



## PRESS RELEASE

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**March 17, 2020 (Findlay, Ohio):** In response to the evolving situation with COVID19, and following Governor Mike DeWine's recommendations for businesses, beginning Wednesday, March 18, the Hancock County Veterans Service Office (HCVSO) **team will only see clients face to face for scheduled appointments to sign paperwork for the following things, everything possible will be conducted over the phone to limited the length of contact:**

1. Eviction or Subsidized Housing or Homelessness
2. Emergency need for Food or Hygiene Products
3. Intent to File, limited compensation claims, and Notice of Disagreement (Appeals) will be filed to ensure not to compromise a Veterans VA time constraints. This paperwork may be completed via email and we appreciate all clients helping us keep the face-to-face contact to a minimum.

"We are working with IT to find options to give all of our staff remote access to their email and projects," explained Nichole Coleman, HCVSO Executive Director. "In the meantime we have a plan in place."

The HCVSO team will work from home when possible and have limited staff in the office beginning March 18. **All employees working from home will check their voicemail at the top of the hour and return calls within the hour, during their normally scheduled hours.** This procedure will continue until Governor DeWine recalls the state of emergency.

As the Ohio Department of Veterans Service Director Deborah Ashenurst said in her letter to her team, "Let's do what our brave men and women of service do every day – remain calm, be careful, and stay healthy. Thank you for joining me in this fight."

These next questions are a quick screening to help everyone protect themselves and the community. Anyone who is going to enter the office or ride in one of the office vehicles will need to answer the following questions.

1. Have you had contact with anyone with confirmed COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
2. Do you have a sore throat?
3. Do you have a persistent cough that is associated with a fever?
4. Do you have any abnormal shortness of breath?

**\*\*\*And/or a fever greater than 100 degrees**

**If you answered yes to question 1, please call your primary care provider or the Ohio Department of Health at 833.427.5634.**

**If you answered no to question 1, but yes to numbers 2, 3 or 4; please contact your healthcare provider if symptoms are severe. Please do NOT visit a medical facility unless you are severely ill. Please call ahead and let any medical facility know why you are coming. Meanwhile, do not get close to anyone with a compromised immune system or other underlying condition. (This information came from the Ohio Department of Health website.)**

For preventative measures, remember that the best thing you can do in the face of COVID-19 is to take precautions to protect yourself, your family, and your community:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; dry hands with a clean towel or air dry hands.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are unavailable.
- Cover your mouth with a tissue or sleeve when sneezing or coughing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Clean “high-touch” surfaces daily. These include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, light switches, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, desks, and tablets.

“We are grateful for the leadership of Governor DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health in guiding Ohio’s response to COVID-19,” said Coleman. “Their efforts are ensuring coordination of state and local strategies to manage this international crisis’ potential impact on Ohio. I want to make sure we do our best to keep ourselves and our clients safe and healthy.”

A trusted source of information is imperative in times of uncertainty like this, and I urge you to visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov) for the latest information specific to Ohio and from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. There is a call center open 7 days a week now from 0900-2000 hours, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634) with questions or concerns.

*The mission of the Hancock County Veterans Service Office is to compassionately empower and improve the lives of veterans and their families by serving those who served.*