consuming food or drink.

Remote Work Encouraged

Finally, DeWine encouraged Ohioans to stay and work from home, whenever possible, and threatened that if cases continued to increase, he would be forced to close bars, restaurants and fitness centers in an attempt to further curb spread of the virus. With surrounding states recently issuing new curfews and stay at home orders, it appears this may be all but inevitable.

As the cases of COVID-19 continue to mount, employers should expect to see additional state and local public health orders as well as increased enforcement activity. As always, the McDonald Hopkins Labor and Employment Response Team will continue to monitor developments and provide updates on further employment law issues as they arise related to the COVID-19 crisis.



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