



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Montgomery, Lake and Lorain counties reach highest risk level of state Public Health Advisory System

Franklin County remains at highest level for second week; 11 counties move to watch list

COLUMBUS – Ongoing stress on the state’s healthcare system is impacting today’s update of the Public Health Advisory System. After more than a month of sustained increases in cases and after several weeks of increased healthcare utilization statewide, a significant number of counties are meeting the most severe of the advisory system’s indicators.

Montgomery, Lake and Lorain counties have moved to the highest risk level (purple or level 4) of the state advisory system. Franklin County remains at the highest risk level for the second week and 11 counties have moved to the watch list in the system.

Montgomery, Lake and Lorain are moving to purple in the alert system because they are experiencing sustained increases in outpatient, emergency, and hospital visits by COVID-19 patients.

Franklin County continues at purple for a second week.

The 11 counties moving to the watch list are: Adams, Clermont, Hamilton, Medina, Portage, Richland, Stark, Summit, Trumbull, Warren, and Wood Counties. These counties meet enough indicators to be considered at risk level 4 or purple, because of the sustained impact on healthcare utilization. However, the system requires them to meet these criteria for two weeks in a row to ensure a consistent trend in the data before they become purple.

Ten of the 11 counties on the watch list are in the Akron and Cincinnati regions, which now have fewer adult ICU beds available. This is largely due to increases in COVID-19 ICU patients.

“The ongoing high prevalence of the virus throughout Ohio, as reflected in today’s alert system update, is very dangerous as we move into the holidays,” said Governor Mike DeWine. “We have heard again this week from hospital administrators and front-line staff about how they are overwhelmed. It is imperative that Ohioans take the virus and this current situation seriously.”

More information on the [Ohio Public Health Advisory System](https://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov) can be found on the coronavirus.ohio.gov website.

NOTE: Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, Thursday’s daily numbers will be reported on Friday.

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