



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ANDY BESHEAR

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

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Contact: Crystal Staley
502-545-3714

Sebastian Kitchen
502-330-0799
502-564-2611

Gov. Beshear: Kentucky Preparing for COVID-19 Case Surge

Visit the Governor's [Facebook](#) page to watch today's news conference
FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 20, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Tuesday said as COVID-19 cases continue to increase, the state is beginning to prepare for a fall and winter surge in cases.

The First Family all tested negative for COVID-19 again today.

Today marks the fourth-highest number of daily COVID-19 cases reported in the commonwealth, including the day a backlog in cases was reported. This is also the first time since August that the state's positivity rate has been higher than 5%.

"Today's report is grim. It is grim because it shows that we are not just continuing in our third escalation, but this one is probably now the second most worrisome escalation we have seen surpassed only by that original March increase," said Gov. Beshear.

The Governor announced that due to this escalation, the commonwealth has renewed state surge preparations, including reviewing plans about the capacity in hospitals, examining possible hotel options, if needed, as well as the use of state

parks. The state is also ensuring operational plans are in place to stand up a field hospital, if necessary.

“Our cases continue to go up, our hospitalization continues to go up and we continue to see more people in the ICU. And if we can’t get everybody’s buy in and we can’t get more people doing the right thing each and every day, my concern is that we are going to experience a real surge that we must avoid,” said Gov. Beshear. “But if we’re going to face it, I want you to know that we are spending our time getting prepared.”

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. Oct. 20, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

- New cases today: 1,312
- New deaths today: 16
- Positivity rate: 5.08%
- Total deaths: 1,342
- Currently hospitalized: 776
- Currently in ICU: 202
- Currently on ventilator: 96

Top counties with the most positive cases today are: Jefferson, Fayette, Laurel, Boone, Nelson, Christian and Pike.

Those lost to the virus today include a 56-year-old woman from Bell County; a 73-year-old man from Boyd County; an 86-year-old woman from Daviess County; two women, ages 96 and 97, from Fayette County; an 82-year-old woman from Hopkins County; four women, ages 67, 74, 76 and 80, from Jefferson County; a 92-year-old woman and three men, ages 64, 94 and 96, from Jessamine County; an 89-year-old man from Marshall County; and a 78-year-old man from Muhlenberg County.

The Governor also paid tribute to another Kentuckian lost to COVID-19, 89-year-old Rev. Robert L. Boyd of Cadiz, who is remembered as a hero and veteran. Rev. Boyd was a pastor of 35 years, a boxer, farmer and historian. Gov. Beshear said Rev. Boyd was a family member of one of the Governor’s security detail. The Governor said family was everything to Rev. Boyd. He was a beloved father,

grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, uncle, cousin and friend. So many who will carry his strength and encouragement in their hearts loved him, the Governor said.

Fast 4

Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman today reminded Kentuckians to vote in the General Election coming up Tuesday, Nov. 3. She asked people to follow the [10 steps](#) to defeat COVID-19, including staying home when you are sick and prioritizing your mental health. She also celebrated Kentuckians who use #MaskUpKY and #MaskUpKentucky hashtags on social media.

In discussing the need to prioritize mental health during the pandemic, Lt. Gov. Coleman focused on preventing youth suicide. She said suicide is the second leading cause of death for people ages 10-24 in the United States claiming 100 young people each week.

“I’m challenging you to participate in the *I Won’t Be Silent* Challenge. This is the Jason Foundation’s challenge to raise the national conversation about the silent epidemic of youth suicide,” Lt. Gov. Coleman said. “Suicide is 100% preventable, and it’s all of our responsibility to put an end to it.”

Visit iwontbesilent.com to learn about the warning signs of suicide and how to help someone in need. For those contemplating suicide, please reach out to the Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

More Information

To view the full daily report, incidence rate map, testing locations, long term-care and other congregate facilities update, school reports, the White House Coronavirus Task Force reports for Kentucky and other key guidance visit, kycovid19.ky.gov

Kentuckians can also access translated COVID-19 information and summaries of the Governor’s news conferences at teamkentuckytranslations.com.

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