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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Beshear Acts to Stop the Spread of COVID-19

State sees biggest one-day spike; 163 positive cases

Visit the Governor's [Facebook](#) page to watch today's news conference

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 24, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear said Tuesday that the state continues to take aggressive action and acknowledged that Kentuckians continue to sacrifice to help stop the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). But the Governor said day-by-day cases are ticking up and Tuesday was the single biggest one-day increase in cases, 39 new. The governor also issued a warning that complacency is the biggest threat against those gains as the global pandemic enters a critical period in the United States.

“With this being the single biggest day that we have had so far with an increase in cases, we are going to have to keep taking increasingly significant steps as we move forward,” Gov. Beshear said. “We know we are in the time in any pandemic when we have escalating cases and we have to act, act now and act in a significant way that protects our people.”

As of Tuesday, Gov. Beshear said Kentucky had 163 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and remains at four deaths attributed to the virus.

With the number of positive cases rising quickly across both the country and the commonwealth as more testing capabilities come online, Gov. Beshear is urging everyone against any rollbacks or lessening of defenses.

Gov. Beshear said they have been expecting the increase and have been preparing. It is also why Gov. Beshear moved aggressively from the start to put Kentucky on a path to flatten the outbreak's curve in the commonwealth and prevent our hospitals from being overwhelmed with sick patients.

Gov. Beshear has urged all Kentuckians to keep doing their part by following the rules of social distancing (keeping at least six feet apart from others), as well as orders to close most businesses, and to not gather in public.

Each day at 5 p.m. ET, Gov. Beshear holds briefings for Kentuckians that are streamed online at his [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) pages.

Case information

As of 5 p.m. March 24, the state's COVID-19 patient information includes 163 who have tested positive. [Click here](#) for the list with details. The Governor said that four Kentuckians have fully recovered. Additional cases and demographics of some cases mentioned were not known by 5 p.m. ET Tuesday so not all cases are listed.

Gov. Beshear said one of the people who tested positive today had attended a coronavirus party and he told Kentuckians not to be so callous as to intentionally go to a gathering and expose yourself to a virus that can kill others, especially our most vulnerable.

“This makes me mad, and it should make you mad,” Gov. Beshear said. “There is the power of forgiveness and we will move on and forgive, but there should not be any more of these parties – for any reason.”

New actions and updates

Non-life-sustaining business to close to in-person service

“With the rise in cases and knowing that these next probably two weeks are going to be some of the most important, we are going to take the next step; so effective Thursday at 8 p.m. we are going to be asking all non-life-sustaining businesses to close to in-person traffic,” Gov. Beshear said. “Even for those who are going to be excepted under this order, we are going to mandate that type of social distance that we have to see out there to protect our people.”

Gov. Beshear said the order will be out on Wednesday to give businesses more guidance. He said many businesses provide life-sustaining services and will be allowed to stay open, even though they must maintain social distancing.

The businesses that can stay open include: grocery stores, drug stores and pharmacies, banks, hardware stores, agricultural operations, gas stations, media, businesses needed for transportation, logistics, shipping, delivery and pick-up, housing, building and construction, laundry, financial services, home-based care and services, professional services, manufacturing and other businesses key to national interests or life-sustaining goods or services, and those covered under the [federal critical infrastructure sector](#).

The governor said most professional services, including attorneys, accountants and those in real estate, can be performed at home.

As he said previously, restaurants can remain open for delivery, curbside pickup and even carry out if they follow guidelines on social distancing.

K-PREP tests canceled

The Kentucky Department of Education has canceled plans to administer the K-PREP assessment for the 2019-2020 school year. The move comes after a waiver was granted by the U.S. Department of Education. K-PREP testing will resume in spring 2021 and current assessments will be in effect until then.

Senior meals being delivered

Gov. Beshear announced that Kentucky is significantly ahead of other Southern states in preparedness, volunteer coordination and meal delivery programs for seniors. On Monday,

March 23, 11,825 meals were served statewide, an increase of 3,825 meals (150%), according to the Department of Health and Family Services.

The Governor said he knows that Trigg, Graves, Mason, Taylor, Lawrence and Christian counties need help preparing more meals for seniors. It is no failure of leadership, but these counties need help making meals for seniors and Kentuckians should reach out to their local elected officials if they can help. The Governor also said many Kentuckians, groups and food banks are doing so much to help and he appreciates it.

Hand sanitizer production

The Governor said many businesses, including food and beverage industries, are making barrels of hand sanitizers for hospitals and first responders.

State workers to food banks

Gov. Beshear said state workers would begin helping at food banks because of the lack of help there during the coronavirus outbreak. "Provided it is a safe environment, we will be there,"

Gov. Beshear said of helping food banks that help Kentuckians in need.

Thanked many

The Governor thanked many people, including an anonymous person who dropped off 4,000 swabs.

"I want to thank whoever it is that dropped off 4,000 swabs today and didn't even walk in to talk about it," Gov. Beshear said. "Swabs are necessary to do kits and tests. Without swabs, you can't do a test. This is running low all over the country and someone came in and just dropped off 4,000 today. I want to thank that individual. Amazing people do amazing things when it's needed the most. So thank you very much."

The Governor also thanked the state's newspapers and TV and radio stations for conducting Public Service Announcements about social distancing and other state guidelines to combat the coronavirus.

Yesterday's actions

Gov. Beshear, along with the Kentucky Public Protection Cabinet (PPC), took executive action to establish the Team Kentucky Fund, a GoFundMe-style online platform to provide financial help to Kentuckians whose employment is affected by the coronavirus. The Governor challenged those who are able to help to make a tax-deductible [donation](#) to the fund.

Gov. Beshear also made changes for employers experiencing mass layoffs, easing the way for anyone laying off 15 or more workers to file through the E-Claims process.

In addition, Gov. Beshear announced the COVID-19 Reporting Hotline (833-KYSAFER or 833-597-2337) that will investigate complaints about non-compliance with coronavirus mandates.

Labor Cabinet personnel will monitor the hotline from 7:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET. A new website where Kentuckians can visit to make online complaints is kysafer.ky.gov.

Other actions by Gov. Beshear

Gov. Beshear has continued to take decisive action since the first case was confirmed in Kentucky. To read the full list of actions Gov. Beshear has taken to protect Kentuckians and limit the spread of the coronavirus, visit governor.ky.gov/covid19.

More information

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourages people to follow

these [steps to prevent illness](#). Kentuckians who want advice can call the state hotline at 800-722-5725 or call their local health care provider. To read Gov. Beshear's news releases and watch other news regarding COVID-19 visit [governor.ky.gov](#). To listen to questions from Kentuckians and media and answers from Gov. Beshear watch his news conferences online on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

Gov. Beshear continues to urge Kentuckians to be cautious of rumors and depend on proven and good sources of news, including [governor.ky.gov](#), [kycovid19.ky.gov](#) and the Governor's official social media accounts [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

Team Kentucky hashtags for social media

#TeamKentucky, #TogetherKY, #Patriot and #HealthyAtHome.

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