Office of the Mayor
City of Columbus
Ohio

EXECUTIVE ORDER

2020-01

By: ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

Declaration of State of Emergency
City of Columbus, Ohio

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death, is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which is a new strain of coronavirus that had not been previously identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person. The virus is spread between individuals who are in close contact with each other (within about six feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It may be possible that individuals can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes; and

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, Alex M. Azar II, Secretary of Health and Human Services, determined and declared a public health emergency exists in the United States in relation to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on February 1, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a statewide Health Alert Network to provide local health departments with updated guidance for COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, testing by the Department of Health confirmed that three (3) patients were positive for COVID-19 in the State of Ohio, creating a potentially dangerous condition which may affect the health, safety, and welfare of citizens of Ohio; and

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, Governor Mike DeWine, signed an Executive Order declaring a State of Emergency for the entire State of Ohio in relation to COVID-19 pursuant to the Governor's authority vested in him by the Constitution, the laws of the State of Ohio and in accordance with Revised Code section 5502.22; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Executive Order declaring a State of Emergency for the entire State of Ohio urged all citizens to heed to the advice of the Department of Health and other emergency officials regarding COVID-19 in order to protect their health and safety; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020, Governor DeWine announced the closing of all kindergarten through 12th grade schools through April 3, 2020 and the Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton signed an order prohibiting mass gatherings in the state of Ohio; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Columbus Board of Health declared a Public Health Emergency due to this imminent threat of an acutely hazardous disease, posing a high probability of widespread exposure to an infectious agent that poses a significant risk of substantial harm to a large number of people, a large number of serious or long-term disabilities, or a large number of death; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Franklin County Emergency Operations Center (FCEOC) activated to support the coordination and response to COVID-19 within Franklin County pursuant to Revised Code Chapter 5502; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald J. Trump declared a National Emergency, invoking the Stafford Act and allowing the Federal Emergency Management Agency to coordinate disaster response and aid state and local governments in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued an amended Director's Order to Limit Access to Ohio Nursing Homes and Similar Facilities; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued an amended Director's Order to require health screening for admission to the state operated psychiatric hospitals and Ohio Department of Youth Services facilities and issued a Director's Order closing all K-12 schools in Ohio; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order to restrict the sales of alcohol, food, and all other beverages to carry-out sales and delivery only and issued interim guidance limiting mass gatherings to no more than 50 people; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, the Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Order closing all polling locations on March 17, 2020 in the state of Ohio; and

WHEREAS, currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists over 4,226 cases in the United States and over 167,151 worldwide cases of COVID-19 and over 6,606 deaths; and

WHEREAS, the State of Ohio has 88 confirmed cases including 4 in the City of Columbus and is currently experiencing "community spread" of the virus that causes COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has advised those that have possible or confirmed COVID-19 to stay home from work, school, and away from other public places; and

WHEREAS, in the City of Columbus and across Franklin County there is a current threat of an acutely hazardous disease, illness, or health condition; specifically, COVID-19, that is believed to be caused by the appearance of a novel infectious agent; and

WHEREAS, in the City of Columbus, this threat has already impacted the daily lives of the citizens of the City of Columbus and, the need for citizens and City of Columbus employees to stay home from work and other public places should they be exposed to the virus substantially impairs the functioning of city government and its ability to protect the lives and property of the citizens of the City of Columbus, Ohio,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Andrew Ginther, Mayor of the City of Columbus, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Ohio Constitution, the Charter of the City of Columbus, and Sections 123.01 and 123.02 of the Columbus City Code, do hereby order and direct that:

1. A State of Emergency is declared for the entire City of Columbus to protect the lives and well-being of the citizens of the City as well as those who work, attend school, and visit the City, from the dangerous effects of COVID-19.

2. I hereby suspend purchasing and contracting requirements pursuant to CCC 329.15 to allow for entering into contracts for the procurement of materials, supplies, equipment, construction or service in order to procure any necessary resources or supplies to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the City of Columbus.

3. I further suspend all regulatory provisions of the Columbus City Code as necessary to allow for the continued ability of the City to meet payroll, process insurance benefits, and pay vendors during the time of the emergency.

4. I further suspend the requirement found in the Columbus City Health Code that the Board of Health and/or the Health Commissioner seek authorization from the Ohio Department of Health to issue orders pursuant to Health Code Section 775.04 except where specifically required by Revised Code Section 3707.05.

5. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and remain in full force and effect until the emergency no longer exists, such time to be determined by the Governor of the State of Ohio as determined by the Director of Health of the State of Ohio and the Executive Director of the Emergency Management Agency of the State of Ohio.

This order shall be in full force and effect after my signature is affixed to this document.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the Mayor of the City of Columbus, Ohio, to be hereto affixed this 18th day of March, 2020.

Andrew J. Ginther, Mayor