

## March 2021 EDITION

Due to the ongoing pandemic this issue continues to primarily contain COVID-19 related policies and resources. *However, there are non-COVID related items included at the end.* Additionally, the [March 2020](#), [April 2020](#), [May 2020](#), [June 2020](#), [July 2020](#), [August 2020](#), [September 2020](#), [October 2020](#), [November/December 2020](#), [January 2021](#), and [February 2021](#) editions are available for historic references and resources.

## COVID-19 Federal Policy and Resources

### The American Rescue Plan

On Wednesday, March 10th, the U.S. House passed the [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#), the third major federal COVID-19 relief act following the CARES Act and the December 2020 Consolidated Appropriations Act. President Biden signed the bill into law on Thursday March 11<sup>th</sup>. The \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act has several stimulus provisions for individuals, businesses, and state and local governments. State and local dollars have an expenditure deadline through 2024. This [Holland & Knight Summary](#) provides an easy to read, comprehensive overview of what's included in the bill. Below is a high-level overview of what is included in the bill:

1. Single adults earning less than \$75,000, heads of household earning less than \$112,500, and married adults filing jointly earning less than \$150,000 are eligible to receive \$1,400 per person. Eligibility is determined based on the most recent tax return the IRS has processed. Eligible parents will also receive \$1,400 per dependent claimed.
2. Continued supplemental unemployment benefits, in the amount of \$300 per month, to individuals receiving unemployment benefits through September 6, 2021.
3. The Economic Impact Disaster Loan (EIDL) program will also receive \$15 billion for an Advance Grant program. The new program is designed to help businesses that previously applied for a grant under the EIDL Advance program-a now-terminated program that provided up to \$10,000 grants to struggling businesses early in the public health emergency-but that did not receive the full amount. The SBA will contact businesses that may qualify and will provide more detailed eligibility and application instructions.
4. The Paycheck Protection Program also received an additional \$7 billion in funding, but not an extension of time, the program is still scheduled to end on March 31, 2021. The major provisions of the program remain the same, although there was a slight expansion in eligibility to permit larger nonprofits with up to 500 employees to apply.

5. \$350 billion in [aid to state and local governments](#) that can be used to address COVID-19's economic effects through aid to households, small businesses, nonprofits, and affected industries such as tourism and hospitality.
6. The National Council has provided a [comprehensive breakdown](#) of the mental health and substance use disorder-related provisions of this bill.
  - a. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Block Grants: Provides \$3 billion for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment block grant and the Community Mental Health Services block grant (\$1.5 billion each).
  - b. Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs): Provides \$420 million to SAMHSA to fund CCBHC Expansion Grants.
  - c. Provider Relief Funds: \$8.5 billion in new money to the Provider Relief Fund for providers in rural areas and those serving rural communities.
  - d. Other Mental Health/Substance Use Disorder Funding: Provides more than \$450 million in additional funding for SAMHSA and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) programming including funding for mental health and addiction services, workforce education and training, suicide prevention and public education campaigns.

## **Payroll Protection Program**

A bill to move the [Paycheck Protection Program](#) (PPP) application deadline from March 31 to May 31 won approval in the U.S. Senate on Thursday. The final vote to approve the PPP Extension Act of 2021, H.R. 1799, was 92–7. The [Senate's action](#) follows on the heels of the U.S. House of Representatives, which already approved original bill 415–3. As it stands, the bill will be presented to President Joe Biden for his signature several days before the PPP was set to expire. In addition to extending the application period by 60 days the bill also provides an additional 30 days for the SBA to finish processing applications received by May 31.

## **SBA Provided Updated Guidance on EIDL**

The Small Business Administration has released some updated information on the EIDL loans. It appears for loans approved before April 2021; the SBA will be approaching businesses to see if they want a loan increase. And, for those requested after April 2021, they are allowing businesses to apply for up to \$500,000 in loans. Please review these web sites for more information: [SBA EIDL Loans](#) and [SBA COVID-19 Hub](#).

## **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Funding to Support Comprehensive Community Prevention, Treatment, Recovery and Health Services**

The Biden Administration will provide nearly \$2.5 billion in funding to states and territories to address the nation's mental illness and addiction crisis, which has worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), will direct \$1.65 billion in Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant funding and \$825 million in Community Mental Health Services Block Grant funding to states and territories. Funding allocation for each state can be viewed [here](#).

## **SAMHSA Releases SAPT and MH Block Grant Allocations**

SAMHSA released the allocations to states for the [Substance Abuse, Prevention, and Treatment](#) (SAPT) and [MH Block Grant Programs](#) as part of the enhanced COVID funding package. According to the release, Ohio will receive an additional \$27,773,140 in the MH Block Grant and an additional \$60,489,869 in the SAPT Block Grant. OhioMHAS is still working through the SAMHSA Guidance documents and considerations for how these funds may be spent. Additionally, SAMHSA has awarded \$686 million to support Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC) Expansion Grants. Click [HERE](#) to read the full announcement.

## **FCC Launches Emergency Broadband Benefit Program**

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has launched an [Emergency Broadband Benefit Program](#) to help households struggling to pay for internet service during the COVID-19 pandemic. This new benefit will connect eligible households to jobs, critical health care services and virtual classrooms. The Emergency Broadband Benefit will provide a discount of up to \$50 per month towards broadband service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for households on Tribal lands. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute \$10-\$50 toward the purchase price. This is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household. Household eligibility and information on how to sign up for the program when it starts can be found [here](#).

## **COVID-19 State Policy and Resources**

[ODH Coronavirus Website](#) – Primary Source for All Ohio Information

### **ODH COVID-19 Vaccine Program**

**Vaccine Eligibility:** [Eligible Population Expansion](#) on 3/29/21 – anyone over age 16 became eligible.

**Mass Vaccination Sites:** Governor DeWine announced that [18 regional mass vaccination sites and mobile vaccination programs](#) will open on or after March 29th, depending on vaccine supply. Once they are operating, any Ohioan who is eligible to receive the vaccine under the Ohio Department of Health's vaccination plan will be able to get a vaccination at any of Ohio's mass vaccination clinics. On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Ohio will open 11 stationary [mass vaccination sites](#) and four mobile clinics that will travel throughout specific regions of the state. The stationary mass vaccination sites will be held at:

- The Knights of Columbus, Lima, Ohio
- The Lucas County Rec Center, Maumee, Ohio
- Dayton-Montgomery County Convention Center, Dayton, Ohio
- The Celeste Center, Columbus, Ohio
- The Summit County Fairgrounds, Akron, Ohio
- The site of the former Dillard's at Southern Park Mall, Youngstown, Ohio
- The Cintas Center, Cincinnati, Ohio
- The Wilmington Airpark, Wilmington, Ohio
- Adena Medical Education Center, Chillicothe, Ohio
- Wayne Street Medical Campus, Marietta, Ohio
- Colony Square Mall, Zanesville, Ohio

**Vaccine Scheduling:** Ohioans can schedule vaccinations through [gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov) - this includes appointments at the mass vaccination sites. Ohioans that do not use or have access to the internet should call their local health department for support in finding an appointment or call the Ohio Coronavirus hotline (1-833-427-5634) to receive help in finding an appointment.

## **Ohio BWC Indoor Air Quality Grant - Available for SUD Residential Providers; MHAS licensed Class 2 and 3 Residential Programs**

Ohio Bureau of Worker Compensation (BWC) has grant funding through the [Indoor Air Quality Assistance Program](#) that now includes eligible provider groups, including substance use treatment centers, adult care facilities, ICF/DDs, Waiver group homes, and others. The program offers up to \$15,000 in reimbursement for eligible entities to inspect and assess their air quality needs and address those needs through portable air filtration systems, new filtration systems, maintenance on current systems, and other interventions implemented on or after March 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021. The [grant application](#) walks through the details of allowable, covered expenses and process for applying. Information you will need to apply includes the organization's BWC policy number, Medicaid Provider ID number, NPI, MHAS certification/license number, and invoices and proof of payment for incurred expenses. The [FAQ](#) has been updated as well and Q. 39 may be helpful to SUD Residential programs. Questions and the completed (and signed) grant application may be submitted to [grants@bwc.state.oh.us](mailto:grants@bwc.state.oh.us). Questions may also be directed to 1-800-644-6292.

## **Ohio Senate Bill 22**

Governor DeWine [issued a veto of SB 22](#) as expected. His veto message included letters of support from several statewide hospital and medical associations, public health entities, and hospital systems. However, the Ohio General Assembly voted to successfully override the Governor's veto by a vote of 22-10 in the Senate and 62-35 in the Ohio House. With the required three-fifths majority reached to override the veto, the measure will become law in 90 days due to the absence of an emergency clause. Further analysis is underway to consider the impact this may have on programs and services if all public health orders expire.

SB 22 includes several provisions targeting the authority of the governor, Ohio Department of Health, and local health departments to respond to a public health crisis:

- Through passing a concurrent resolution, the legislature can rescind public health orders; state of emergency declarations; and any other executive branch order/rule issued in response to an emergency declaration.
- These orders/declarations can be rescinded as early as the same day they are issued.
- The executive branch cannot reissue a rescinded order for at least 60 days.
- The bill limits state of emergency declaration to 30 days, requiring legislature approval to extend it.
- Limits local boards of health from issuing widespread quarantine orders or any other orders that generally impact schools and businesses.
- Local boards of health can only issue a quarantine/isolation order to individuals who have been diagnosed with a disease or have come in contact with someone who has.

# Telehealth & Billing

## Federal Telehealth Legislation Re-Introduced

Senators Portman (R-OH) and Whitehouse (D-RI) and Representatives McKinley (R-WV), Budd (R-NC), Cicilline (D-RI), and Trone (D-MD) re-introduced the [Telehealth Response for E-prescribing Addiction Therapy Services \(TREATS\) Act](#). The legislation, first introduced last Congress, seeks to support the expansion of telehealth services for substance use treatment. The TREATS Act would allow for the prescription of medication-assisted treatment (MAT) without a prior in-person visit, and for Medicare to be billed for audio-only telehealth services.

## OIG Releases Statement Clarifying Support for Telehealth Fraud Investigation Work

Increased telehealth utilization during the COVID-19 pandemic has attracted attention from federal health care regulators. While utilization [audits for telehealth services delivered during the public health emergency \(PHE\)](#) are planned, such as [home health](#) and [Medicaid behavioral health services](#), the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\) Office of Inspector General \(OIG\)](#) recently released a [statement](#) clarifying that it is important to differentiate between “telefraud” schemes and telehealth fraud. Speaking to OIG’s overall support of telehealth and its ability to improve access to care and health outcomes, they note that common fraud investigations often focus on providers fraudulently billing for items and services unrelated to how the visit was provided. Nevertheless, they affirmed their continued oversight work of temporary COVID-19 telehealth policies and ensuring telehealth is not compromised by fraud that could limit its benefits. OIG Principal Deputy Inspector General, Christi Grimm, concluded the statement with a commitment to providing objective, independent information to inform stakeholders and policymakers about which telehealth flexibilities should be made permanent. The OIG reports should be published later this year. For more information, read the full [OIG statement](#).

## Accessing Supplies and Personal Protective Equipment

As COVID-19 cases continue across the country, access to PPE remains difficult in some areas, and the long term costs for PPE supplies are challenging budgets. MHAS shared that ODH and the state emergency management agency (EMA) have been stockpiling PPE supplies. BH Providers, as essential health care providers, needing access to PPE are encouraged to reach out to your local EMA to seek access to supplies via the stockpiles. You should also connect with your local ADAMH Board, who may be able to support your request to the local EMA. Additionally, the following is the best guidance and creative problem solving available currently for obtaining supplies from reputable sources.

- Contact your local health department(s) or emergency management agency (EMA). To request access to cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment. Here's the list of [Ohio County Emergency Management Directory](#).
- Reach out to local schools (K-12, colleges/universities, cosmetology), restaurants, bars, salons, specialty medicine (dentists, veterinarians, etc.), and through your organization’s social media account(s) to inquire about availability of supplies for purchase or donation.

- The State of Ohio is asking residents and businesses who can donate PPE, or any other essential service or resource, to email [together@governor.ohio.gov](mailto:together@governor.ohio.gov). Please share on your websites and via social media.
- **Ohio Manufacturers Retooling and Repurposing to Create PPE** - alternative sources for some PPE items. Items available here include face shields, hand sanitizer, cotton (reusable) face masks, gowns, non-cotton face masks, gloves, and other items.
- **JobsOhio has created a PPE Database** (scroll down the page) which includes information on manufacturers, distributors, and potential contract manufacturers to connect with PPE resources.
- #GetUsPPE is a grassroots movement founded by physicians and medical researchers on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic. They are working to ensure healthcare facilities have access to supplies they need. Several members have had success with this site. <https://getusppe.org/request/>
- A local company, Aunt Flow, is currently leveraging their network and resources to help provide PPE. Right now, they have available FDA Approved Masks. You can learn more and [order HERE](#). Order limits are currently 2,000. If you have questions or need larger orders, please contact Claire Coder at [claire@auntflow.org](mailto:claire@auntflow.org).
- An Ohio-based company members can contact for N95 masks is Accord Medical Staffing at (440) 205-1930 or [www.accordmedstaffing.com](http://www.accordmedstaffing.com). Please contact Ashley with questions at: [ashleyg@accordmedstaffing.com](mailto:ashleyg@accordmedstaffing.com).
- **WB Mason**. This company appears to have hand sanitizer, thermometers, and surgical masks. Shipments appear to be 2-3 weeks.
- Thermometers: Through our discussions with MHAS and OPS, they have provided us with a source to purchase no-touch thermometers. <https://ihealthlabs.com/>. They currently have stock and can ship supplies quickly. It is recommended to order through their website. Questions can be sent to Jeff Li at [Jeff@ihealthlabs.com](mailto:Jeff@ihealthlabs.com).
- A grassroots effort is underway to assist medical facilities, health care providers (including behavioral health care settings, ACFs, etc.), and first responders who do not have face masks available. **Operation Face Mask**, launched by Air Force veteran and nurse Jenn Andrade and local partners, is recruiting individuals with sewing skills to donate homemade masks to be distributed. The group encourages donors to follow the [recommended guidance](#) from the CDC for sewing a homemade face mask. The group cannot pay for material, sewing supplies, shipping, or time, but welcomes any contributions. Masks may be mailed to Jennifer Andrade, P.O. Box 141415, Columbus, OH 43214. Click [HERE](#) to request masks.
- **Reduced Cost PPE Supplies - National Council Partnership with Panacea Life** - The National Council for Behavioral Health has established a partnership with [Panacea Life](#) to deliver a variety of PPE at reduced rates. To take advantage of this opportunity, [visit Panacea Life's online store](#), where you will find a variety of PPE for purchasing. For information on each item, including shipping information, please click on the item. This store will be regularly updated based on available inventory. Questions - [Contact NC](#).
- NAMI Ohio has plastic face shields and paper gowns available from their PPE distribution. Any behavioral health provider that wants either of these items or both, NAMI Ohio will make those available. There are no limits to your request as they noted they have a significant amount in stock. Please contact Lance Cranmer at (614) 981-8045 and he will take care of distributing it to your organization at no cost.
- Report any unscrupulous vendors or price gouging to the [Attorney General](#).



## COVID-19 State Orders and Guidance

- [All COVID-19 Public Health Orders](#)

## Non-COVID Resources

## Federal Policy & Resources – Non-COVID Related

### Priority Legislation Introduced in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress

- Mental Health Access Improvement Act. H.R. 432 would allow marriage and family therapists and licensed mental health counselors to directly bill Medicare for their services. *A Senate companion bill is expected to be introduced this spring.*
- Medicaid Reentry Act. H.R. 955/S. 285 would allow states to restart Medicaid coverage for eligible incarcerated individuals up to 30 days before their release from jail or prison.
- Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment (MAT) Act. H.R. 2482/S.2074 would remove the DEA X-waiver requirement for health care providers to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder.
- Medication Access and Training Expansion (MATE) Act. H.R. 4974/ S. 4640 would standardize substance use disorder training and education standards for providers that prescribe DEA scheduled medications, such as those used for MAT.
- Telehealth Response for E-prescribing Addiction Therapy Services (TREATS) Act. S. 340 would allow for the prescription of MAT without a prior in-person visit, and for Medicare to be billed for audio-only telehealth services.

### HHS Office of Civil Rights Proposes Revised HIPPA Privacy Regulations

The HHS Office of Civil Rights [Proposed HIPAA Rule Revision](#) that recommend some significant changes to federal privacy regulations.

Key changes include: Below is a high-level overview.

- Patient's rights to access information - more access to patient's information in a shorter time frame - from 30 days to 15 days. More requirements around how patients can view/access records.
- Permitted disclosures for care coordination and case management - disclosures to covered entities or health plans for care coordination or case management to not be limited to minimum necessary disclosure.
- Permitted disclosures believed to be in the best interest of the patient.
- Patient notification requirements - eliminates requirement to obtain written acknowledgement of receipt of policy from patients.

The National Council for Behavioral Health worked with Feldesman, Tucker, Liefer, Fidell, a Washington DC law firm to provide a [PPT overview](#) of the proposed changes.

## **SAMHSA Medication Assisted Treatment Grant**

SAMHSA is accepting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2021 [Medication-Assisted Treatment - Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction \(Short Title: MAT-PDOA\) grants](#). The purpose of this program is to expand/enhance access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) services for persons with an opioid use disorder (OUD) seeking or receiving MAT. The desired outcomes for this program are: 1) an increase in the number of individuals with OUD receiving MAT; and 2) a decrease in illicit opioid drug use and prescription opioid misuse at six-month follow-up.

SAMHSA plans to issue approximately 89-135 awards of up to \$1 million per year for states and up to \$525,000 per year for other domestic public or non-profit entities for up to 5 years. Application Due Date: Tuesday, April 27, 2021.

## **NIMH Mental Health Information in Spanish**

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) offers [basic information on mental health](#) disorders and related topics in Spanish for patients and their families, health professionals, and the public. Printed materials can be ordered free of charge and are available in bulk quantities for distribution at clinics, schools, and community events.

## **Cannabis/Marijuana Awareness & Prevention Toolkit**

The Stanford University School of Medicine released a new [Cannabis/Marijuana Awareness & Prevention Toolkit](#). This web-based toolkit offers theory-based and evidence-informed resources created by educators, parents, and researchers aimed at preventing middle and high school students' use of cannabis/marijuana. The toolkit features four modules, including: *Cannabis: The Basics, Health Effects, THC & the Brain* and *Refusal Skills & Social Norms*.

## **State Policy & Resources – Non COVID Related**

### **Case Western Reserve University Selected to Coordinate Child and Adolescent Center of Excellence**

OhioMHAS announced that the Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) Center for Innovative Practices at the Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education, a part of the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences (CIP/Begun/MSASS), has been awarded a two-year, \$3.6 million contract to coordinate a new statewide Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Center of Excellence (COE). Among its primary responsibilities, the COE will be responsible for building and sustaining a standardized assessment process, evaluating the effectiveness of services, and expanding service and care coordination capacity for children with complex behavioral health needs and their families. The Center will also provide orientation, training, coaching, mentoring, and other functions/supports as needed to support Ohio's statewide child caring provider network. The COE is working in collaboration with the Ohio Children's Alliance (OCA), the Public Children's Services Agencies of Ohio (PCSAO), the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRRA), the Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers (The Ohio Council), Clermont County Family and Children First (Clermont FCFC), and other expert consultants through this effort. Click [HERE](#) to view a fact sheet and [HERE](#) to read the full media announcement.



## **Recovery Requires a Community Funding Available**

The Recovery Requires a Community program has funds available and is accepting new applications. [Recovery Requires a Community](#) helps individuals with a behavioral health diagnosis by providing financial assistance for transitioning from nursing homes to sustainable community living. Program funds can be used in many ways to help an individual transition and can also be used to help recently transitioned individuals to avoid re-admission to a nursing facility. Some examples of Recovery assistance include short-term housing assistance, a one-time payment of utility arrears, short term supportive services (such as home health aide/peer support services), or other needs that will support the individual's ability to live in the community. For more information and to inquire about funds, please email [Recovery@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:Recovery@mha.ohio.gov).

## **Ethical Considerations for Peer Recovery Supporter Dual Certification**

OhioMHAS recognizes that some certified Peer Recovery Supporters (PRS) hold credentials from other credentialing boards such as the Counselor, Social Worker and Marriage and Family Therapist Board and the Chemical Dependency Professional Board. OhioMHAS is in support of holding a dual license and certification with clear delineation between the roles. When employed and serving in a dual role as a Peer Supporter and/or counselor, it is an ethical obligation of all dually credentialed individuals to communicate clearly to clients the role in which they are functioning. It is essential to create clear and understandable distinctions between the duties of a Peer Recovery Supporter (PRS) and another licensed role to avoid any compromise of ethical boundaries with any other license. A Peer Supporter must avoid serving a client in both roles. Peer Recovery Supporters are encouraged to consult with their supervisor(s), or OhioMHAS to clarify any dilemmas relating to professional practice. For more information, visit the [OhioMHAS Peer Supporter web resource page](#) and see "Dual Certification" for additional details or email [ohiopeercertification@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:ohiopeercertification@mha.ohio.gov).

## **Behavioral Health Connection Referral Network (B-CON)**

You have likely heard of the [Behavioral Health Connection Referral Network](#) (B-CON) built on the OpenBeds platform by OhioMHAS. If not, more details are available below in the slide deck from one of their recent presentations. You can also contact Tracy Oswald, the Project Manager, with any questions. Her contact info along with additional steps and resources for onboarding are on the Landing Page link below. It is a streamlined process to onboard and includes a no fee subscription agreement, account creation and training on the Network's use. Details are:

- A link to the no fee Subscription Agreement, accessible via the [Landing Page](#)
- A link to Jeremy Prather's availability for [workflow discussion/account creation](#)
- The [slide deck](#) from the presentation

OpenBeds is excited to begin working with providers to create the network! Please reach out to them to be a part of this exciting initiative.

## **MHAS Financial Literacy and Education**

Money can be a trigger for substance use. When people are aware of this trigger and plan for how they will manage their paychecks, tax returns, etc., it can help them avoid impulsive spending including on alcohol and drugs. The Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services created this [financial literacy education resource list](#) to help people living with and recovering from substance use disorders and their supportive allies

plan for their financial and behavioral health. The list is not exhaustive. Some of these services are provided for free while others have a cost.

## **MHAS Suicide Prevention Resources**

During this time of increased stressors, it is important to have access to the resources that can help both children and adults to cope, heal, strengthen, and grow. MHAS has provided guides and toolkits to provide access to those resources as well as all the tools needed to support an appropriate awareness campaign. Each initiative has a built-in education and stigma-reduction component, aimed at changing attitudes and strengthening supports for those in need. The website links [HERE](#) will take visitors directly to the “plug and play” assets for each campaign. The toolkits include downloadable educational resources, including videos, for parents and educators. Additionally, available are youth specific guides.

- [Youth, Parents/Caregivers and Educators Mental Health and Wellness Outreach Campaign Guide](#)
- [Youth Mental Health and Wellness Social Media Campaign Guide](#)

## **February State Revenue Projections Remain Strong**

The Office of Budget and Management released [February revenue data](#) showing general revenue tax receipts finished the month at about 10.6% or \$182 million above budget estimates. Non-auto sales tax was 3.8% above estimate, auto sales tax was above estimate for the 9th straight month coming in 23.3% above estimate in February. Personal income tax estimates and commercial activity tax (CAT) were also above estimates. This bodes well as we continue to advocate for additional funds in the FY 22-23 state budget.

## **Attorney General Yost Releases Updated ‘Yellow Book’**

Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost released the 2021 edition of the [Sunshine Laws Manual](#), a one-stop resource for information on the Ohio Public Records and Open Meetings Acts.

The manual, commonly known as the “Yellow Book,” reflects the past year’s law changes and legal decisions affecting Ohio’s open government laws. The attorney general’s Public Records Unit annually updates the manual to help citizens understand their rights and to help public servants understand their obligations under the laws.

The unit also created a model public records policy for local governments to use as a guide when creating their own policies. These resources and more are available on the attorney general’s website at [www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Sunshine](http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Sunshine). Sunshine Week is a national initiative promoting government transparency and access to freedom of information resources. Since 2005, it has been recognized annually during the week which includes March 16.

## **Ohio’s Strategic Action Plan on Aging**

Ursel J. McElroy, Director of the Ohio Department of Aging, released Ohio’s [Strategic Action Plan on Aging \(SAPA\)](#). The goals of the SAPA are that all Ohioans live longer, healthier lives with dignity and autonomy and that disparities and inequities among older Ohioans are eliminated. The SAPA prioritizes 15 issues to improve the lives of all older Ohioans. It also provides a menu of evidence-informed strategies to be implemented at the state and local levels to improve outcomes.

The SAPA's key issues are organized into six topic areas: community conditions, healthy living, access to care, social connectedness, population health, and preserving independence. Within each topic area, priority populations most affected by those issues are identified. Two principles guide this work: elder justice and equity. Elder justice is achieved by fostering and promoting systems, policies, and beliefs that value aging, dismantle ageism, and create an age-integrated society. Equity requires dismantling ageism and the compounding effects of ageism and other forms of discrimination.

To achieve the goals of the SAPA, Director McElroy is calling on state and local partners in the public and private sectors to act on the SAPA by aligning with its issues, advocating for policy change and funding, implementing one or more of the evidence-informed strategies, partnering and collaborating, and evaluating the state's progress.

## **Coparenting Survey for Divorced Fathers**

Case Western Reserve University is conducting an IRB-approved research project focusing on the coparenting experience of divorced fathers. The goal is to learn more about this population to improve outcomes for children of divorced parents and expand the resources available to patients and practitioners working with divorced fathers. They are asking mental health boards and community organizations throughout Ohio if they would be willing to assist in emailing out [this flyer](#). The flyer includes a link to an anonymous survey. All survey data will be completely de-identified, and their research team will have no contact with any study participants. Please feel free to contact [dadsstudy@case.edu](mailto:dadsstudy@case.edu) for further information. Thank you so much for your assistance in this important research on the coparenting experience of Fathers.

## **ORH Releases Report on Recovery Housing Resident Outcomes**

Ohio Recovery Housing released, [Recovery Housing in Ohio: Analysis of Resident Survey Data](#), a new report analyzing the impact of recovery housing in Ohio. "This report reaffirms the vital role that recovery-focused alcohol-and drug free living environments play in helping Ohioans find pathways to wellness and long-term success," said OhioMHAS Director Lori Criss.

### **Key highlights include:**

- **Increased employment** – More than half of respondents at move-out were employed, compared to 21 percent at move-in.
- **Positive Community Engagement** – 46 percent of respondents who were not working at six months, were instead engaged in regular volunteer or service-work.
- **Decreased Criminal Justice Involvement** – it is less likely for a respondent to have experienced an arrest in the past 30 days at six months (0.6 percent) or move-out (2 percent) than move-in (5 percent).
- **Family Reunification** - It is nearly twice as common for a parent to indicate that their child is in their custody and residing with them at move-out (11 percent) vs. move-in (6 percent), indicating that parents can successfully reunite with their children.
- **Developed Recovery Capital** – 98 percent of respondents moving out of recovery housing indicated that they were actively involved in an ongoing recovery support activity.
- **Housing Stability** – 91 percent of move out respondents indicated that they were moving out to their own home, to rejoin their family, move in with a friend, or other stable independent living environment.

# Trainings and Conferences

## **Introductory Webinar for New Child and Adolescent BH Center of Excellence – April 7**

Plan to join Governor Mike DeWine's Office of Children's Initiatives and the Ohio Departments of Developmental Disabilities, Health, Job and Family Services, Medicaid, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Youth Services, and Ohio Family and Children First, for an introductory overview of Ohio's new *Statewide Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Center of Excellence* on **April 7 at 1 p.m.** Among its primary responsibilities, the new Center will be responsible for building and sustaining a standardized assessment process, evaluating the effectiveness of services, and expanding service and care coordination capacity for children with complex behavioral health needs and their families. The Center will also provide orientation, training, coaching, mentoring, and other functions/supports as needed to support Ohio's statewide child caring provider network. Registration is not required. Please use [this link](#) to join the Microsoft Teams meeting. Click [HERE](#) for a fact sheet about the new Center and [HERE](#) to view the March 10 media release announcing Case Western Reserve University's Center for Innovative Practices as the coordinator for the new Center.

## **Addiction Studies Institute**

The 30th Annual Addiction Studies Institute conference, will be held virtually, June 18 - 19, 2021, and features Tia Dayton, MD as the keynote speaker. Dr. Dayton is a senior fellow at The Meadows and author of fifteen books including *The Soulful Journey of Recovery*, *The ACoA Trauma Syndrome*, *Emotional Sobriety* and *Forgiving and Moving on*. She has also been a guest expert of NBC, CNN, an MSNBC.

The Addiction Studies Institute annual conference, sponsored by The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and Ohio State's Talbot Hall, is one of the largest educational gatherings in the Midwest. This conference brings together leading experts to share the best tools, information and research available to help those struggling with addiction.

To learn more about the conference, continuing education credits, and early bird discount rates, please visit the registration page [HERE](#).

## **Behavioral Health Workforce Development Training Series**

The Ohio State University College of Social Work, in partnership with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, has scheduled free behavioral health workforce development trainings into April. Sessions with an \* are geared for professionals working for one of Ohio's CareLine agencies, though they are open to the public. Click on the training to learn more and register. Please email questions to Cindy Clouner at [clouner.2@osu.edu](mailto:clouner.2@osu.edu).

**April 2:** [Suicide Prevention for Veterans\\*](#) | 1-3:15 p.m.

**April 5:** [Interactional Supervision](#) | 9 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

**April 15:** [ABC's of MAT: Introduction to Medication-Assisted Treatment](#) | 9 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

**April 21:** [Motivational Interviewing](#) | 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

## **Trauma Informed Care Trainings for Housing Providers**

Through a partnership with American Institutes for Research in the Behavioral Sciences (AIR), the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) will host an introductory webinar on trauma and trauma-informed care for agency leadership and staff for Recovery Housing, Adult Care Facilities, and related agencies and stakeholders. This free webinar will provide participants with a foundational understanding of trauma and its effects on service recipients and providers, and core elements of trauma-informed care. This training is open to providers of all housing types. Residential Facility Class 2 Operators and staff will receive 2 hours of mental health training towards licensure and certification.

Please sign up for **ONE** class:

- **April 14** | 11 a.m.-1 p.m. | [Register](#)
- **April 29** | 10 a.m.-Noon | [Register](#)

## **Ohio University Peer Recovery Supporter Training Program and Apprenticeship**

Ohio University is offering a Peer Recovery Supporter (PRS) training and apprenticeship program funded, in part, by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration. This program includes the OhioMHAS PRS training and certification and 130 hours field experience hours at a partnering behavioral health agency. Once a trainee is certified, he or she will be enrolled into an apprenticeship program for 2,000 hours at a partnering behavioral health agency. During the apprenticeship, trainees will have an opportunity to refine the skills gained during training and make community connections. A stipend will be provided to all participants for time spent in the program. Stipends will be paid out at various steps in the program. Participants must be able to travel regularly to one of the following cities for field experience and an apprenticeship: Chillicothe, Hillsboro, Lexington, St. Clairsville. For questions, e-mail Sasha Collins: [collinss1@ohio.edu](mailto:collinss1@ohio.edu).

## **Adapting and Accelerating Adult Conference – April 23**

In collaboration with [Youth to Youth International](#) and support from the County of Summit Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services Board and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Nordon Youth to Youth has announced that it will host "Adapting and Accelerating", a one-day, virtual experience for adults serving youth programs on April 23. The training aims to provide participants with tools and strategies for not only adapting to the needs of young people now but accelerating and taking their programs to the next level despite the pandemic. Click [HERE](#) for more information and to register.

## **ADAPAO Conference 2021 - May 4-6, 2021**

Registration for the May 4-6, 2021, ADAPAO Conference is live! Registration information is available on the [ADAPAO Events](#) page at [www.adapao.org](http://www.adapao.org). The conference, themed **Doing Prevention Well**, focuses on using prevention science, building effective prevention organizations and systems, and maintaining wellness while engaging in prevention practice. The ADAPAO 2021 Conference is a virtual event using the Zoom platform.

## **Opiate and Other Drugs Conference – May 11-13**

The Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities, in partnership with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, will host [Ohio's 2021 Opiate and Other Drugs Conference: Exploring Better Pathways for Care](#) on May 11-13. This will be Ohio's 11th annual Opiate Conference and its first ever virtual Opiate Conference experience. The conference will focus on opiates, stimulants, and other substance use disorders, specifically on efforts related to prevention, education, intervention, treatment, recovery, family supports, community engagement, and more. Click [HERE](#) for sponsor and exhibitor registration and [HERE](#) for participant registration information.

## **Eighth Annual Trauma-Informed Care Summit – May 18-19**

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) will host the *Eighth Annual Trauma-Informed Care Summit* virtually, on May 18-19. This year's theme is "Creating Environments of Resiliency and Hope: Trauma-Informed Care Inside a Pandemic." Cost is \$39. Click [HERE](#) to register online.

## **Ohio Power of Postvention Workshop Series**

The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation, in partnership with OhioMHAS and the American Association of Suicidology, is hosting a seven-part *Power of Postvention* workshop series, with trainings to be held every other Friday beginning on April 2 at 1 p.m. and continuing through June 25. Cost is \$50 for the entire series. Click [HERE](#) for more information on workshop themes/dates/times/ and to register online. Please direct questions to [Austin.lucas@ohiospf.org](mailto:Austin.lucas@ohiospf.org).

## **Bring SMART Recovery into Your Organization**

SMART Recovery is a self-empowering program that helps people achieve independence from addictive behaviors. Meetings are free, guided by trained facilitators, and available online and face-to-face.

Facilitators and participants in SMART Recovery meetings support each other by using evidence-based tools and techniques that are effective for overcoming problematic addictive behaviors (smoking, drinking, eating disorders, drugs, gambling, etc.). SMART provides programs and resources for individuals, family and friends, treatment professionals, courts and corrections, veterans and first responders, and young adults.

SMART Recovery meetings and services are:

- Self-empowering, evidence-based and time-tested
- Respectful of all beliefs/non-beliefs
- Non-stigmatizing (participants are not labeled)
- Easily integrated with other pathways to recovery
- Compatible with Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)

**Special Offer on SMART Recovery for Professionals Training!** For a limited time, SMART Recovery is offering a \$50 discount for Ohio Council members who sign up for SMART Recovery for Professionals Training. (options include online, self-paced or instructor-led via Zoom).

To learn more about SMART Recovery, visit [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org). To learn more about the online training offer, visit <https://www.smartrecovery.org/the-ohio-council/>.



## **LOSS Team Trainings**

[LOSS Community Services](#), with support from OhioMHAS and the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation, will host an upcoming virtual training. Click the link for more information and to register.

**April 17** | [Volunteer Training for LOSS Teams throughout Ohio](#)

## **Ohio Council Staff Contact Information**

The Ohio Council Staff are continuing to work remotely, but we want to make sure you can reach us. If you need help - have questions - or ideas to share, use the below emails to contact us:

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