FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Rachelle Kuhn, PIO
1300 E. Second St., Ste. 100
Defiance, OH. 43512

July 20, 2020: On July 2, 2020, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced a new Ohio Public Health Advisory System for COVID-19. The 4-level system (yellow, orange, red, and purple) is an early warning system like a weather alert or snow emergency. The Public Health Advisory Alert System provides a clear, color-coded approached to inform Ohioans about their current risk associated with COVID-19 and provides evidence-based recommendations and actions that can be taken to protect themselves and their communities based on the level of risk. The Public Health Advisory Alert System provides context and awareness as to the scope of COVID-19 within our community.

As of July 16, 2020, Defiance County is currently at Level 2 (Orange). "We want to remind everyone the actions we take today can affect where we are tomorrow. Given the incubation period of COVID-19 is 2-14 days, which means the data reflects on the actions we took two weeks ago. It also means our actions today will shape how the data in two weeks looks. It is important to look to these advisory levels in determining how we go about our daily actions," stated Jamie Gerken, Health Commissioner.

It is important to continue to follow standard precautions to prevent the spread of infectious disease. To prevent the spread of any virus including novel coronavirus, practice these preventative measures:
- Practice social distancing by staying 6ft away from others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Cover your cough and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow.
- Wearing a cloth face mask when in public.

WHERE TO GO TO LEARN MORE:
- **Review the attached Public Health Advisory System for COVID-19 fact sheet**
- **Public Health Advisory System:**
    - Go to: coronavirus.ohio.gov and click "Ohio Public Health Advisory System" tab.
    - Direct link: https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/public-health-advisory-system/
- **Public Health Advisory System Summary of Indicators:**
    - Coronavirus.ohio.gov, click "Ohio Public Health Advisory System" tab, click "Indicators Overview" link.
    - Direct link: https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/OPHASM/Summary-Alert-Indicators.pdf
- **Defiance County Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Daily Update:** Defiance County COVID-19 updates will be posted to the Defiance County General Health Districts website and social media pages
    - **Website:** http://defiancecohealth.org/coronavirus/
    - **Facebook:** Defiance County Public Health
    - **Twitter:** @DCGHD

COVID-19 information is being shared as it becomes available on the following websites: coronavirus.ohio.gov or www.defiancecohealth.org

Ohio Public Health Advisory System for COVID-19 Fact Sheet

Level 1
0-1 indicators triggered

Active exposure and spread. Follow all current health orders.

Level 2
2-3 indicators triggered

Defiance County

Increased exposure and spread. Exercise high degree of caution. Follow all current health orders.

*Updated 7/16/2020

Level 3
4-5 indicators triggered

Very high exposure and spread. Limit activites as much as possible. Follow all current health orders.

Level 4
6-7 indicators triggered

Severe exposure and spread. Only leave home for supplies and services. Follow all current health orders.

The risk level system is as follows:

- Alert Level 1 Public Health Emergency (Yellow): Baseline level. County has met zero or one indicator. Active exposure and spread. Follow all health orders.
- Alert Level 2 Public Emergency (Orange): County has met two or three indicators. Increased exposure and spread. Exercise high degree of caution. Follow all current health orders.
- Alert Level 3 Public Emergency (Red): County has met four or five indicators. Very high exposure and spread. Limit activities as much as possible. Follow all current health orders.
- Alert Level 4 Public Health Emergency (Purple): County has met six or seven indicators. Severe exposure and spread. Only leave home for supplies and services. Follow all current health orders.

A county's alert level is determined by the following seven data indicators: *Indicates the indicators triggered for Defiance County as of July 16,2020*

- *New Cases Per Capita:* This measure considers how many new cases have occurred in the last 14 days relative to the population of a county. More cases mean a greater potential for spread among individuals living in that county, and contributes to a county's overall risk level. The threshold for concern is set at 50 cases per 100,000 residents over the last two weeks, which follows CDC guidance for categorizing incidence.
- **Sustained Increase in New Cases:* Flagged if the number of daily new cases continually increases day over day, then that means the virus is spreading more in a county. However, we don't want to flag a county that may have experienced just a one-day increase. Therefore, for this measure we look at the increase using smoothed analysis (or 7-day moving average) of new cases and see if there is at least a 5-day period of sustained growth. The CDC and Resolve to Save Lives both use 5 days as the minimum for determining a trajectory.
- **Proportion of Cases that are Not Congregate Cases:* Congregate settings for this indicator are defined as long-term care facilities (including nursing homes) and prisons. Individuals who reside in congregate settings or are incarcerated are generally not viewed as a transmission risk to the broader community. As such, people with COVID-19 not residing in a congregate setting should carry greater weight in a county's risk analysis since they are more likely to interact with others in the broader community. A county is flagged on this measure if at least one week, of the last three weeks, sees more than 50% of new cases in non-congregate settings.

- *Sustained Increase in Emergency Room Visits:* Those going to emergency departments for COVID-19 symptoms as an early warning sign of COVID activity that may impact hospitals down the road. This measures the trend in the number of people with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 that visit the emergency department (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing) and not diagnosed with another respiratory illness. In addition, patients with a COVID-19 diagnosis code are included in this metric. A county is flagged when there is an increase over a 5-day period using a smoothed analysis (7-day moving average), which follows CDC criteria for assessing increases or rebounds of COVID-like illness.

- **Sustained Increase in Outpatient Visits:* The number of people visiting outpatient settings with suspected and confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis codes is important to understand how many people are sick enough to go to the doctor's office. Like with emergency visits, this can be an early warning indicator. A county is flagged when the there is an increase over a 5-day period using a smoothed analysis (7-day moving average), per CDC criteria for assessing increases or rebounds.

- *Sustained Increase in New COVID-19 Hospital Admissions:* the number of county residents who are admitted to hospitals with COVID is an indicator of the burden of illness in the community. This measure looks at the county of residence (rather than the county of hospitalization) since residents of rural counties may seek care at hospitals in neighboring counties. In addition, CDC recommends looking at hospital admissions in addition to COVID-like illness for a more complete picture of disease activity in an area. A county is flagged when there is at least a 5-day period of sustained growth with a 7-day moving average (or smoothed analysis) of new hospital admissions.

- *Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Bed Occupancy:* One of the challenges of treating COVID patients is the long period of hospital or ICU care required per patient. While new hospital admissions tell us the new burden of illness on individuals in a county, it does not tell us the resource burden on the hospitals in the broader region. This measure considers both COVID and non-COVID use of intensive care unit beds, as COVID cases are just one portion of what hospitals must handle in their communities. A county is flagged on this measure when the regional ICU occupancy goes above 80% for at least three of the last seven days. The CDC has set ICU occupancy at 80% as an indicator of hospital capacity to treat all patients without resorting to crisis standards of care.