



Department
of Health

News Release

www.odh.ohio.gov



Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor

Lance D. Himes, Interim Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 19, 2020

Contacts: ODH Office of Communications (614) 644-8562

State Minority Health Strike Force Launches “More Than A Mask” Campaign

COLUMBUS –The State of Ohio’s Minority Health Strike Force has launched the “More Than A Mask” campaign to provide specific messaging and resources within communities of color in Ohio to protect and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence has shown that communities of color have been disproportionately affected by the virus, especially African American and Latino communities. African Americans represent 14% of Ohio's population but 24% of positive COVID-19 cases, 32% of COVID-19 hospitalizations, and 19% of COVID-19 deaths in the state. Similarly, at least 6% of those who have tested positive for COVID-19 in Ohio are Latino, despite only representing 3.9% of Ohio's population.

“As Governor DeWine said in his letter in Ohio’s Executive Response: A Plan of Action to Advance Equity, inequities can only be changed by intentional acts to break down barriers,” said Ohio COVID-19 Minority Health Strikeforce Co-Chairs, Alisha Nelson and Ursel McElroy. “The campaign features real people living in Ohio communities and will spur healthy behaviors to keep our friends and families safe through targeted COVID-19 prevention messaging.”

The campaign, created in collaboration with the Us4Us Coalition, utilizes both paid advertising strategies and local grassroots efforts to reach minority community members across the state of Ohio. Warhol and WALL ST, Fountain Management Group, and GetCR8V, formed the Us4Us Coalition to create and implement an effective communication strategy using their over 30-plus years of combined experience to work across multiple sectors using a unified approach regarding education, advocacy, and empowering minority communities in the wake of COVID-19.

In the [“More Than A Mask” video](#), the message is clear: “If we are going to defeat COVID-19 in our community, we are going to need a mask and more.” The campaign will help fill those needs with facts, tools, and inspiration.

Governor Mike DeWine formed the Minority Health Strike Force in April to examine the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on minority communities as well as broader race-related

inequities. The group released on August 13 its [COVID-19 Minority Health Strike Force Blueprint](#).

In response to the Strike Force's report, Governor DeWine issued [Ohio's Executive Response: A Plan of Action to Advance Equity](#). The action plan outlines efforts to reinforce the DeWine Administration's commitment to advancing health equity and establishing Ohio as a model for justice, equity, opportunity, and resilience.

For more information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov/more.

###