

| February 2021

# State Representative Jeffrey Crossman

## Ohio House District 15 Statehouse Legislative Update

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Dear Neighbor,

Last month, Ohio House Democrats sent a survey to constituents asking how we can make Ohio a better place to live, work, go to school, start a business, and raise a family. The response was overwhelming: Ohioans want a government that works for **you** by investing in our communities, our children and our future.

The responses gave a real and honest account of what it's like to be an Ohioan, from mounting challenges like struggling to access affordable healthcare, the spread of COVID-19, and an economy that too often rewards wealth and not the hard work of everyday Ohioans.

You also shared with us your hopes for the future of our state, as a place where everyone has the opportunity to succeed and thrive rather than “just get by.”

These concerns are at the forefront of our priorities for this General Assembly and in the coming days and weeks as we work to develop the state's two-year state budget, we will work to craft a budget that reflects these priorities.

Our focus remains the same—to put *people* before politics and to work together to create jobs, build back our economy and restore the promise of opportunity for all Ohioans.

My office is always here to help. You can contact me at [Rep15@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:Rep15@ohiohouse.gov) or 614-466-3485.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeff Crossman".

Rep. Jeffrey A. Crossman  
State Representative  
15th House District



## February Is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month



OHIO HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

FEBRUARY IS

### TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

To learn more, visit  
[www.odvn.org](http://www.odvn.org)

February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. Teen dating violence is an issue that impacts everyone – not just teens – but parents, teachers, friends and communities as well.

This month, we are raising awareness about teen dating violence and promoting safe, healthy relationships.

In the 132nd General Assembly (2018), democratic legislation HB 1, was passed to expand domestic violence protection orders to those in a dating or intimate relationships was signed into law on July 6th, 2018.

Prior to HB 1's passage, Ohio law did not allow victims of dating violence strong protections. "Dating violence" was treated far different from domestic violence because these relationships did not fit the state's definition of "domestic violence."

Because of HB1, the state now includes individuals in dating relationships under Ohio's definition of domestic violence for the purpose of obtaining a civil protection order, gaining access to battered women's shelters, and included in the Attorney General's victim's bill of rights.

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse, you can find help statewide at Ohio Domestic Violence Network at [1.800.934.9840](tel:18009349840) or [www.odvn.org](http://www.odvn.org).



## Rep. Jeffrey A. Crossman Announces \$100 Million to Help Ohioans Pay Rent, Utility Costs Amid Pandemic.

Columbus, OH– State Representative Jeffrey A. Crossman (D-Parma) recently announced the State Controlling Board approved \$100 million in federal funds for the state's Rent Assistance Program to aid Ohioans impacted by the pandemic with financial assistance to pay rent, rent arrears, utilities, and home energy costs arrears.

"I am pleased the state is now releasing this much needed relief for constituents. We have received so many phone calls and emails requesting assistance and we now know that there is some relief from people available. Many have lost their jobs and we must ensure that we find ways to keep individuals and families in their homes. The long term impact of housing insecurity harms entire communities," said Rep. Crossman.

The Development Services Agency will award funds to local Community Action Agencies (CAA) according to the low-to-moderate-income populations and unemployment rates within each county. Ohioans at or below 80 percent of the area median income (AMI) are eligible for assistance.

Additionally, the Controlling Board February 8th approved the transfer of \$20.9 million in CARES Act funding to the Department of Health's 2021 budget to support data analysis, public information about COVID-19 and vaccines, and related critical outreach to Ohio citizens, and other response costs paid by the department. Another \$8 million will go to purchase additional PPE equipment to aid the state's ongoing coronavirus response efforts.

Rep. Crossman has also introduced House Bill 20 (HB 20) which seeks a delay on evictions and foreclosures until the COVID state of emergency ends. He and his joint sponsor Rep. David Leland testified in the House's Civil Justice committee on February 23, 2021.



## Understanding Unemployment

An update on the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 (CAA), which was enacted on December 27, 2020 and filing you 2020 tax returns:

**If you have any questions regarding your unemployment of 1099 G Tax Fraud & filing you 2020 taxes please reach out to my office at :**

**614-466-3485 or rep15@ohiohouse.gov**

### **PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (PUA)**

- PUA claims can be filed for weeks prior to December 27.
- All claimants will receive all benefits they are eligible for, retroactive to December 27, 2020.
- System Upgrades by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, required by the new federal mandates, have made federal PUA again available to 134,000 Ohioans who have been waiting to receive these benefits since the program expired on December 26th. These upgrades also allow for Ohioans to submit new PUA applications.
- Once implemented, PUA will provide up to an additional 11 weeks of benefits, to a maximum of up to 50 weeks.

### **PANDEMIC EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION (PEUC)**

- New PEUC applications can be filed, and those who previously were approved to receive up to 13 weeks of PEUC benefits through the CARES Act may file claims for those weeks and receive payment.
- All claimants will receive all benefits they are eligible for, retroactive to as early as December 27, 2020.

### **FEDERAL PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION (FPUC)**

- ODJFS expects to be able to issue FPUC payments by the third week in January for PUA claimants who previously were approved to receive up to 39 weeks of benefits.
- All claimants will receive all benefits they are eligible for, retroactive to as early as December 27, 2020.

### **MIXED EARNER UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**

- The legislation created a new program for individuals eligible for traditional unemployment benefits who also have earned wages in self-employment.
- Once implemented, this program will provide an additional \$100 a week, in addition to the \$300 FPUC benefit.

### **1099 G FRAUD/ FILING 2019 TAXES REGARDING UNEMPLOYMENT**

- JFS is expected to send 1.7 million 1099 G forms to those that they have a record of receiving benefits -- **Many who receive will not have received unemployment benefits.**
- Taxpayers who receive an incorrect Form 1099-G for unemployment benefits they did not receive should contact the issuing state agency to request a revised Form 1099-G showing they did not receive these benefits. **Taxpayers who are unable to obtain a timely, corrected form from states should still file an accurate tax return, reporting only the income they received.** A corrected Form 1099-G showing zero unemployment benefits in cases of identity theft will help taxpayers avoid being hit with an unexpected federal tax bill for unreported income.
- Please visit these sites for more detail on unemployment theft: <https://unemploymenthelp.ohio.gov/IdentityTheft/> or <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-offers-guidance-to-taxpayers-on-identity-theft-involving-unemployment-benefits>

For additional updates and information, please visit: <https://jfs.ohio.gov/caa/>

# MetroHealth and the Office of Opioid Safety



Located in Cleveland, Ohio, MetroHealth is the public, safety-net, medical system funded by Cuyahoga County. As a comprehensive medical system, MetroHealth has served the community, regardless of their ability to pay, since 1837. As an

institution committed to the health of the entire community, MetroHealth continues to work on solutions that address the crisis of opioid use disorder. MetroHealth's Office of Opioid Safety (OOS) was established in 2017 to promote opioid safety throughout MetroHealth and in the greater community through education, advocacy and treatment.

The MetroHealth System provides emergency care for over 140,000 patients annually in its main campus emergency department (ED) and three community EDs located throughout Cuyahoga County. The ED has an Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accredited residency program in emergency medicine based at MetroHealth and shared with the Cleveland Clinic Foundation to provide additional training sites for residents in both urban and community settings. In January 2020, we began training with two addiction medicine fellows in our addiction medicine fellowship training program recently approved by the ACGME

Here is the link connecting people directly to the external website, which hosts a variety of resources: <https://www.metrohealth.org/office-of-opioid-safety>

Here is the email address as well as the Project Dawn hotline in the event someone needs assistance:

Office of Opioid Safety Email address: [opioidsafety@metrohealth.org](mailto:opioidsafety@metrohealth.org)

Metro Health's Project Dawn Hotline: (216) 778-5677

In addition, here is the National Helpline provided by SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), a confidential, free, 24 hour a day, 365 day a year information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders:

SAMSHA 24 hour hotline – 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

## United Way 2-1-1 Cuyahoga County Resource

United Way 2-1-1 provides help when you need it. Dial three numbers – 2-1-1 – and a compassionate professional will help you understand, find and access community resources 24 hours a day, every day.

**[For help registering for your COVID-19 vaccine call 2-1-1 or visit https://www.211oh.org/](https://www.211oh.org/)**

# NEED HELP?



CALL 2-1-1

OR

VISIT 211OH.ORG  
TO CHAT ONLINE

### YOUR LINK TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

Food, housing and utility assistance | Employment services | Health care | Counseling services | Drug and alcohol treatment | Legal services | Veterans' services | Income support | Tax preparation assistance | And more



FREE | CONFIDENTIAL | AVAILABLE 24/7  
GET CONNECTED | GET HELP

# COVID-19 Vaccine Resources for Cuyahoga County

- **Link for residents to register for the vaccine in Cuyahoga County Board of Health for Phases 1A & 1B:** <https://www.ccbh.net/vax/>. Those groups are able to submit their contact information online.
- **Vaccine links:** [www.coronavirus.ohio.gov/vaccine](http://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov/vaccine) (a list of documents and graphics are available)
- **Myth vs. Facts:** <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/covid-19-vaccination-program/19-vaccine-myths-vs-facts/covid-19-vaccine-myths-vs-facts>
- **FAQ:** <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/resources/general-resources/frequently-asked-questions+covid-19-vaccine>
- **Vaccine Data:** <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/dashboards/vaccination-dashboard/covid-19-vaccination-dashboard>

## House District 15 Utility Resources

### **First Energy:** [The Illuminating Company \(firstenergycorp.com\)](http://The Illuminating Company (firstenergycorp.com))

The link above provides a great deal of information about various support programs, payment plans and other resources. While the site contains helpful information customers may always call our customer care department at **1-800-589-3101**.

### **Cleveland Power Company:** <https://www.cpp.org/Payment-Options>

If you are worried about your bill, received a disconnection notice, your electricity has been disconnected, or need to set up a payment plan call the Customer Care Representative to help you.

#### **Payment Assistance- (216)-664-2782,**

You can make payments by mail, phone, online, or in person.

If you are paying online and your balance is over 30 days old, contact the Call Center at 216-664-4600 and report your payment to prevent disconnection of service.

### **Dominion Energy:** <https://www.dominionenergy.com/ohio/billing>

Higher energy bills can be common in the winter, but Dominion Energy gives you payment options to make sure an unexpected bill doesn't put a chill on your winter season. The link above guides you through options for payment plans for your bills.

Dominion can also help with your questions at **800-362-7557**

### **The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland**

For legal help, call (216) 687-1900  
<https://laslev.org>

### **Cleveland Tenants Organization Cleveland**

216-432-0617  
<http://www.clevelandtenants.org/>

### **Housing Center, Housing Research and Advocacy Center Cleveland**

216-361-9240  
<http://www.thehousingcenter.org/>

### **Heights Community Congress Cleveland Heights**

216-321-6775  
<http://www.heightscongress.org/>



## COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Schedule

Since Jan. 19, vaccines have slowly become available to older Ohioans over the age of 70.

Below is the vaccine eligibility schedule for February. This may be subject to change due to availability of vaccine supplies.

- **Feb. 1, 2021** – Ohioans 70 years of age and older; employees of K-12 schools that wish to remain or return to in-person or hybrid models.
- **Feb. 8, 2021** – Ohioans 65 years of age and older.
- **Feb. 15, 2021** – Ohioans with severe congenital, developmental, or early-onset, and inherited conditions.

To learn more about the vaccination process, visit: [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

## Preventing the Spread of COVID-19

It might be a new year, but COVID-19 hasn't gone away. Take these precautions to prevent the spread of the virus.

- Stay home as much as possible to prevent the spread of the virus.
- Wear a mask when around people who are not in your household.
- Do not hold large in-person gatherings. If holding smaller parties, limit attendance to 10 or fewer people and hold the event outside if possible.
- Wipe down commonly used surfaces such as light switches, countertops and door knobs daily with disinfectant.
- Wash your hands often for 20 seconds with soap and warm water.

Getting a flu vaccine is an easy and quick way to protect yourself and others from the flu and its complications.



Since it is likely that flu viruses and COVID-19 will both spread this fall and winter, it's more important than ever to get a flu vaccine to prevent healthcare systems from being overwhelmed with flu and COVID-19 patients this year.

Visit [vaccinefinder.org](https://vaccinefinder.org) to find nearby locations that offer the flu vaccine.