CLIENT ALERTS & INSIGHTS

DeWine Issues New Public Health Orders

NOVEMBER 12, 2020

On November 11, 2020, Governor DeWine held a press conference to announce additional public health orders to enhance requirements for mask-wearing and to issue a warning about restaurants, bars and fitness centers.

DeWine said all 88 counties have a high rate of virus-spread with rural areas being especially hard hit. Testing has doubled, but positive cases are up 4 times, he said. During a previous spike in positive cases earlier this year, the most patients that were in the hospital at one time due to Coronavirus was 1,100. Last week there were 2,000 patients and one week later, he shared, Ohio is approaching 3,000 patients.

The Governor said Ohio remains in a state of emergency and he asked Ohioans to get back to basics --- wear a mask, maintain 6 feet of distance between each other, wash hands frequently, no get-togethers, and get adequate fresh air into homes.

He then acknowledged that some businesses are being lax about mask-wearing. Every employee deserves to be safe, he said, and all customers must wear a mask. The original mask order was issued July 23rd. Governor DeWine announced that he will re-issue the order with 3 additional provisions - each business shall post a sign stating that a face covering is required at every entrance; businesses are responsible to see that customers and employees are wearing masks; and new mask-wearing agents housed in the Bureau of Worker's Compensation will be inspecting. The business will first receive a written warning, but if there is a second incident, the business will be ordered closed for 24 hours. ***You can download the required facial covering sign by clicking the link at the top of the page.***

He also repeated that the limit on large, social gatherings remains in place. Great tragedies have been associated with these types of events, according to DeWine. There will be new restrictions forthcoming on social activities. Open congregate areas have to be closed. Everyone will need to be seated and wearing a mask unless they are eating or drinking.

He gave a warning to restaurant, bars, and fitness centers and said if the uptick in cases continues, those businesses will be forced to close. He said he will give them one week for the number to go down.

DeWine also mentioned schools. He praised K-12 schools for doing a phenomenal job and said children are better off in school than in a remote setting. He also asked that colleges all agree not to return to campus in-person after Thanksgiving. He thanked the majority of schools that have already agreed to keep students home after Thanksgiving and for reducing the number of kids on campus in general, but he warned that unless Ohioans slow this community spread, universities will have to stay virtual.

Finally, he advised that we spend Thanksgiving with those we live with and gave a final caution that every time someone new enters your bubble, the risk increases greatly.

The Health Orders have not yet been released, but all Health Orders will be posted to the Ohio Department of Health's Public Health Orders webpage.

For more information on the new orders, contact a member of the firm's Government Relations Practice Group.

Cheryl Burchard at cburchard@beneschlaw.com or 614.223.9315.

N. Victor Goodman at nvgoodman@beneschlaw.com or 614.223.9343.

Martha J. Sweterlitsch at msweterlitsch@beneschlaw.com or 614.223.9367.

Rachel Winder at rwinder@beneschlaw.com or 614.223.9316.

Robert A. Zimmerman at rzimmerman@beneschlaw.com or 216.363.4437.