



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ANDY BESHEAR

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Crystal Staley
502-545-3714

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

Gov. Beshear Provides Update on COVID-19

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

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 24, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Monday updated Kentuckians on the state's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) in the commonwealth.

"Let's start where we need to start – by remembering that we're going to get through this and we're going to get through it together," the Governor said. "We need to make sure we're not at a point in time, kind of like right at the beginning of the summer, where we let our guard down and we just get tired of doing what it takes, we want to go back to our normal life and this virus ultimately spikes."

'The Fast 4 at 4'

Gov. Beshear on Monday introduced "The Fast 4 at 4," which will highlight a variety of issues of importance to Kentuckians and the commonwealth.

On Monday, he reminded voters they can now go to www.GoVoteKy.com to request an absentee ballot for the Nov. 3 general election, if they are concerned about COVID-19 and voting.

"Voting is the bedrock principle of this democracy," said Gov. Beshear. "The way that you are heard is to make sure you vote, and there are going to be more ways to vote now than ever before."

The Governor asked all Kentuckians to remember to fill out the U.S. Census forms, which in addition to being mandated by the U.S. Constitution is crucial to states for funding.

He also reminded Kentuckians that the state issued a [travel advisory](#) in July that recommends people avoid visiting states with coronavirus case positivity rates of 15% or higher. Among the states currently exceeding that threshold, according to [data from Johns Hopkins](#), are Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, Nevada and Idaho. Anyone returning to Kentucky after visiting these places is asked to self-quarantine for 14 days.

Finally, Gov. Beshear asked Kentuckians to take advantage of the free COVID-19 testing available at sites throughout the commonwealth.

“There are testing options all over Kentucky,” the Governor said, “and there are options close to you. If you are going to engage in new activities or haven’t been tested in a while, please get tested.”

For information on more than 200 testing sites, [click here](#).

Case Information – Monday, Aug. 24

As of 4 p.m. Aug. 24, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 43,899 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 373 of which were newly reported Monday. Sixty-eight of the newly reported cases were from children ages 18 and younger, of which 14 were children ages 5 and under. The youngest was only 7 months old.

“The normal beginning of a school year has us all feeling the same things: We want to get over this, we want to get our kids out of the house. And I, at least, am seeing a change that goes beyond the ‘When to return to school?’ debate,” said Gov. Beshear. “We’re seeing more people trying to get out of quarantine when the health department has recommended it. Those feelings are natural but they’re harmful. This is a war. Whether we win or lose depends on the number of battles that we win. Let’s pick it up because lives depend on it.”

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported four new deaths Monday, raising the total to 885 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Monday include a 74-year-old man from Harlan County; an 82-year-old man and a 94-year-old woman from Jefferson County; and a 71-year-old woman from Marion County.

“We’ve been able to push our mortality rate almost a percentage point lower than the national average,” said Gov. Beshear. “But we had more deaths announced last week than in any week where we’ve been battling this virus.”

As of Monday, there have been at least 822,904 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 4.77%. At least 9,544 Kentuckians have recovered from the virus.

For additional information, including up-to-date lists of positive cases and deaths, as well as breakdowns of coronavirus infections by county, race and ethnicity, [click here](#). To see all recent daily reports, [click here](#).

Case Information – Sunday, Aug. 23

Due to limited reporting on the weekends, some updated information is now available from Sunday, Aug. 23.

As of Sunday, there were 821,828 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate was at 4.76% and at least 9,524 Kentuckians had recovered from the virus.

Evictions

Gov. Beshear on Monday issued a new [executive order](#) to provide protections and clarity on the issues surrounding evictions during the coronavirus crisis. The Governor suspended evictions as the pandemic took hold. Gov. Beshear said the new executive order protects tenants and provides relief for eligible landlords.

“As this battle has taken many months, we now face three major concerns: one, wanting to make sure that people aren’t out on the street; two, wanting to make sure that these landlords aren’t bankrupted or aren’t being treated unfairly; and three, making sure that as people come out of this that they don’t have so much debt from their housing situation that they can’t ever dig out,” the Governor said. “We want a fair system that tries to address all three of these.”

Under the new order, landlords must give tenants 30 days’ notice of an intent to evict for nonpayment of rent. During that time, the landlord and tenant must meet and confer on a possible agreement. In addition, no penalties, late fees or interest can be charged related to nonpayment of rent from March 6 through the end of the year.

At the same time, Gov. Beshear said his administration is dedicating \$15 million of federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act money to create a *Healthy at Home* Eviction Relief Fund.

The fund will reimburse eligible landlords for missed rent payments and pay some advance rent to keep tenants in their homes. Kentuckians will be able to submit applications Sept. 9. More information about eligibility and how to apply will be forthcoming.

“Kentuckians cannot be *Healthy at Home* without a home,” said Gov. Beshear. “We want to help get people in a place where they’re not only still in their homes, but they’re not going to owe five or six months of rent when they come out of this.”

The Governor also pointed to other programs helping Kentuckians pay rent, including the [Team Kentucky Fund](#), the [Louisville/Jefferson County Eviction Prevention COVID-19 Relief Fund](#) and the [Kentucky Housing Corporation Emergency Solutions Grant \(ESG\) program](#), which is awaiting funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Kentuckians seeking legal assistance can contact the [Kentucky COVID-19 Legal Helpline](#) or call toll-free: 833-540-0342. The service is sponsored by Kentucky’s [Access to Justice Commission](#) and the four Kentucky civil legal aid programs, [AppalReD Legal Aid](#), [Kentucky Legal Aid](#), [Legal Aid of the Bluegrass](#) and [Legal Aid Society](#).

Lawyers who want to volunteer to provide direct legal assistance to Kentuckians in need during the pandemic can visit [Together Lawyers Can](#).

Fall Sports Update

Gov. Beshear on Monday said the decision to allow fall sports to resume in the commonwealth comes with a heavy burden of responsibility from school and athletic officials entrusted with keeping student-athletes and others safe.

Last week, the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) voted 16-2 to allow practices to begin today for the fall sports of cross country, field hockey, football, soccer and volleyball. Regular season games will begin Sept. 7, with football starting Sept. 11.

“Let me start by saying we’re not going to overturn that decision, and it’s not because I think it’s a good decision or a wise decision,” the Governor said. “But if we’re going to defeat this virus, we need people other than me all over Kentucky taking responsibility to make good and wise decisions.”

The Governor highlighted recent reports about athletes facing cardiac problems after COVID-19 infections. Dr. Curt Daniels, a cardiologist who is the director of the adolescent and adult congenital heart disease program and a professor of clinical internal medicine in pediatrics at Ohio State University and Nationwide Children’s Hospital, reported a study that found 10-13% of athletes with coronavirus had developed mild cases of myocarditis, which is inflammation of heart muscle.

Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, reinforced the Governor’s message about sports and provided an update Monday about COVID-19 infections in young people.

“We’ve hit a new plateau, but if we take off from this level, it gets out of control much more quickly,” said Dr. Stack. “I hope that in Kentucky we can be more successful with youth sports than

other places, but the outlook is not good. There's a lot we don't know about this disease. We don't know some of the more silent but really serious harms that this disease causes."

Price-Gouging Update

For a third time, Gov. Beshear signed an [executive order](#) prohibiting price gouging, extending consumer protections outlined in previous orders. This order will remain in effect for the duration of the [state of emergency](#).

"The order protects Kentuckians from those who would take advantage of the pandemic by charging inflated prices for goods – goods like hand sanitizer, soap, cleaners and disinfectants," said La Tasha Buckner, the Governor's chief of staff and general counsel.

[Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center](#)

Today, Gov. Beshear said nine veterans and one staff member at [Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center](#) (EKVC) in Hazard have tested positive.

The Governor said the cases were confined to one hallway unit and the veterans' cases were traced to one transport aide, who has left the hospital and is recovering at home.

Out of an abundance of caution, all veterans who have tested positive have been sent to Appalachian Regional Healthcare. The hospital has agreed to keep the veterans until either a negative test or 14 days have passed. EKVC is testing all veterans in that unit today, and the rest of the veterans in the facility tomorrow and Wednesday.

Some of the steps being taken to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 include: putting up a barrier between the two hall ways; consistent staffing; deep/terminal cleaning of the rooms; ongoing audits and re-training on all infection control procedures and personal protective equipment usage; cancellation of all non-essential appointments; continued testing and working closely with both the local health department and the Department for Public Health.

Remembrance

Gov. Beshear on Monday spoke about the loss of lifelong Carter County resident Rob Perry, who died last week at age 56 of COVID-19.

Chris Perry, Rob's brother, is a state park manager and shared his brother's story, stating "these past four weeks have been the worst of my life, not being by his side and not having the ability to say a proper goodbye."

Chris said his brother was a devoted father, husband, son and brother, as well as a preacher dedicated to his community. He leaves behind his wife, Tawana, children, Tyler and Destiny, and his 80-year-old mother, Sonja.

Rob Perry's family is asking that everyone honor his life by wearing a mask and maintaining social distance.

More Information

Read about other key updates, actions and information from Gov. Beshear and his administration at governor.ky.gov, kycovid19.ky.gov and the Governor's official social media accounts [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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

###